

RESOLUTION NO. RS2018-1372

A resolution calling a county-wide referendum election to ascertain the will of the people regarding the issuance of bonds by the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County to be secured by revenues of the Metropolitan Government, and the lease of public property, for the construction of a new Major League Soccer Stadium at Fairgrounds Nashville, and appropriating an amount not to exceed Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) from the Undesignated Fund Balance of the General Fund of the General Services District to provide the necessary funds for the referendum.

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Council has been asked to approve a resolution authorizing the issuance of general obligation bonds in an aggregate principal amount of up to fifty million dollars (\$50,000,000.00) by the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, payable from and secured by ad valorem taxes, for the construction of a new Major League Soccer Stadium at the Fairgrounds Nashville, as well as for surrounding infrastructure improvements, acquisition of property, rehabilitation and/or demolition of fairgrounds buildings and facilities, and related expenditures; and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Council has previously approved a resolution approving the issuance of public facility revenue improvement bonds in the aggregate principal amount of two hundred twenty-five million dollars (\$225,000,000.00) by the Sports Authority of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, subject to conditions, for purposes of paying costs related to the proposed Stadium, including acquisition, construction, improvement, renovation, and equipment costs, capitalized interest and debt service, and other costs; and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Council has been further asked to authorize a 99-year ground lease for the development of approximately ten (10) acres of public property adjacent to the proposed stadium as an inducement for a mixed-use development owned by Nashville Soccer Holdings Development LLC; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Major League Soccer Stadium would be a significant capital expenditure for Nashville and Davidson County, require the additional leasing of Metropolitan Government property, and would eventually increase the Metropolitan Government's general obligation debt; and

WHEREAS, to date, no formal survey establishing public support or public opposition for the proposed stadium or the affiliated 99-year lease of public property, has been conducted, nor has a sufficient outlet been provided to confirm approval of the Stadium and the 99-year public property lease by the citizens of Nashville and Davidson County; and

WHEREAS, while contemplating development of this Stadium and 99-year public property lease, the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County has simultaneously approved a "status quo" FY18-19 operating budget eliminating promised pay increases for Metropolitan Government employees and relying upon sales of public property for funding; and

WHEREAS, citizens and taxpayers of Nashville should be entitled to voice their collective will regarding the Metropolitan Government's proposed expenditure upon a capital project of such magnitude and of such limited benefit to citizens as a whole; and

WHEREAS, Tenn. Code Ann. §2-3-204 provides that elections on questions submitted to the people may be held on dates set by the county election commission; and resolutions requiring the holding of elections on questions submitted to the people which are to be held with the regular November election shall be filed with the county election commission not less than seventy-five (75) days prior to such election; and

WHEREAS, Section 7.05 of the Metropolitan Charter provides in relevant part that the council may, if it desires, call an election for the purpose of ascertaining the will of the qualified electors in the general services district or the urban services district, as the case may be, with respect to the issuance of any bonds, whether payable from ad valorem taxes or other taxes, or any other revenues, or a combination thereof; and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Council desires to hold a referendum election to ascertain the will of the people regarding the issuance of general obligation bonds of up to fifty million dollars (\$50,000,000), revenue improvement bonds of up to two hundred twenty-five million dollars (\$225,000,000), and a 99-year lease of public property, all for the construction of a new Major League Soccer Stadium.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY:

Section 1. The Metropolitan Council hereby calls a referendum election to be conducted by the Davidson County Election Commission on November 6, 2018 or as soon as reasonably practicable under the laws of the State of Tennessee to ascertain the will of the people regarding the proposed issuance of general obligation bonds of up to fifty million dollars (\$50,000,000) to be secured by revenues of the Metropolitan Government, revenue improvement bonds of up to two hundred twenty-five million dollars (\$225,000,000), and the proposed 99-year lease of public property by the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County for the construction of a Major League Soccer Stadium. The referendum shall specifically include the following question:

"Do you favor the expenditure of funds and/or revenues of the Metropolitan Government through the issuance of fifty million dollars (\$50,000,000) in general obligation bonds, two hundred twenty-five million (\$225,000,000) in revenue improvement bonds, and a 99-year lease of ten (10) acres of public property to become a mixed-use real estate development held by a privately-owned soccer team, for the purpose of constructing a new Major League Soccer Stadium at the Fairgrounds Nashville?"

Section 2. There is hereby appropriated an amount not to exceed Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) from the Undesignated Fund Balance of the General Fund of the General Services District to provide the necessary funds to conduct the county-wide referendum as provided in Section 1 of this Resolution.

Section 3. This Resolution shall take effect from and after its adoption, the welfare of The Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County requiring it.

INTRODUCED BY:

John Cooper
Member of Council, At-Large

Tanaka Vercher
Member of Council