

Minutes: Meeting of the Metropolitan Government Board of Fair Commissioners

Date: August 9, 2022 4:00 p.m.

On the above referenced date, the August meeting for the Board of Fair Commissioners was held in Expo 3 at the Fairgrounds. Those in attendance were Chair Sheri Weiner, Vice-Chair Jasper Hendricks, Commissioner Mario Avila, Commissioner Todd Hartley, and Commissioner Anthony Owens. Also, present were Fairgrounds Executive Director Laura Womack, Finance and Administrative Manager Satrice Allen and Event Services Manager for the Fair Scott Jones. Metro Attorney Ann Mikkelsen was in attendance. Ed Henley with Pillars Development was present, as well as Ron Gobbell and Alison Poland with GHP. Jason Bergeron with the Neighborhood Impact Advisory Committee (NIAC) was in attendance, as was Trey Walker, Chief Development Officer with WeGo.

Chair Weiner called the meeting to order and read the legal notice. She introduced Anthony Owens as the new Fair Board Commissioner, and he said a few words. She then moved to the approval of the June meeting minutes. Vice-Chair Hendricks made a motion to approve, and Commissioner Avila seconded the motion. All were in favor and the minutes were passed. She then moved to Public Comment Time.

There were no public comments and Chair Weiner then asked a motion to suspend the rules to go out of order to allow Trey Walker with WeGo to move to the head of the meeting. Commissioner Hartley stated, "*So moved*" and Commissioner Avila seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion was passed.

Director Womack stated that they had been working on an agreement for a while with MTA and it had always been in the plans (as part of the Fair Park Phase 2 Development) for MTA to improve the WeGo stop at Nolensville Road. Therefore, a MOU (memorandum of understanding) was now presented before the Board to consider: 1) to improve that stop 2) improve access to/from the stop 3) to maintain stop. Chair Weiner asked for a motion to accept the MOU so that the Board could discuss it, and Vice-Chair Hendricks stated, "*I move that we open up discussion regarding this MOU with MTA.*" Commissioner Hartley seconded the motion. Mr. Walker reported that he had been working with Director Womack and the Development Team for a while and briefly went over some of the basics of the MOU. Chair Weiner asked if any of the Board had questions. Commissioner Hartley asked Director Womack if there would be any budget or operational impact and Director Womack answered, "No." He also asked if legal had reviewed the MOU and Ms. Mikkelsen stated that legal had reviewed the document. Commissioner Avila asked about electrical or any other expenses-if WeGo would cover those and Mr. Walker stated that they would. Vice-Chair Hendricks asked when the project would start and how long the project would take. Mr. Walker answered that it would be about 3 or 4 months before they started, and they would build in the winter months and planned to be open by next soccer season. Chair Weiner suggested that it might be good for WeGo to have access to the Fairgrounds schedule for several reasons and Mr. Walker agreed. There were a couple of other questions/comments. Chair Weiner then asked for a motion to accept the MOU between the Fairgrounds and MTA. Commissioner Hartley stated, "*So moved*" and Vice-Chair Hendricks seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion was passed. Chair Weiner then moved to the Financial Report.

Ms. Allen gave a financial report for the months of June and July. She added that it would be the end of December before the FY22 books would close. Commissioner Hartley asked if it would be possible for Ms. Allen to send a roll up of the last fiscal year financials and Chair Weiner suggested that, since they had so many new commissioners on board, it might be good for all of them to get a copy. He also asked if she could include all the Dashboards from last year, as well. Ms. Allen stated she would be glad to send that. Chair Weiner then moved to the Executive Director's Report.

Director Womack gave an update on the Rent Relief Grant Program for the flea market vendors and stated that all was going well, and they had processed almost 170 applications so far. She stated that they had had a very busy month with back-to-back events and approximately 35,000 people come through in the last 30 days and thanked the staff for all of their hard work. She reported that she would be one of the co-chairs in the Metro Makes a Difference Campaign this year which would launch in September. She introduced Melissa Borgmeyer as the new Event Services Coordinator for the Fair and then gave the floor to Mr. Jones to give an update on the Fair.

Mr. Jones gave an update on the Fair which included a run-down of some of the events scheduled, the fair logo and website, opening ceremonies, sponsorships, and which buildings would hold which events. Vice-Chair Hendricks asked about parking for the Fair and Director Womack stated that while they had been very busy in parking, so far it had not been an issue to date.

Commissioner Hartley asked about the volume of events and his concerns of the staff workload coming up. Director Womack stated that they did have some turnover in event staff recently but were filling those positions. She added that they had been trying to prioritize some higher revenue events and trying to recruit more regional and national (larger) shows, as well as, trying to fill up the buildings during the week. She stated that they had reached out to partner with companies like White Door to set up events and to supplement the small staff and that were trying to be more efficient in scheduling and set up. Chair Weiner then moved to Old Business and the Fairgrounds Improvement Project, Mixed Use, and Infrastructure Update item on the agenda.

Mr. Henley gave a quick financial update on each outstanding project at the Fairgrounds. Mr. Gobbell introduced Alison Poland as new to their firm and reported that GHP had been busy with lots of coordination with several different parties such as WeGo and were also busy fighting inflation in building costs and working on options of how to proceed with the current projects. He reported that the Arts Commission Project was now “in the weeds” and moving along. He reported that they were coordinating with the Mixed-Use Project, and everyone was working well together. Director Womack confirmed that the roadwork would be complete by the Fair but would be closed during the Fair and September Flea Market and then would open for good after both of those had occurred. Chair Weiner moved to the Bristol Update item on the agenda.

Director Womack stated that the report was similar to last month and that discussions were continuing and that a proposal should be presented shortly. Chair Weiner then moved to the Community Impact/Speedway Policy Discussion and Consideration item on the agenda.

Mr. Bergeron asked the Board again to commit to transparency and more public conversation concerning the Bristol/SMI deal and community impact. Chair Weiner then asked for a motion to adjourn.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

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Chair, Sheri Weiner

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Executive Director, Laura Womack