

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

**PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
Thursday June 2, 2022 | 3:30 pm  
Lindsley Hall – Peabody Conference Room**

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**Attendees**

**Committee Members:** Cathy Bender (Chair), Frank Harrison (Vice-Chair), Emmett Wynn (Secretary/Treasurer)

**Board Members:** Melvin Gill

**Staff:** Monica Fawknorton (ED), Melissa Wells, Valda Barksdale, Josh Thomas (Metro Legal), Lexie Ward (Metro Legal), Derek Moore (Intern)

***Call to Order***

Chair Bender called the meeting of the Sports Authority Personnel Committee to order at 3:30 p.m. and welcomed all in attendance. She reported that the committee is comprised of the officers of the Board of Directors and a fourth member may be appointed at the discretion of the chair. Because an odd number is typically preferred, appointing a fourth person will be taken into consideration.

***Consider approval of August 17, 2021 Joint Meeting of the Personnel/Finance Committees Minutes Upon a motion made by Director Wynn and seconded by Director Harrison, the Personnel Committee unanimously approved the minutes from the August 17, 2021 meeting.***

***Executive Director Annual Performance Evaluation***

Chair Bender recognized ED Fawknorton to share highlights from the past year, including things that worked, didn't work, accomplishments and navigating office operations thru the COVID pandemic. ED Fawknorton shared that the biggest accomplishment of the year has been the completion of the Geodis Soccer Stadium. It has been a work in progress for over five years and the end result is a phenomenal stadium. The construction site was clean, well-organized and encountered only one minor injury. The diversity and DBE goals were surpassed and the community was well engaged with the construction project. It has been a great partnership, one that we are most proud of.

Additionally, Ed Fawknorton stated, The Women's Professional Sports Initiative is getting a lot of attention and Nashville is a serious contender for the WNBA market expansion.

Transitioning from in-person to virtual to meetings presented some challenges as many people were unfamiliar with video conferencing. Now that we have returned to meeting in person our board seems to appreciate the face-to-face interactions, particularly given there were several board appointments made during the pandemic as well as new legal counsel assigned to the Sports Authority.

Additionally, Metro's Finance department has experienced significant staff changes as well as other areas within the organization. Learning the many new faces and roles can be a challenge, however it is also an opportunity to improve communications.

Director Harrison questioned whether the mayor's office seeks input from the Sports Authority regarding recommendations for the selection process of new board members. It would be advantageous to have expertise in areas that will enhance the work of the board. ED Fawknorton responded that the current mayor has joined several virtual board meetings and stated he was pleased with the work of the board. Additionally, she stated, many of the questions asked by board members oftentimes parallel with the curiosity of the public and the board's six-year term allows time for them to become acclimated to our processes and protocols. Two recommendations for appointments were submitted to the current administration for Director Margaret Behm's replacement, however, neither of them was selected. Chair Bender encouraged board members to attend the Finance Committee meetings as they offer more details and insight of how operations within the Sports Authority work. Director Harrison commented that he learned a lot from former Director Behm's comments and questions and he emphasized the importance of encouraging all board members, particularly the new appointees to feel comfortable asking questions.

Director Wynn inquired whether ED Fawknorton believes she is receiving the support needed to operate effectively. ED Fawknorton responded that the board is extremely supportive with their time and efforts in serving on various committees and being available when needed. She stated she is thankful for having several board members who have served for more than six years and the experiences and wisdom that they offer to new board members.

ED Fawknorton also commented on the numerous media attention the Sports Authority is receiving. A public information officer would be ideal to ensure we are proactive in our messaging and to promote communication consistency between the Sports Authority and the Mayor's Office.

Chair Bender commented on the professional team ED Fawknorton has built and stated that the caliber of work delivered by the Sports Authority staff speaks volume to her leadership. ED Fawknorton commented that it is evident that staff cares about the quality of their work and they go above and beyond their call of duty.

ED Fawknorton reported that she is looking forward to attending the Convention, Sports & Entertainment Facilities Conference in Tampa, Florida June 14-15. The conference will examine facility types, structure financing for new and expanded facilities as well as procurement trends and project delivery. The Committee concurred that learning how sports authorities in other cities are operating will be good for building upon and improving processes here in Nashville.

As a way to help board members maintain their calendars, Chair Bender suggested that the staff post meeting dates and locations at the beginning of each year.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of a 3% merit increase and 4% cost of living increase to the Executive Director's salary. The increase is consistent with the Mayor's recommendation for Metro employees in his proposed FY 23 budget. The increase is contingent upon approval of the budget by the Metro Council.

### ***Internship Discussion***

ED Fawknorton introduced Derek Moore, who recently graduated from Belmont University's Masters of Sports Management program. He is completing internship hours with the Sports Authority by developing logos and inputting spreadsheet data. The Sports Authority is contacted regularly by students seeking internship programs and looks forward to continuing the program and will work with Metro Legal to ensure the office is in compliance with Metro protocols. Mr. Moore commented that it has been a great learning experience coming to the office and gaining hands on experience of office operations. Chair Bender commented that the program is a win-win opportunity for both the student and the Sports Authority and stated she would like to see the Sports Authority move forward with continuance of the internship program.

### ***New Business***

ED Fawknorton reported that Finance Consultant Bob Lackey has brought tremendous value not only to the Sports Authority but to Metro's Finance Departments as well. Mr. Lackey is a Metro retiree with a wealth of finance knowledge and the office would benefit greatly by transitioning him from temporary part-time to permanent part-time. The committee agreed and offered full support of the request going before the Finance Committee.

Chair Bender announced that the Personnel Committee meets annually and a notice for next year's meeting will be shared once a date is confirmed.

There being no further questions or business, the Personnel Committee meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted, Valda Barksdale, The Metro Sports Authority

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<https://metronashville.sharepoint.com/sites/SportsAuthority/Shared Documents/P-Drive-Sports Authority/SA BOARD/Personnel Committee/Committee Minutes/FY22/Minutes 2022 Personnel Committee June 2.docx>