

Minutes: Meeting of the Metropolitan Government Board of Fair Commissioners

Date: January 11, 2022 8:00 a.m.

On the above referenced date, the January meeting for the Board of Fair Commissioners was held in Expo 2 at the Fairgrounds. Those in attendance were Chairman Jason Bergeron, Vice-Chair Sheri Weiner, Commissioner Caleb Hemmer, Commissioner Jasper Hendricks, and Commissioner Mario Avila. Also, present were Fairgrounds Executive Director Laura Womack and Finance and Administrative Manager Satrice Allen. Metro Attorney Alex Dickerson was in attendance. Ed Henley with Pillars Development was present, as well as Ron Gobbell and Tim DeBuse with Gobbell Hays Partners (GHP). Mary Cavarra with Nashville Soccer Club (and the Ownership Group) was also in attendance as well as Dirk Melton with Market Street Enterprises. Matthew Kuhn with Bristol Motor Speedway and Ben Eagles with the Mayor's Office were both present.

Chairman Bergeron called the meeting to order and read the legal notice. He then welcomed new board members Jasper Hendricks and Mario Avila. He then moved to the approval of the December meeting minutes. Vice-Chair Weiner made a motion to approve, and Commissioner Hemmer seconded the motion. All were in favor and the minutes were passed. Commissioner Hemmer asked the new commissioners to briefly introduce themselves. He then moved to Public Comment Time.

There were no public comments. Chairman Bergeron then moved to the Financial Report.

Ms. Allen gave a brief financial report. She announced that they would receive the \$200,000 lease payment for the mixed-use from soccer for January. She added that they were working on the budget and that it was due to Finance on February 11th. She stated that they would present the FY23 budget to the Board at the next meeting. Commissioner Hemmer stated that he would be interested to know whether the Fairgrounds would need a supplement or not. Chairman Bergeron moved to the Executive Director's Report.

Director Womack stated that the new Corporate Sales Event Manager would be on board soon and she was hoping to introduce her at the next meeting in February. She reported that they still had two maintenance vacancies and that they were actively looking to fill those and asked the Board to use their networks for hiring if they knew of anyone who might be interested. She added that she would send the link with the job information out to the Board. Chairman Bergeron moved to the Event Update item on the agenda.

Director Womack gave a quick update of the events coming up and added that Bell Construction and Mortenson-Messer had both been great about coordinating with the staff about events. Chairman Bergeron then moved to Old Business and the Fairgrounds Improvement Project, Stadium, Mixed-Use, and Infrastructure Update item on the agenda.

Mr. Henley gave an update on all the projects going on at the Fairgrounds. He reported that the Multi-Purpose Building should be completed soon. Mr. DeBuse added that they were trying to get as much done as possible with the Infrastructure Project before soccer started May 1st. He stated that they should have a construction manager on board for Fair Park Phase 2 before the month was over. Mr. Gobbell stated that all was going well and thanked everyone for coordinating weekly to keep events functioning during construction.

Ms. Cavarra stated that the stadium was on track on both the schedule and budget. She gave a quick update of what they were finishing up on. She reported one injury that was not serious on the job site and added that the DBE/MBE spend was at about 36% which was above contract requirement. She added that she hoped to present a parking plan at next month's meeting-they were not able to get it done for the January meeting. Commissioner Hemmer asked Ms. Cavarra if she would get the DBE report for the new commissioners and she stated that she would be happy to.

Mr. Melton gave a summary and brief update of the Mixed-Use Project and stated that all was going well. Chairman Bergeron then moved to the Bristol Motor Speedway Update item on the agenda.

Director Womack reported that things were progressing with the financial analysis and that downtown was working on a draft lease. She added that she would be meeting with both new board members to “catch them up” concerning the Bristol Proposal. Mr. Eagles stated that they hoped to have the consultant report done very soon and asked that the Board call a special meeting at the end of January and then a public comment meeting as well. He also stated that Metro was not a party to the discussions concerning the Community Benefits Agreement, but that Bristol had representatives there if they had any questions. Chairman Bergeron had some questions and concerns about whether Bristol had come up with some guarantees financially with the proposal and Mr. Eagles stated that a special meeting would be the best place to discuss this issue since they were still waiting for the consultant to finish the report.

Chairman Bergeron also expressed his concern specifically about the termination rights as well. Mr. Eagles stated that he thought the Board would be pleased with result of the discussions concerning some of these issues. There were a few questions and some discussion, especially about the Community Benefits Agreement and the timeline and process of what would occur over the next few weeks. Commissioner Hendricks asked who made the decision on who was allowed to sit at the table for these discussions about the Community Benefits Agreement and he also had a question about the difference(s) between the soccer benefits agreement and the Bristol agreement. Mr. Eagles stated that state law forbids Metro from being part of the negotiating party in a community benefits agreement and that since Metro was not a part of the agreement, they were not allowed to dictate who was met with. He added that Bristol had to get a little more creative since they did not have the ten acres to work with (that the soccer agreement had) for community benefits but the Board was welcome to reach out to Bristol if they felt that anything was being left out. Director Womack stated that she could be working with Public Facilities Committee Chair Russ Bradford (of the Metro Council) and the Sports Authority while they were waiting to get the report. Chairman Bergeron then moved to the Community Impact/Speedway Policy Discussion and Consideration item on the agenda.

Chairman Bergeron asked if there was a presentation from Bristol concerning the community partners. Mr. Kuhn stated that he did not have a presentation prepared but that he could get with each of the board members concerning the community partners. There were several questions concerning what the Board was/was not allowed to talk about and ask questions concerning the Community Benefits Agreement and the list of partnerships and what they were contributing. Metro Attorney Alex Dickerson stated that the Board was allowed to discuss and request information to be given to them but that they could not dictate terms. There was more discussion and some suggestions by several board members and Director Womack stated again that she would meet with both new commissioners individually along with Mr. Jerry Caldwell, President of Bristol Motor Speedway, on this issue. Chairman Bergeron mentioned the number of race day weekends and getting the track rentals down and the true effects of sound mitigation. Director Womack stated that she believed Bristol was on track with being consistent with the current contract terms. Chairman Bergeron then moved to New Business and the Election of Officers item on the agenda.

Mr. Dickerson explained that the elections that day would only be through June of 2022 when the annual board elections would occur. There was a lengthy discussion and some concerns expressed about continuity due to Chairman Bergeron’s re-appointment in April. Commissioner Hemmer then made a motion stating, *“I make a motion for Sheri Weiner for Chair of the Metro Nashville Board of Fair Commissioners.”* Commissioner Hendricks seconded the motion. Commissioners Hemmer, Weiner, Hendricks, and Avila voted “Aye.” Commissioner Bergeron voted “Nay”. The motion was passed four to one.

Vice-Chair Weiner then made a motion stating, *“I would like to nominate Jason Bergeron as Vice-Chairman of the Fair Board.”* Commissioner Hendricks seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion was passed. Chairman Bergeron then moved to the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Funding item on the agenda.

Director Womack explained that the Flea Market vendors might be eligible for some federal funding through the ARP and that she and Ms. Allen would be presenting a one million dollar rent relief program/ proposal to Metro Council that week concerning this. She gave a few details concerning this proposal and how it would work and added that there were still things to figure out about how it would be administered. Vice-Chair Weiner stated that she felt it was very important for Metro Council to know that the Board endorsed this and then made a motion stating, *“I move that the Board of Fair Commissioners endorse the use of the ARP funds and utilize those funds to support our (Flea Market) vendors moving forward.”* There were a couple of questions and a brief discussion. Commissioner Hendricks seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion was passed. Director Womack stated that she would add that for redistribution for their information.

Vice-Chair Weiner then made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Hendricks seconded the motion. All were in favor and the meeting was dismissed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Chairman, Jason Bergeron

Executive Director, Laura Womack