

THE SPORTS AUTHORITY OF THE
METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE & DAVIDSON COUNTY

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Thursday March 10, 2022 | 10:30 am
Nissan Stadium – Press Box

Attendees

Members: Cathy Bender (Chair), Frank Harrison (Vice-Chair), Emmett Wynn (Secretary/Treasurer), Kim Adkins, Margaret Behm, Don Deering, Jad Duncan, Glenn Farner, Melvin Gill, Jon Glassmeyer, Dan Hogan, Aaron McGee, Anna Page

Staff: Monica Fawknorton (ED), Valda Barksdale, Quinton Herring, Joshua Thomas (Metro Legal), Lexie Ward (Metro Legal), Melissa Wells

Visitors: Bill Wickett (Predators), Brett Withers (Metro Council), Burke Nihill, (Titans), Carol Greenlee (Mortenson Messer JV), Craig Eckelot (Barton Malow), Diamond Bell (SUN), Dan Werly (Titans), David Urn (Predators), Dick Davis (CPS), Dinah Wells (PML), Erik Johannes (Mortenson), Ian Ayre (Nashville SC), Jerry Mullins (Barton Malow), Katie Gafiero (Predators), Katy Sheesley (GHP), Kyle Clayton (Preds), Maddie Davis (SELDC), Michell Bosch (Metro Finance), Rob Dobie (Calvert Street), Sean Henry (Predators), Shannon Myers (Titans), Shereme Siewnarine (Titans), Will Traylor (Mortenson)

Call to Order

Chair Bender called the meeting to order by welcoming all and thanking Nissan Stadium and the Titans for hosting the meeting. Chair Bender also welcomed District Six council member Brett Withers and thanked him for joining.

Consider Approval of Minutes from February 17, 2022 Meeting

Chair Bender asked if there were additions or corrections to the February 17, 2022 meeting minutes. There being none, upon a motion made by Director Deering and seconded by Director Wynn, the committee approved the minutes from the February 17, 2022 meeting.

Executive Director's Report

Chair Bender recognized ED Fawknorton to provide the Executive Director's report. After briefly summarizing the meeting's agenda, ED Fawknorton reported that Bridgestone Arena/ Nashville Predators did an incredible job hosting the SEC Women's Basketball Tournament. Fans, schools, coaches and trailblazers felt something special upon arriving in Nashville. Ms. Fawknorton commented on other tournament activities including: A Title IX panel at the Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame, the more than 2,000 Metro students who attended the Wednesday session, The Trailblazer reception, Saturday's Downtown Dribble, and a gospel explosion on Sunday morning featuring CeCe Winans. Ms. Fawknorton noted that the main attraction was some of the best women's college basketball in the country. Director Behm echoed her comments and thanked everyone who participated in representing the city of Nashville well and for making the event extra special.

Consider approval of a resolution authorizing and approving an amendment to the franchise study for Women's Professional Sports contract to engage CAA ICON for additional services related to the Women's Sports Initiative.

Chair Bender recognized Finance Chair Jon Glassmeyer to give the Finance Committee Report. Chair Glassmeyer reported the committee considered a resolution authorizing and approving an amendment to the Authority's contract for consulting services with CAAICON for the women's sports initiative. Executive Director Fawknotsen stated that under the proposed amendment, CAAICON will prepare and submit a summary presentation to both the WNBA and the NWSL. She noted that CAAICON Strategic Division President Dan Barrett joined the Finance Committee by phone and stated that the goal of the amendment is to engage with league representatives and prospective ownership groups and to sell them on why Nashville is a great market for their league. Cost for the Additional Services is not to exceed \$20,000 as stated in the contract, but the Authority does have the ability to amend the contract to raise the cap should it believe it necessary. A scope of the work and cost projections should be included.

Upon a motion made by Director Glassmeyer and seconded by Director Adkins, the Authority voted to approve the resolution authorizing and approving an amendment to its agreement with CAAICON for additional services related to the Women's Sports Initiative.

Nissan Stadium Update, Burke Nihill, President & CEO, Tennessee Titans

Chair Bender recognized Burke Nihill, President & CEO of the Tennessee Titans to present an update on Nissan Stadium. Mr. Nihill began by showing a Titans promotional video which focused on the team's community outreach during weather disasters and the team's Mission- Win. Serve. Entertain. He thanked the community for its support of the Titans

In reviewing 2021, Mr. Nihill's reported a record 1.2 million fans at Nissan Stadium during the pandemic, sell-out crowd for the Rolling Stones, and the campus being transformed into an Indy Car Racetrack. The 2021-2022 season began with a Titans themed art show and other calendar dates include Flag Football, WWE Summer Slam, and Garth Brooks concert. Nihil stated their objective for Nissan Stadium is to create a diverse range of activities outside of football.

Mr. Nihill turned his attention to discussions of renovating the existing stadium vs. building a new stadium and noted that that for years the Titans have been performing studies for the cost of renovations. The desire is to remain at the current location and to include a neighborhood concept with affordable housing and greenspace near the stadium.

A national architect was hired to consult with a national contractor to study the specific costs of renovating and creating the NFL stadium standard, Mr. Nihill stated. The focus is on heavy investment from the team with the objective of not burdening taxpayers, he stated.

Other comments from Mr. Nihill included:

- Extensive repairs have been underway for years which have resulted in heavy cost
- Other stadiums built during the same time as Nissan Stadium have either been demolished or repurposed. As NFL standards have evolved, Nissan Stadium has not.
- Kellen DeCoursey was hired as the construction manager with the hope that a deal could be made by Spring 2022 to move forward with renovation plans. Due to inflationary concerns, Kellen hired two contractors in January 2022, both of whom identified the renovation cost had doubled since 2020 due to inflationary pressure. . As a result of these findings, the Titans and the City is considering whether renovation is the wisest pursuit. The organization is actively researching other recently built stadiums to ascertain an understanding of layout with regards to economics and financing.
- There is a sense of urgency in trying to identify which is the right path to ensure a wise investment for the next thirty plus years is pursued.

Mr. Nihill entertained questions/discussions from the board including:

- Director Harrison asked what is the oldest NFL stadium and how is it allowed to continue in operation by the NFL without building a new stadium? Mr. Nihill responded Lambeau Field, home of the Green Bay Packers. The stadium is a historical landmark and has been rebuilt and gutted with hundreds of millions of dollars to achieve NFL standards while retaining its historical structure.
- Director Behm requested Mr. Nihill to elaborate on the difficulty of renovating the stadium's concrete structure. Mr. Nihill stated that the stadium was built in a cost-saving manner in 1990s for approximately \$170m excluding land cost. The current structure is precast concrete which is not flexible nor is it designed for infrastructure repairs. Also, he further stated, the utilities are very inefficient. The right construction for longevity is a steel construction, he noted.
- Director Adkins requested information with regards to timelines, seating capacity and hosting the World Cup. Mr. Nihill commented that the organization is experiencing a sense of urgency due to the inflationary environment. He further stated that Kellen and the contractors are creating a budget-driven process to help the organization understand the cost of building. All designs must work into a responsible budget rather than the opposite. Identifying areas, he continued, where cost can be kept low without compromising fan experience, quality of construction nor the iconic nature of the building are essential. Square footage with no wasted space is a priority, he stated. Less capacity in the 60k range, he further stated, is an NFL stadium preference with emphasis on high character spaces, great social experiences, quality seating products. Because FIFA prefers maximum seating capacity, Mr. Nihill stated, hosting the World Cup at a new stadium would be unlikely. The current stadium, he continued, would have to follow FIFA protocol and be in their exact required condition one year prior to the 2026 event.

- Director Deering questioned how the \$600m would address renovations given the structure is concrete and asked whether a remodeled stadium would meet NFL standards to host a Super Bowl. Mr. Nihill responded that most expenses would go towards the infrastructure and converting antiquated spaces to a more modern space. He continued stating that the original renovation proposal would satisfy the stadium as a possible one-time super bowl host facility.
- Director Gill requested clarity regarding the updated renovation cost, NFL standards and eliminating the taxpayer burden. Mr. Nihill responded that the original renovation cost was approximately \$400m for soft cost and \$600m for true cost. The updated cost range between \$850m - \$950m. Because we went with two different contractors, he stated, the numbers are reliable. Mr. Nihill further commented that a few of the NFL standards include food and beverage concessions that are fan friendly, state of the art utilities and post 911 digital and technological security enhancements. Continuing his comments, he further stated that the goal is to secure revenue streams from real estate, the team and other sources to avoid raising taxes.
- Director Hogan questioned whether the original stadium was built to minimum expectations and asked about the expectations for proposed renovations and/or new construction along with the completion timeframe for a new build. Mr. Nihill responded that the objective of renovation efforts has always been to achieve first class NFL standards. He further stated that any cost cutting will be done on material selections and not infrastructure. In terms of a new construction time frame, he stated 30-31 months with an aggressive optimism of opening for the Titans 2026 season.
- Director McGee requested an overview of the vision for the fan experience. Mr. Nihill stated that the goal is to convert 100 parking lot acres into a great Nashville neighborhood, with housing for all races and income levels. There will be a lot of green space with a stadium that the neighborhood can be proud of.

Chair Bender thanked Mr. Nihill for updating the Authority. She extended congratulations to the Titans for an outstanding season.

Consider approval of a Resolution pertaining to a request pursuant to Section 9(b) of the Lease Agreement between the Sports Authority of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County and Walsh

Chair Bender recognized Ian Ayre, President & CEO, Nashville Soccer Club. Mr. Ayre shared that the Nashville SC is six weeks away from its first game in their new stadium. He announced that the partnership team has reached an agreement for a long-term naming rights deal with Geodis, a global logistics company. One of the fastest growing supply chain logistics companies in the U.S., Mr. Ayre continued, Geodis is French owned and based in France. Its U.S. headquarters is located in Brentwood with over 2,000 local employees and 15,000 across the U.S. Geodis is widely known for the delivery of all Apple products purchased online in the U.S. The company is also a major distributor for Starbucks.

Mr. Ayre reported the stadium will be named **Geodis Park** and that Geodis will additionally serve as a brand owner of one of the clubs in the facility. Chair Bender reminder the board as well as the audience that the Nashville Soccer Club is required to obtain approval from the Sports Authority prior to naming the stadium. The board cannot withhold approval unless the name is controversial or offensive.

Chair Bender asked if there were any questions or discussions regarding approval of the proposed stadium name. **There being none, upon a motion made by Director Adkins and seconded by Director Harrison, the Authority approved Geodis Park for the Nashville Major League Soccer Stadium.**

Chair Bender Congratulated the Nashville Soccer Club on reaching an agreement and naming rights partnership with the Geodis Group. She invited everyone to attend the public announcement at the stadium following the conclusion of today's meeting.

Adjourn

In closing Chair Bender thanked members of the board, Metro Legal and Finance, staff and facility representatives for their commitment and contributions. She extended a special thank you to Margaret Behm for serving two terms on the board and for being an amazing partner who has made tremendous contributions to the city of Nashville and the Sports. She thanked Director Behm for her many years of service to the Sports Authority including as former Chair of the Finance Committee and the current chair of the Women's Professional Sports Ad Hoc Committee. The group extended a warm standing ovation in honor of Chair Behm's commitment to the Sports Authority.

Director Behm reminisced about her tenure on the board and thanked the Sports Authority for the opportunity to serve for the last twelve years. She stated she is looking forward to continuing to serve as Chair for the Women's Professional Sports Initiative.

Next board meeting is scheduled for 10:30am, April 21 at Geodis Park. There being no other business the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted, Valda Barksdale, The Metro Sports Authority



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G4zbeW0PBWQ>

<https://metronashville.sharepoint.com/sites/SportsAuthority/Shared Documents/P-Drive-Sports Authority/SA BOARD/SA MINUTES/2022/2022 Minutes March 10Working.docx>