



SPORTS AUTHORITY OF THE
METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY

MINUTES
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

NISSAN STADIUM – PRESS BOX | THURSDAY, MARCH 20, 2025 | 10:30 AM

ATTENDEES

BOARD MEMBERS: Cathy Bender (Chair), Jad Duncan (Vice Chair), Aaron McGee (Secretary/Treasurer), Kim Adkins, Don Deering, Tiffany Degrafinreid, Dan Hogan, Monchiere' Holmes-Jones, Anna Page, Russ Pulley, Emmett Wynn

STAFF: Monica Fawknorton (ED), Valda Barksdale, Bob Lackey, Brandon Little, Melissa Wells, Joshua Thomas (Metro Legal), Sam Keen (Metro Legal)

Visitors: Adolpho Birch (Titans), Danny Butler, Kyle Clayton (Predators), Jon Cooper (Preds), Randall Coy (DLR Group), Carol Crawley (Cumming Group), Haley Davidson (Titans), Kellen DeCoursey, Adam English (Sounds), Kate Guerra (Titans), Matt Greci (Nashville Super Speedway), John Gromos (TBA), Ryan Harbour (Nashville Soccer Club), Sean Henry (Preds), Alana Hibbler (Metro Parks), Heather Hill (Cumming Group), Michelle Kennedy (Predators), Allie Kleva (Athletes Unlimited), Necol Lyons (Metro OMB), Greg McClarin (Metro Finance), George Morgan (Morgan & Morgan Inc Technical Consultant Services), James Morrison (Mortenson), Shannon Myers (Titans), Lindsey Paola (Nashville Soccer Club), Doug Scopel (Sounds), Steven Seiber (Morgan & Morgan Inc Technical Consultant Services), Paul Tarrants (DLR Group), Nancy Van Reece

Call to Order

Chair Bender called the meeting of the Sports Authority Board of Directors to order, welcomed all to Nissan Stadium and thanked the Titans for hosting.

Public Comment Period Pursuant to TN Open Meetings Act, Tenn. Code Ann. § 8-44-101

There were no sign-ups for Public Comment.

Consider Approval of January 16, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Chair Bender asked if there were questions or comments pertaining to the January 16, 2025 meeting minutes. There being none,

Upon a motion made by Vice Chair Duncan and seconded by Director McGee, the Board of Directors unanimously approved the January 16, 2025 meeting minutes.

Women's Sports Spotlight Interview: Allie Kleva, Athletes Unlimited Pro Basketball

In continuing the Sports Authority's celebration of women's athletics, Director Monchiere' Holmes-Jones welcomed Allie Kleva, Chief Growth Officer of Athletes Unlimited (AU). Director Holmes-Jones thanked Ms. Kleva for a successful season of AU women's basketball in Nashville and congratulated AU on its announcement returning to Music City for the next two years. Ms. Kleva noted that the success of AU in Nashville is due to great relationships with several local organizations including Nashville Sports Council who organized a committee comprised of public and private entities. AU was welcomed by Nashville's professional men's leagues, its media coverage was expansive, the business community was engaging and the rich history of women's basketball in Tennessee all helped AU achieve an authentic experience. Additionally, this year's AU hype video song was performed by a local entertainer Daisha McBride and received raved reviews.

AU's 2025 season saw a 151% increase in merchandise sales, 116% increase in social platforms engagement, along with a 96% increase in viewership and 86% increase in attendance. Also, many WNBA coaches attended the double header games for scouting purposes.

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Ms. Kleva further shared that AU (established in 2020) is athlete driven with athletes serving on the Board of Directors and governed by an Executive Committee comprised of five active players. The season consists of four weeks of competitive play during the domestic off-season, with teams changing every week and each player seeking the goal of one player being the winner. Maddie Siegrist of the WNBA Dallas Wings won this year's competition and set a new record with 7,052 leaderboard points.

The strategy for the next two seasons here in Nashville is to maintain the reasonable game ticket price point, foster continuation of local support & partnerships and to be a strong ally in the community.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Monica Fawknotson shared that one of the women spotlighted during the Sports Authority Title IX series was Nashvillian Jean Patton Latimer who recently passed away. Ms. Patton-Latimer excelled in basketball at Pearl High School, ran track at TSU and held the 100-yard dash world record earning her the title of the World's Fastest Woman. In 2024 she was inducted into the Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame.

Executive Director Fawknotson gave a brief overview of the agenda and shared that Nashville Sports Council and Bridgestone Arena recently announced the inaugural Broadway Block Party women's college volleyball tournament will take place at Bridgestone Arena August 31. The games will be matchups between SEC and Big Ten. Continuing, Ms. Fawknotson congratulated Finance Manager Melissa Hudson Wells on being recognized by Metro HR for five years of service. She also welcomed Matt Greci, Senior Vice President/General Manager Nashville Superspeedway to his first Sports Authority board meeting.

Finance Committee Report FC Chair Dan Hogan

Director Hogan reported on discussions from the meeting held earlier at 9:30am as follows:

- A. Kyle Clayton, Predators, Chief Strategy Officer and Jon Cooper, attorney with Holland & Knight, shared an update on Bridgestone Arena's SEC Men's Basketball Tournament.
- B. A resolution was considered approving the expenditure of funds for the upkeep of the bio-retention basin and maintenance of the Green Roof at First Horizon Park. The Sports Authority has an MOU with Metro Water acknowledging its responsibility. The request is for a not to exceed amount of \$6,000 for 2025. The Finance Committee recommends approval of the Resolution.

Upon a motion made by Director Hogan and seconded by Vice Chair Duncan, the Board of Directors unanimously approved the Resolution Approving The Expenditure Of Funds Related To Continuing Obligations To Maintain And Comply With Storm Water Control Measures At First Horizon Park .

- C. The Finance Committee also considered approval of the Sports Authority's FY26 Operating and Capital Budgets. The FY26 budget is status quo from FY25 except for office rent. Metro Finance will transfer dollars for rent (approximately \$65k) from an administrative account into the Sports Authority fund. The proposed budget for FY26 is \$1,853,960 with 71%

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(\$1,328,700) comprised of insurance expenses---primarily on facilities, 21% (\$396k) for salaries/fringes for the three staff positions funded by General Fund. Any salary updates

recommended by the Mayor and approved by Council for positions will be funded by the Finance Department. Two Finance positions (Finance Consultant and the Finance Manager) are funded from Sports Authority allocations from the Bridgestone Arena Revenue funds totaling \$206k (including fringes).

First Horizon Park Capital Improvement requests for FY26 were approved by Sports Authority in January and will go to Metro Council for consideration of 4% funds. Projects include: Replacement of Dugout Flooring (\$58,000), Replacement of Suite Seat Parts (\$20,500), Replacement of Two HVAC units serving the concession areas (\$20,807) and Roof Repairs (\$2,350). Total 4% Funding Requests equal \$101,657.

The Finance Committee recommends approval of the budget and capital requests.

Upon a motion made by Director Hogan and seconded by Vice Chair Duncan, the Board of Directors unanimously approved the Sports Authority FY26 Operating Budget and Capital Requests

Facility Questions

- For those who were not in the Finance Committee, Director Adkins requested a brief update from the Predators on the SEC Tournament. Kyle Clayton, Chief Strategy Officer reported that Bridgestone Arena hosted the SEC Men's Basketball Tournament (SEC MBT) March 12-16. Fourteen of the SEC's sixteen teams participated in the tournament during which ESPN aired it's 2025 NCAA Tournament Men's Bracketology show live from the Bridgestone Arena Plaza. Mr. Clayton noted that since the SEC has added two additional teams (University of Texas and University of Oklahoma), expanding its roster from 14 to 16, the rising cost of staffing, hosting additional play sessions, rentals and hospitality, hosting expenses have increased. The Predator's deficit for SEC expenses last year was about \$175k and is anticipated to be about \$400k this year. Because of these additional cost, Powers Management notified the board that they will seek its approval next month for an increase in funding. The proposal will include projections to accommodate a 5% growth rate for the next five years with the option to review cost again in 2030 to determine if further funding adjustments are necessary. Revenue generated from ticket and sales tax will cover the cost increase.
- Director Degrafinreid asked for an update on Nashville's bid for a WNBA franchise. Michelle Kennedy, President & COO, Nashville Predators, shared that an application was submitted for Nashville to be considered for the 16th WNBA team. Bill & Crissy Haslam's committed ownership role of bringing a WNBA team to the city helped to place Nashville in a viable contender position for a franchise team either now or in the near future. Ms. Kennedy continued that 10-12 other cities have submitted applications. While there is no official word on the selection, the media has reported that Cleveland is being seriously considered. Director Hogan asked if the WNBA's strategic expansion plans are known. Ms. Kennedy noted an expansion to 16 teams is the only official number, however, unofficial grapevine conversations have indicated that due to the interest, the WNBA Selection Team

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may expand beyond 16 teams. Director Adkins added that with Bridgestone Arena (a premier facility) being the potential venue for a WNBA team, this places Nashville in an advantageous position.

- Chair Bender announced the Sounds will celebrate its 10th anniversary at First Horizon in April and the season opener is at home on March 28.

Titans DBE Update, New Stadium Monthly Progress Update & Host Facility Report

Adolpho Birch, TN Titans Chief External & League Affairs Officer, reported there has been great progress in the construction realm, workforce efforts and community participation. Kellen DeCoursey, Project Executive, shared an aerial and walk-thru drone view of the construction of the New Nissan Stadium (NNS). The construction project is more than a year underway with two years to go, has seven cranes in and around the bowl and has eclipsed over one million labor hours. The concrete superstructure work will end in May, 275 (10%) seating Bowl precast pieces are being set, 900 plus workers are onsite daily and a future 15m gallon pump station for the East Bank Development is being built in conjunction with Metro Water. A Titans One Community video was also shared featuring Sheila Darton, EA Architects expressing personal and professional appreciation to be involved with a project that will have a positive impact on communities and neighborhoods.

Mr. Birch reported there are 277 firms on the project of which 114 are based in Tennessee. NNS construction project payments to DBE firms are:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Paid Amounts</u>	<u># Firms</u>
Women-Owned Business Enterprise (WBE)	\$ 30,765,482	20
Minority-Owned Business Enterprise (MBE)	21,262,994	26
Small Business Enterprise (SBE)	21,758,835	11
Total Paid to DBE Firms	\$ 73,787,311	57
<i>Total Payments</i>	<i>\$ 316,044,963</i>	

Chair Bender requested clarification of the size of the small businesses on the project to which Mr. Birch stated they can request those numbers from Metro's Business Assistance Office and provide at the next meeting. John Gromos, Tennessee Business Alliance, reported the project is averaging 50k hours per week with approximately 983k hours to date and DBE participating is averaging 70% of the work hours. A celebration is scheduled for Monday, March 24 to honor this milestone. TC2 (Titans Construction Training Camp 3 training week program) has held 5 cohorts of 52 participants, 49 graduates and the 6th cohort is scheduled to graduate 14 next week.

In regards to safety, February saw zero recordable incidents and, as of the end of February the project was proactive by administering 3,500 wellness checks and over 600 workers had Blood Pressure tests administered. Director Pulley asked whether comparable Recordable Incidents data based on the construction project size is available to which Mr. Gromos noted the Recordable Incident Rate captures safety performance and is based on the number of recordables divided by the number of workers. Tennessee's average is rated 1.9, the national average is rated 1.7 and the NNS Construction Project is lower than them both with a 1.17 rating. The goal is to drive the rate to 0.5.

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Mr. Birch acknowledged and welcomed Nashvillian Katie Hill, Senior Vice President of Communication to the Titans organization. He also noted that TBA's GAME Plan (a program designed to help small businesses grow by exposing them to knowledge and training) has concluded Four Sessions and the X Project Destined Program embarked on their participation in the fifth cohort of the ONE Community Sports Venue and Real Estate Development Bridge Program.

Director Hogan noted the media has reported that the governor has submitted a letter of interest to the NFL for consideration of the 2029 Super Bowl to be held at the NNS. He asked about the process and whether it is unusual for a new stadium to be awarded a Super Bowl presence. Mr. Birch stated it is a detailed process and the Titans are putting forth every effort to ensure collaboration and support of the various stakeholders in Tennessee to host a Super Bowl. It is not unusual for such an award to be made. Director Deering added the Minnesota Vikings US Bank Stadium was awarded a Super Bowl appearance while it was under construction to which Mr. Birch affirmed.

Executive Director Fawknorton announced that Fisk University students will host a Sports and Entertainment Career Expo and Panel on March 28 on campus. The students are thankful for the support of Sports Authority facility partners.

Adjourn

Chair Bender announced the next meeting is scheduled for 10:30am Thursday, April 17 at First Horizon Park. The Finance Committee will most likely meet prior to at 9:30am, however staff will confirm. There being no further questions or business, the Board of Directors meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted, Valda Barksdale, Metro Nashville Sports Authority

YouTube Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y4bqdtbnQCw>