

Minutes: Meeting of the Metropolitan Government Board of Fair Commissioners

Date: February 14, 2023 4:00 p.m.

On the above referenced date, the February meeting for the Board of Fair Commissioners was held at Geodis Park. Those in attendance were Chair Sheri Weiner, Vice-Chair Jasper Hendricks, Commissioner Mario Avila (arrived later), Commissioner Todd Hartley, and Commissioner Anthony Owens (arrived later). Also, in attendance were Executive Director Laura Womack and Finance and Administrative Manager Satrice Allen. Metro Attorney's Terri Costonis and Tom Cross were present. Ed Henley with Pillars Development was in attendance. Matthew Kuhn with Bristol Motor Speedway was present. And Jason Bergeron with the Neighborhood Impact Advisory Committee (NIAC) was also in attendance.

Chair Weiner read the legal notice. She then called the meeting to order and moved to the approval of the January meeting minutes. Vice-Chair Hendricks made a motion to approve, and Commissioner Hartley seconded the motion. All were in favor and the minutes were passed. She then moved to Public Comment Time.

There were several comments both in support of and in opposition of the Bristol Proposal. Chair Weiner then moved to the Financial Report.

Ms. Allen gave a brief financial report and went over the Aging Report. Commissioner Hartley asked if the Fairgrounds was still on track on this year's revenue projections and Ms. Allen answered that they were still on track. Chair Weiner then moved to the Events Update item on the agenda.

Director Womack reported that the event calendars in the board packets included road closures. Commissioner Hartley asked that any changes concerning closures/lane restrictions be communicated to the community and Commissioner Owens asked if the times could also be included. Commissioner Avila asked that soccer road closures (specifically full closures or lane restrictions) be on the calendars as well and Director Womack stated that she would get with soccer and also work on getting these requests on the calendars and out to the neighbors. Vice-Chair Hendricks asked if there was a parking plan for the soccer games on event days coming up and Director Womack stated that they were already working on that. Chair Weiner then moved to the Executive Director's Report.

Director Womack went over the Flea Market data comparison numbers and stated that there had been a remarkable improvement since last year. She added that they had picked up 308 new dealers and were on the right track to rebuilding the market. There was some discussion about this, how much the rent relief had attributed to the increase, the food and beverage percentage, market retention, and the list of what flea vendors were prohibited to sell. Director Womack added that they would be opening Expo 3 in March for the first time since COVID-19. Chair Weiner then moved to Old Business and the Fairgrounds Improvement Project, Mixed Use, and Infrastructure Update item on the agenda.

Mr. Henley stated that he was representing Pillars and GHP and then gave some quick updates on each project. He stated that there was a new draft in the board packets on the Infrastructure Part 2 project. He added that they were closing out on the maintenance facility and that they were able to stay within budget on this project. Commissioner Hartley asked Chair Weiner if she could get the Board some information about the Fair Park Phase 2 project so that they could better understand it and what should happen. He also asked for a timeline since this was before some of them were on the Board. Chair Weiner added that Councilman Sledge had a timeline, and she would get that from him. Mr. Henley stated that activity had started on the Infrastructure Part 2 project and that invoices were starting to come in and Director Womack added that they were hoping to get 19.3 million approved by Metro Council for the Capital Spending Plan soon. She then quickly went over some projects that they could do with the 19 million.

There was no Mixed-Use Project update. Chair Weiner then moved to the Bristol Motor Speedway Update item on the agenda.

Mr. Kuhn reported that they had held four community meetings and had three more scheduled. He explained that he was keeping notes and a running list from each meeting and would correspond with the neighbors accordingly. Chair Weiner then moved to the Community Impact/Speedway Policy Discussion and Consideration item on the agenda.

Mr. Bergeron went over several concerns. He mentioned requests for conversations and dialogue (working sessions) between the public and the Board and the racers, written (and not just verbal) commitments in the contracts, and protection penalties.

Vice-Chair Hendricks asked, before they moved to New Business, for an update from Nashville Soccer and their scheduling. Commissioner Hartley agreed about someone from soccer doing an update at the meetings and also asked for a copy of the NSC lease. Chair Weiner stated that she would get with Ms. Cavarra and get something out to everyone.

Vice-Chair Hendricks also wanted to state that every person had had an opportunity to make comments concerning the Bristol deal and was frustrated that the Board kept getting blamed for not having an open process. He stated that it had been at least a year and at least 10 meetings and, while they might not agree with the process, that was just not the case. He added that the Board was listening would be making some amendments soon. Commissioner Hartley agreed that it had been a good process and that while he was not happy with the speed of the process, there had been plenty of opportunity for public comment. Chair Weiner added that they would soon be presenting everything appropriately and in the right way and that the final documents would be comprehensive. She stated that they would vote on the best document that they could make and then recommend that document to the Metro Council who would then vote. Chair Weiner then moved to New Business and the FY24 Budget Update item on the agenda.

Ms. Allen stated that they had presented a budget draft to the finance team, but that Director Womack had some fee changes she would like to implement and if the Board approved, they would need to change the budget draft. Chair Weiner then moved to the Consideration of Building Rental and Parking Fee Adjustments item on the agenda.

Director Womack went over several points staff had been focusing on over the last year and things for the Board to consider concerning goods & services increases, reducing budget gaps, vendor and regional shows recruitment, evaluating the new fair's expenses vs. revenue, speedway path, staff focus and equity pay, reducing expenses overall, and building rental fees. She then asked that the Board allow her to authorize an increase up to 5% in building rental fees (not the Flea Market) on an annual basis based on market without coming to The Board every year. Chair Weiner asked for a motion so they could discuss, and Commissioner Hartley made a motion stating, "*I make a motion to give the Executive Director discretion up to 5% annually based on market research and CPI to adjust building rental fees without having to go to The Board.*" Commissioner Avila seconded the motion. There was a brief discussion and several questions. Chair Weiner asked for a vote. All were in favor, and the motion was passed. Chair Weiner then moved to Parking Fee Adjustment.

Director Womack reported that parking fees had not increased since 2011 (from FREE parking to \$5). There was much discussion with lots of questions concerning Fair Park parking control, parking in general, cash handling and changing to technology and/or QR codes, parking buyouts, revenue from soccer parking, how changes would affect the vendors and promoters, being consistent with all events for parking, discretion for Director Womack to charge more for some events and a few other topics. Ms. Allen reminded the Board that they were a revenue generating fund and that they must meet their expenses and make money to produce (unlike other general fund departments in Metro) and that they must go to the taxpayers if they don't make their budget. It was decided that, because of

budget coming up soon the Board could make a motion at this meeting, and they could always expand/update that motion after a parking study and some more research and discussion had been done. Chair Weiner then made a motion stating, *"I make a motion that we authorize Director Womack to set parking fees."* Commissioner Owens seconded the motion. Vice-Chair Hendricks then made an amendment to the motion stating, *"I move that we cap the price at \$20 per car/space."* Chair Weiner accepted the motion as amended. Commissioner Hartley seconded the request to amend the motion. Chair Weiner then asked for a vote on the amendment, all were in favor and the amendment passed. Chair Weiner then asked for a vote on the motion which was *"...For the Executive Director to have discretion to set the parking fees per car/space of up to \$20 or more than \$20 if there is a parking split-the share of the Fair Board can be no more than \$20-and if there are additional exceptions to that, the Executive Director can come back to the Fair Board to request special exceptions"*. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Commissioner Hartley asked Metro Legal to look into the issue that if the back pit and tunnel were changed or eliminated, would it be a breach of contract. There was a brief discussion about the upcoming meetings. Chair Weiner stated that the updated documents would be out before the Public Hearing on the 20th and she asked if any of the Board Members had any other amendments to add to send them to Director Womack as soon as possible. Vice-Chair Hendricks then made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Owens seconded the motion, all were in favor and the meeting was dismissed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Chair, Sheri Weiner

Executive Director, Laura Womack