



AUTHORITY BOARD MEETING

Date/Time: Wednesday, March 29, 2023; 12:00 P.M.

Location: BMO Harris Bank Center (Board Room – Lower Level)
300 Elm Street, Rockford, IL 61101

MINUTES

Board Members Present: Craig Thomas Martesha Brown
Tom Walsh Bobbie Holzwarth
John Phelps Geno Iafrate

Board Members Absent: Rudy Valdez

Others Present: Alderman Chad Tuneberg
Alderman Frank Beach
Tim Rollins, Attorney
Kevin McCarthy, Winnebago County Liaison
Beth Howard, Friends of the Coronado
East High School Student Observers

Staff Present: Gretchen Gilmore, General Manager, BMO Harris Bank Center
Jackie Powers; Finance Coordinator/RAVE Board Secretary, BMO Harris Bank Center

Chairman Thomas called the meeting to order at 12:07 P.M.

Craig Thomas welcomes everyone to the BMO Center Boardroom.

MINUTES – The minutes from the January 25, 2023, meeting are reviewed and approved.

***MOTION: To approve the January 25, 2023, minutes made by Bobbie Holzwarth, second by Tom Walsh.
Motion passes unanimously.***

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- **Finance**

Mr. Tom Walsh, Chair

Tom Walsh defers to the treasurer's report but highlights the strong performance of the arena for the fiscal year.

- **Executive**

Mr. Craig Thomas, Chair

Craig Thomas reports Dan McMahon will be joining the board to fill one of the vacant seats filled by the City of Rockford and Winnebago County has nominated Megan McCoy. Both are expected to attend the April 2023 meeting.

- **Davis Park** **Mr. Tom Walsh, Chair**

No report at this time.

- **Coronado** **Mr. Craig Thomas, Chair**

Gretchen Gilmore states the city has signed the contract with Alpha for building automation and work should begin in September. The city also met with WJE to discuss the exterior façade project. The owner's apartment restoration is ongoing, with several projects included. The Illinois Arts Council Agency had representatives tour the Coronado in March. Gretchen Gilmore discusses new grant opportunities for the Coronado. The City of Rockford Public Works department will send a representative to the Coronado twice a week to help with regular maintenance. Beth Howard praises the approach to the remediation of the water damage at the Coronado.

- **DEI Advisory Group** **Ms. Martesha Brown, Chair**

Martesha Brown states a press release had been sent out to communicate what the DEI has been doing as relates to the pledges the group has made to the community and updates the board on the DEI scorecard. Martesha Brown updates the board regarding new members on the DEI Committee. Martesha Brown informs the board that Ignite Change Solutions will be conducting team building training for BMO Center employees. Beth Howard reviews the Reach for the Stars program and praises its success and diversity and expresses her gratitude for the help and cooperation for the event and states the sponsor would like to do it again next season. Martesha Brown also praises the recent SOAR Awards event held at the Coronado.

- **Governance** **Mr. Tim Rollins, Attorney**

No report at this time.

- **Capital Improvement** **Mr. John Phelps, Chair**

No report at this time.

TREASURER'S REPORT – Mr. Tom Walsh, Treasurer

Gretchen Gilmore reviews the financial reports for January and highlights the event contribution line item and explains the BMO has had amazing attendance and profits. Craig Thomas summarizes the agreement with the Chicago Blackhawks and how it relates to current attendance and profits.

MOTION: To approve the January 2023 financials made by Martesha Brown, second by Bobbie Holzwarth. Motion passes unanimously.

Gretchen Gilmore reviews the success of February events and points out the profits from the food and beverage sales specifically. Craig Thomas and Gretchen Gilmore praise the work by Doug Johnson with a new event promoter and inform the board that the promoter was pleased with the results. Tom Walsh asks that attention be drawn to the February IceHogs numbers and how they have risen in comparison to last year. Chad Tuneberg inquires about higher expenses for some events at the Coronado Performing Arts Center and is informed some shows require additional equipment rental expenses and is informed we are looking into purchasing, rather than renting equipment in the future. Frank Beach requests future reporting to show the number of patrons coming from the Chicago area and is informed the Marketing department is working on a

report that will highlight demographics and location of ticket purchasers. Gretchen Gilmore states event heat maps will be included in future board meeting materials. Chad Tuneberg informs that Gretchen Gilmore and Doug Johnson, as well as the RAVE board, were praised for their success at the recent Rockford City Council meeting. The board discusses the success of the recent Old Dominion concert. John Phelps praises the work that has resulted in an operating surplus in a short amount of time since the shutdown.

MOTION: To approve the February 2023 financials made by Bobbie Holzwarth, second by Tom Walsh. Motion passes unanimously.

Gretchen Gilmore highlights the fiscal year 2023 forecast and states the surplus is well above the budgeted amount. Gretchen Gilmore reviews the IceHogs comparison sheet and shows revenues are up on average. Craig Thomas reviews the options to terminate the lease with the Blackhawks regarding attendance and states all parties are currently happy. Gretchen Gilmore provides the board with the information that event income and concessions revenue at the Coronado were the largest ever last year and discusses the reasons behind the growth. Tom Walsh praises the new “Tax on Top” system put in place for food and beverage sales. Gretchen Gilmore states she will be hiring an accounting manager and will begin the budget process for next year.

GENERAL MANAGERS REPORT – Ms. Gretchen Gilmore, GM

Gretchen Gilmore gives the board a program update for recent and upcoming events, including private corporate events and product launches. Gretchen Gilmore informs the board the bid openings for Phase Three construction are this afternoon and a discussion follows regarding the state requirements for awarding the bids. Kevin McCarthy inquires about and is informed of the bidding process and requests the ability to advertise the bid requests in the future. Renovation projects are discussed by Gretchen Gilmore and Craig Thomas regarding breaking the work into separate phases. Gretchen Gilmore reviews upcoming events and discusses ongoing marketing initiatives. Gretchen Gilmore apprises the board of current roof repairs taking place at the BMO Center. Craig Thomas reminds the board to complete their Statements of Economic Interest and turn them into the County Clerk’s office before the May 1, 2023, deadline. Gretchen Gilmore states there have been ongoing renewal talks with Hard Rock for the upcoming year and they are going well.

COUNSEL’S REPORT – Attorney Tim Rollins

No report at this time.

CHAIRMAN’S REPORT – Mr. Craig Thomas

Craig Thomas informs the board of ongoing discussions with ASM and the Blackhawks regarding renovation wish lists and sources of funding for those items. Craig Thomas reports productive discussions with the city regarding the IGA renewals and a thorough presentation is being put together for the city and county. Frank Beach requests to see the presentation before it is submitted to provide guidance. Bobbie Holzwarth suggests a press release regarding the progress of venues. Craig Thomas states that an entity has reached out regarding rental of parking spaces and there will be discussions with the Blackhawks as to whether the spots can be made available. A request has been made by a local group regarding an easement or arrangement for parking lot seven, which is a public lot owned by RAVE and we have asked for clarification of what they are looking for and will determine how our prior obligations with other parties may impact our ability to honor their request. Kevin McCarthy states his constituents have made inquiries regarding parking downtown during events and Gretchen Gilmore informs him that there are weekly meetings with ABM and the city regarding parking and how best to accommodate the public at events. Craig Thomas reviews recent parking issues and viable solutions that are being worked on by all parties to ensure positive results for all aspects of a patron’s experience with our events. Frank Beach offers several suggestions to alleviate patrons’ parking stress. Bobbie Holzwarth suggests avenues to encourage patrons to arrive early. Kevin McCarthy praises the pre-show information being disseminated on social media.

OLD BUSINESS:

None at this time.

NEW BUSINESS:

None at this time.

ADJOURNMENT – The Authority Board adjourned at 1:11 P.M.

MOTION: To adjourn made by Martesha Brown, second by Bobbie Holzwarth. Motion passes unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted

Jackie Powers, Authority Board Secretary/ FOIA Officer