

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



**BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MINUTES ~ SPECIAL CALLED MEETING
SPORTS AUTHORITY FACILITY SECURITY LIAISON UPDATE**

MONDAY, AUGUST 25, 2025 | 1:30PM

150 SECOND AVENUE NORTH, NASHVILLE 37201 – CONFERENCE ROOMS 215/216

ATTENDEES

BOARD MEMBERS: Cathy Bender (Chair), Russ Pulley (Facility Security Liaison), Kim Adkins, Victoria Crawford, Dan Hogan, Monchiere' Holmes-Jones

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

Visitors: Kyle Clayton (Preds), Stephen Elliott (Nashville Banner), Heather Hill (Cumming Group), Tucker Karnes (Cooley Public Strategies)

Call to Order

Chair Bender called the Special Called Meeting of the Sports Authority Board of Directors to order and welcomed all.

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

Today's agenda carries no action items; thus, Public Comment is not applicable.

Sports Authority Facility Security Liaison Update

Director Russ Pulley, Facility Security Liaison, gave an overview of his visits to the facilities:

- **Bridgestone Arena** – Met with Chad Ludkey, Senior Director of Public Safety. A follow-up visit is scheduled for Wednesday. NHL representatives declined to meet.
- **First Horizon Park** – Met with Adam English, General Manager/Chief Operating Officer and Doug Scopel, Assistant General Manager/VP of Operations. Director Pulley noted that he also engaged in two electronic follow-up conversations, and he met with MLB's representative responsible for security at the First Horizon Park.
- **GEODIS Park** – Met with Justin Puls, Security Director and Ryan Harbour, Chief of Staff. Director Pulley reported that he had a follow-up visit at their corporate office with Mr. Puls, Mr. Harbour and Lindsey Paola, Chief Business Officer. A follow-up visit with MLS security will be scheduled soon.
- **Nissan Stadium** – Met with David Haywood, Security Director and Haley Davidson, Chief of Staff; President Fawknorton was present. Director Pulley reported he engaged in a follow up meeting with local NFL representatives and he will schedule a follow up meeting with New York NFL representatives.

Continuing, Director Pulley reported that discussions were also engaged with Chris Gilder, MNPD Deputy Chief, Executive Services Bureau, Raymond Jones, MNPD Special Events Commander and Metro Legal counselors Josh Thomas & Tom Cross.

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In addition to MNPd participation, each facility has more than one outside agency involved in security audits and assessments, including, but is not limited to, Red Team Audits, league security oversight, first responders, security training, Department of Homeland Security, 3rd party risk assessments and Stadium Managers Association. Due to the sensitive nature of security measures, security particulars were not disclosed. Director Pulley reported that all teams expressed concerns regarding a potential audit by the Sports Authority, given that the results may be subject to a Public Records Request.

Q & A:

Q1 If the Sports Authority orders a security audit, is the document protected against public records request? *Director Pulley*

A1 There is the possibility of an exception under the Public Records Act where venue security may be protected against public disclosure, however, this may not necessarily exclude the entire document. *Counselor Thomas*

Q2 Can board members have a conversation about the audit without exposing the results of the audit and the audit itself to the public? *Director Pulley*

A2 The Tennessee Open Meeting Act governs the Authority's meetings while the Tennessee Public Records Act governs their documents. To discuss board matters the Authority is required to notice all meetings to the public; thus, any discussions surrounding venue security would have to be in an open meeting. This may cause concern and security infringements. There are no exceptions nor provisions for secret board meetings. *Counselor Thomas*

Q3 Is it possible for board members' emails to not be subject to public release? *Director Pulley*

A3 If board members are conducting Authority related business, those emails are subject to Public Records Request. Any venue security related document exchanged via email presents a security risk; the emails will be prone to hackers, friends and family members having access to the documents. *Counselor Thomas*

Director Hogan commented that best practice would be for President Fawknottson to have access to the audit, not the board members.

Q4 Should an audit conducted by the Authority expose something different than the team's audit, presenting a conflict, does the Authority have the power to demand that the team comply with the Authority's audit? *Director Pulley*

A4 Each team's contract will need to be reviewed as each venue has different provisions related to security. *Counselor Thomas*

Q5 What if the team rejects compliance with the Authority's recommendation which results in an unfavorable event, what is the liability of the Authority? *Director Pulley*

A5 It is possible that the Authority will be liable if an exposed deficiency was not corrected. *Counselor Thomas*

Q6 Can the board go into a private session with Metro Legal? *Chair Bender*

A6 Executive session is permitted only when there is current or pending litigation. *Counselor Thomas*

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Q7 Have we looked at the protocols of how other Sports Authorities are managing venue security assessments? *Director Holmes-Jones*

A7 Not as of yet, however, it is a good idea. *Director Pulley*

Director Pulley further reported that there is an opportunity for the Sports Authority to purchase 600 portable bollards which would primarily be used for Sports Authority owned venues during events that may require public streets to be temporarily blocked from vehicle traffic. Secondary usage would be at the discretion of MNPd. Director Pulley shared estimates of various safety barrier equipment from Meridian Rapid Defense Group, a contractor of Metro.

After several discussions, the board agreed to:

- Continue with Director Pulley serving as the Facility Security Liaison. Should a situation arise where an adhoc venue security committee is needed, one can then be formalized.
- Seek information from peer cities to learn how they are addressing venue security.
- Consider opportunities to receive feedback from the teams.
- Consider what an audit conducted by the Sports Authority might entail.
- Consider the purchase of bollards at the next Finance Committee meeting.

Adjourn

The next meetings are scheduled for Thursday, September 18 at GEODIS Park.

Respectfully submitted, Valda Barksdale, Metro Nashville Sports Authority

Audio File Path:

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Called\8.25.2025 Special Called Meeting Audio Recording