



Hyatt Regency McCormick Place
Regency Ballroom, 2nd Floor
2233 South Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive
Chicago, IL 60616

**Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
April 23, 2024 9:00 A.M.**

Board Members Present: Jeffrey Bethke, Chairman; Don Villar, Vice Chairman; Jorge Ramirez*, Secretary/Treasurer; Dr. Sonat Birnecker Hart; Sam Kukadia; Terrance McGann; Christian Mitchell; Juan Morado; Sherman Wright

*Teleconference

Others Present: Larita Clark, Chief Executive Officer; Matthew Simmons, General Counsel; Jason Bormann, Chief Financial Officer; Pat Allen, Senior Director of Labor Relations and Campus Operations; Jill Kolinski, Deputy General Counsel; Stephanie Lovelace Nieves, Controller; Gloria Juarbe, Director of Human Resources; Pi Tao Hsu, Director of Treasury and Capital Management; Hilary Barker, Director of Procurement; Kelsey Rubin, Director of Collection Sales; Tiffany Wright, Business Diversity Program Manager; Emilie Yount, Associate Director of Communications; Mahesh Mohnalkar, Director of Construction Management; Nicol Chervenak, Director of Planning and Program Management; Vickee Danz, Capital Finance Manager; Cynthia McCafferty, Hawthorne Strategy Group; Samuel Thomas, McCormick Place/OVG360; Mark Bickler, McCormick Place/OVG360; Julia Yob, McCormick Place/OVG360; Rufus Purnell, Contractor; Jim Meyer, Choose Chicago; Matthew Schalk, Hyatt Regency McCormick Place; Pat Doerr, HBAC; Laura Spingola, Trade Resources; Maria Calderon, Compliance Officer and Board Administrator

General Matters: Chairman Bethke asked for a motion to permit Secretary/Treasurer Ramirez to participate via teleconference. Upon motion duly made by Member Villar and seconded by Member Wright, the remaining members present unanimously voted to pass the motion.

- A1. Roll Call: MPEA Chairman Bethke, called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m. and Ms. Calderon called roll.
- A2. Approval of Minutes: Chairman Bethke called for the approval of the minutes from the March 26, 2024 Regular Board Meeting.

Moved by Member Villar, seconded by Member Mitchell, and the remaining members present voted to approve item A2.

Roll call vote. Record as:

Jeffrey Bethke, Chairman – Yes	Terrance McGann - Yes
Don Villar, Vice Chairman – Yes	Christian Mitchell – Yes
Jorge Ramirez, Secretary/Treasurer – Yes	Juan Morado – Yes
Dr. Sonat Birnecker Hart – Yes	Sherman Wright – Yes

The motion passed.

- A3. Public Comment.

There was no public comment.

Report from MPEA Chief Executive Officer. Ms. Clark reported she was honored to testify last week in Springfield to inform legislators about MPEA's impact and advocate for financial appropriations and amendments to the MPEA Act that will allow MPEA to continue fulfilling its mission to attract trade shows, events, and expositions that benefit the City and State. Ms. Clark thanked Mr. Bormann, Mr. Simmons, and Mr. Aderman for joining her in Springfield.



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Ms. Clark reported MPEA made several legislative requests, two of which pertained to appropriations that will help MPEA and Choose Chicago attract new business. First, MPEA requested \$15 million for the MPEA Incentive Grant Program, which enables MPEA to offer incentives to secure events on campus. In Fiscal Year 23, MPEA deployed \$11 million for 31 events, bringing in more than 500,000 visitors and generating \$1.1 billion in economic impact. Second, MPEA requested \$17 million for the Chicago Travel Industry Promotion Fund, which MPEA is required by law to pass onto Choose Chicago. MPEA's partners at Choose Chicago use these funds to market McCormick Place and Chicago for large events.

Additionally, MPEA submitted a request to draw \$262.7 million from state sales tax deposits for their 2025 Expansion Project Bond debt service. MPEA last drew on state sales tax deposits during the COVID-19 pandemic and was able to reimburse the state ahead of schedule.

Lastly, MPEA proposed an amendment to the MPEA Act that will allow MPEA to award contracts up to \$100,000 without opening an official procurement opportunity – the same contract limit state agencies have. Under current law MPEA must go out to bid for any contracts for goods and services which exceed \$10,000 or construction contracts which exceed \$30,000. This change would help MPEA stay competitive in the convention market and increase MBE and WBE participation.

MPEA continues to seek federal support to improve the campus. MPEA recently submitted three grant applications focused on safety and accessibility improvements, which are critical ahead of the DNC. The grant applications ask for support in three key areas: main entrance upgrades, with updates to create a safer and more accessible environment for pedestrians and vehicles alike; security and lighting upgrades to replace aging security cameras and software, fill gaps in camera coverage, and improve visibility throughout the campus with better lighting; and a campus-wide alert system to replace our old infrastructure. MPEA currently has no way to make a campus-wide announcement in the case of a catastrophic event or fire. Installing a new system will ensure people receive the same information at the same time during an emergency.

MPEA continues to be hard at work preparing for the DNC. Approximately 400 people from across the country came through; there was a lot of energy and enthusiasm! In other DNC news, MPEA's law enforcement partners in CPD, the FBI, and the Secret Service started canvassing the neighborhood and speaking with neighbors and nearby businesses about what to expect during the convention in August. MPEA is happy to have DNC engaging with the community and helping them feel at ease and prepared for the event.

MPEA's 2023 Annual Report outlines how MPEA partnered with WEFTEC to make their event one of the most sustainable ever held. A few weeks ago, WEFTEC announced it received the Events Industry Council Sustainable Events Gold Certification. They received high marks for the campus being powered by 100% renewable energy certificates; achieving 45% event waste diversion; prioritizing locally sourced food; and more.

Not only is this a credit to WEFTEC, but also to the incredible campus staff, who worked very hard to help WEFTEC achieve their goal. MPEA worked directly with WEFTEC to develop, implement, and enforce a sustainability plan. For example, the front- and back-of-house staff focused on keeping recyclables and compostables out of the waste stream to minimize waste. For food operations alone, the hospitality staff achieved an 89% waste diversion rate!

Ms. Clark reported during her time as CEO, she has made a very deliberate effort to increase MPEA's visibility within the event industry. Ms. Clark reported she continued that in April when she attended the 2024 CEO Summit from the Society of Independent Show Organizers in Florida. This summit was a great opportunity to speak with and learn from several hundred leaders across the industry – event planners, industry organizations, other venues, and more. Ms. Clark attended multiple meetings, presentations, fireside chats, and roundtables with prospective and current partners.



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After the SISO CEO Summit, Ms. Clark was honored to attend the PCMA Foundation Visionary Awards in Washington, D.C. Ms. Clark would like to extend MPEA's congratulations to a couple of their partners who were honored at the event. First, Ms. Clark was pleased to see Greg O'Dell, president of venue management at OVG360 recognized with a Lifetime Achievement award. Second, Eric Kincaid, Vice President of Sales at Choose Chicago, was a finalist for Professional Excellence Award for Supplier of the Year. Ms. Clark found it encouraging to know such talented and well-respected individuals are on MPEA's side and helping the campus thrive.

Report from Controller. Ms. Lovelace Nieves presented the financial results for March 2024.

Report from Chief Financial Officer. Mr. Bormann presented the tax collections for March 2024.

Report from McCormick Place General Manager. Mr. Thomas reported the following events took place on campus in March: Varsity Brands Cheer Event; PCMA Greater Midwest Chapter Awards; Gathering of Christ Church Passover; The Inspired Home Show; Tonight's Conversation Live & Uncut; MPI Regional Business Exchange; and the Adidas Windy City National Qualifier.

Mr. Thomas reported the following events took place on campus in April: the Digital Summit; MRO Americas; KCF All-Girls National Chess Championship; a Rooftop Garden Tour with Glessner House; the Specialty Coffee Expo; The Future of Protein Production; and Chicago Comic & Entertainment Expo (C2E2). Mr. Thomas reported MRO Americas was in the North and South Buildings with over 17,000 guests; had 99 countries and all 50 states represented; and over 1,800 airline representatives and 50 low-income students from local high schools attended MRO America's Diversity Bridge event in partnership with The Diversity Org.

Mr. Thomas reported We Them One's Comedy Tour had two sold-out shows at Wintrust Arena. Mr. Thomas reported BMN Entertainment previously sold out Arie Crown Theater in October 2023 and in 2024, it added a second show only six weeks prior due to high demand. Mr. Thomas reported Wintrust Arena also hosted Windy City Riot New Japan Pro-Wrestling with three events. A post-event photo of new IWGP World Heavyweight Champion, Jon Moxley, has reached over 409k accounts on Instagram.

Mr. Thomas reported When a Woman's Fed Up was hosted at the Arie Crown Theater with Tony Award-winning actress Jennifer Holliday as part of the ensemble cast. Additional cast included Mike Jerel from Tower of Power, Terrell Phillips from Blackstreet and Patrice Lovely from Tyler Perry's Love Thy Neighbor.

Mr. Thomas reported on OVG Hospitality's April event highlights: Big Chicken opened inside Wintrust Arena. Big Chicken pays homage to Shaquille O'Neal's childhood and offers a unique experience for Chicagoans and visitors alike. Staff underwent rigorous training under the guidance of Big Chicken's Chef and logistics team. OVG Hospitality hosted a special tasting event held on April 11th. Feedback gathered at the tasting guided final adjustments before the weekend's soft opening. Mr. Thomas reported OVG Hospitality hosted the Spring Rooftop Garden Tour with Glessner House which provided OVG Hospitality the opportunity to showcase the versatility of this unique location.

Mr. Thomas reported on upcoming events, including: AANS Annual Meeting (May 3-6) with an estimated 5,000 attendees in the North and South Buildings; Immunology (May 3-7) with an estimated 2,200 attendees in the West Building; Automate (May 6-9) with an estimated 20,000 attendees in the North, South and West Buildings; MathCon Finals Competition (May 11) with an estimated 1,100 attendees in the South Building; the National Restaurant Association Show (May 18-21) with an estimated 56,250 attendees in Lakeside Center, North and South Buildings; International Mr. Leather (May 28) with an estimated 1,000 attendees in the West Building; and ASCO's Annual Meeting with an estimated 37,179 attendees in Arie Crown Theater, Lakeside Center, North and South Buildings.



Mr. Thomas reported on an upcoming event at Arie Crown Theater: Tamia & Joe (May 3).

Review of Covered Actions and Eligible Agreements:

D1. Consideration of Approval of MPEA Financial Plan for Fiscal Years 2025 through 2027.

Moved by Member McGann, seconded by Member Birnecker Hart, and the remaining members present voted approving item D1.

Jeffrey Bethke, Chairman – Yes	Terrance McGann - Yes
Don Villar, Vice Chairman – Yes	Christian Mitchell – Yes
Jorge Ramirez, Secretary/Treasurer – Yes	Juan Morado – Yes
Dr. Sonat Birnecker Hart – Yes	Sherman Wright – Yes
Sam Kukadia – Yes	

The motion passed.

D2. Consideration of Approval of Modified FY24-26 Financial Plan.

Moved by Member Morado, seconded by Member McGann, and the remaining members present voted approving item D2.

Jeffrey Bethke, Chairman – Yes	Terrance McGann - Yes
Don Villar, Vice Chairman – Yes	Christian Mitchell – Yes
Jorge Ramirez, Secretary/Treasurer – Yes	Juan Morado – Yes
Dr. Sonat Birnecker Hart – Yes	Sherman Wright – Yes
Sam Kukadia – Yes	

The motion passed.

D3. Consideration of Approval of New Contract for Property Appraisal Services.

Moved by Member Ramirez, seconded by Member Villar, and the remaining members present voted approving item D3.

Jeffrey Bethke, Chairman – Yes	Terrance McGann - Yes
Don Villar, Vice Chairman – Yes	Christian Mitchell – Yes
Jorge Ramirez, Secretary/Treasurer – Yes	Juan Morado – Yes
Dr. Sonat Birnecker Hart – Yes	Sherman Wright – Yes
Sam Kukadia – Yes	

The motion passed.

D4. Consideration of Approval of MPEA Series 2024 Expansion Project Refunding Bond Finance Team.

Moved by Member Villar, seconded by Member McGann, and the remaining members present voted approving item D4.



Jeffrey Bethke, Chairman – Yes	Terrance McGann - Yes
Don Villar, Vice Chairman – Yes	Christian Mitchell – Yes
Jorge Ramirez, Secretary/Treasurer – Yes	Juan Morado – Yes
Dr. Sonat Birnecker Hart – Yes	Sherman Wright – Yes
Sam Kukadia - Yes	

The motion passed.

D5. Consideration of Approval of Contract Extension for Telecommunication Supplies.

Moved by Member McGann, seconded by Member Mitchell, and the remaining members present voted approving item D5.

Jeffrey Bethke, Chairman – Yes	Terrance McGann - Yes
Don Villar, Vice Chairman – Yes	Christian Mitchell – Yes
Jorge Ramirez, Secretary/Treasurer – Yes	Juan Morado – Yes
Dr. Sonat Birnecker Hart – Yes	Sherman Wright – Yes
Sam Kukadia - Yes	

The motion passed.

D6. Consideration of Reference Contract Extension for Audio Visual Equipment and Supplies.

Moved by Member McGann, seconded by Member Villar, and the remaining members present voted approving item D6.

Jeffrey Bethke, Chairman – Yes	Terrance McGann - Yes
Don Villar, Vice Chairman – Yes	Christian Mitchell – Yes
Jorge Ramirez, Secretary/Treasurer – Yes	Juan Morado – Yes
Dr. Sonat Birnecker Hart – Yes	Sherman Wright – Yes
Sam Kukadia - Yes	

The motion passed.

D7. Consideration of Contract Extension for Teletrol Building Automation System Maintenance Services.

Moved by Member Villar, seconded by Member Mitchell, and the remaining members present voted approving item D5.

Jeffrey Bethke, Chairman – Yes	Terrance McGann - Yes
Don Villar, Vice Chairman – Yes	Christian Mitchell – Yes
Jorge Ramirez, Secretary/Treasurer – Yes	Juan Morado – Yes
Dr. Sonat Birnecker Hart – Yes	Sherman Wright – Yes
Sam Kukadia - Yes	

The motion passed.



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E1. New Business.

There was no new business.

E2. Adjournment.

Chairman Bethke moved to adjourn the meeting moved by Member McGann, seconded by Member Morado, and the meeting was adjourned by unanimous vote of the Board.

Roll call vote. Record as:

Jeffrey Bethke, Chairman – Yes	Terrance McGann - Yes
Jorge Ramirez, Secretary/Treasurer – Yes	Christian Mitchell – Yes
Dr. Sonat Birnecker Hart – Yes	Juan Morado – Yes
Sam Kukadia - Yes	Sherman Wright – Yes

The motion passed.

Time meeting adjourned: 10:10 a.m.

Approved: May 22, 2024


Secretary/Treasurer or Assistant Secretary