

Minutes: Meeting of the Metropolitan Government Board of Fair Commissioners
Date: May 8, 2018 8:00 a.m.

On the above referenced date the May meeting for the Board of Fair Commissioners was held in Wilson Hall at the Fairgrounds. Those in attendance were Chairman Ned Horton, Vice-Chairman Erin McAnally, Commissioner Caleb Hemmer, Commissioner Bonna Johnson and Commissioner Jason Bergeron. Also present were Executive Director Laura Womack and Metro Attorney Susan Jones. Assistant Director Ken Sanders was not present. Larry Atema and Jonathan Schneider both with Commonwealth Development Group and Ed Henley with MCC Finance were in attendance. Ron Gobbell with GHP Environmental and Architecture and Gary Gaston and Dana Terebessy with Nashville Civic Design Center were both present as well.

The meeting was called to order at 8:05 and Chairman Horton read the Appeal Announcement. He then moved to the approval of the April Meeting minutes. Commissioner Johnson made a motion to approve. Vice-Chairman McAnally seconded the motion, all were in favor and the minutes were passed. Chairman Horton then moved to Public Comment Time.

Ms. Carol Swain stated that she was running for Mayor and that she supported the Fairgrounds and then read a statement saying that it was important to honor the Raines Family wishes that the Tennessee State Fair be held on the property and to uphold the wishes of the citizens of Nashville that voted for the referendum. Mr. Jim Roberts introduced himself as the attorney for the Nashville Flea Market Vendors Association; a new group created by some of the Flea Market vendors he and stated that he looked forward to working with the Board in the future. Shane Smiley, a local citizen, expressed his concerns about rig traffic up and down the hill and he felt this was a liability issue. Wanda West with the Flea Market Vendor Association wanted to let the Board know that Mr. Roberts represented a different vendor group that had recently formed and that he did not speak for her group that she was associated with. She added that Dick Dickerson, their president, had been around for many many years and their group supported the Fairgrounds. Chairman Horton then moved to the Financial Report.

Director Womack stated that Ken Sanders was out and she then gave a brief report and stated that she had changed the format a bit on the financial papers in their packet. She stated that the budget hearings with Metro Council were May 23rd. She also announced that the Friday before had been Doug Peters last day and that they were advertising for a new Finance Manager position as soon as possible. Chairman Horton then moved to the Executive Directors Report.

Director Womack announced that Terry Taylor with Operations would be retiring soon and she recognized him for his many years of service. She added that they would be recruiting for this position as well. Chairman Horton then moved to Fairgrounds Improvement Project Update item on the agenda.

Mr. Jonathan Schneider with Commonwealth Development gave the updates on Fair Park and the grand stands. He addressed the issue of the access to the speedway for the big trucks to go through and stated that they were doing the best they could to make sure everything was as smooth as possible. He then gave the floor to Mr. Ed Henley to go over the capital expenditures. Mr. Henley went over the costs of the capital improvements and gave a recap of what was to come. There were a couple of questions about timing and finishing dates on some of the areas of the project. Director Womack then introduced Ron Gobbell who would be working with the Fairgrounds on the improvement project.

Chairman Horton asked if they could talk about the expo center site plan. Director Womack stated that they did have a decent idea of what a building would be like down at the bottom of the property and that it looked promising. She stated that the public engagement meetings coming up would be helpful. She then introduced Gary Gaston with the Nashville Civic Design Center who would be helping to facilitate the public engagement meetings coming up. She then explained about those meetings a little bit. Mr. Gaston introduced Ms. Terebessy and stated that they were glad to be working on this project.

At this point Wanda West, a Flea Market vendor, asked a few questions and also wanted to know about the budget for Flea Market advertising. There was a discussion about this and Mr. Scott Wallace, Corporate Sales Manager and who also works with the Flea Market addressed Ms. West's questions. Chairman Horton asked if there were any updates about moving the new Fairgrounds building down at the bottom of the property. Mr. Gobbell stated that they were still doing meetings on that and they were looking forward to the public engagement meetings and added that this was a good direction to explore. Chairman Horton then moved to the MLS Stadium Plan item on the agenda.

Mr. Gobbell reported that they were in the process of selecting an architectural engineering firm and that a selection should be made soon. Mr. Gaston explained what the engagement meetings would be like. Chairman Horton then moved on to the Tennessee State Fair Legislation item on the agenda.

Metro Attorney Susan Jones explained that the bill simply reorganized those persons that sit on the Tennessee State Fair Commission and reorganized how they will serve on that commission. The Fair Board's responsibility would not change in any way. She reported another change was that the TSFA (Tennessee State Fair Association) would be the sole non-profit responsible for putting on the Tennessee State Fair. She added that this legislation deleted the previous legislation. There was some discussion about this and Fair Manager, Scott Jones, answered some of the questions and made some comments. Chairman Horton made it clear that the Fair Board had always been very supportive of the State Fair and added that the fair had been "taken away" from Metro. He stated some of the incorrect information printed in the newspaper was often offensive to the Fair Board. Commissioner Bergeron and Commissioner Hemmer both had some comments about this issue.

Commissioner Hemmer asked that the public engagement meeting times be sent to the Board in advance.

Commission Hemmer then made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. All were in favor and the meeting was dismissed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ned Horton, Chairman

Laura Womack, Executive Director