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MPEA Corporate Center
Corporate Boardroom, 5th Floor
301 East Cermak Road
Chicago, IL 60616

Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
September 15, 2026

Board Members Present: Jeffrey Bethke, Chairman; Dr. Sonat Birnecker Hart; Sol Flores; Sam Kukadia; Terrance McGann; Sherman Wright

Others Present: Larita Clark, Chief Executive Officer; Matthew Simmons, General Counsel; Jason Bormann, Chief Financial Officer; Larry McKinley, Chief Security Officer; Stephanie Lovelace Nieves, Controller; Gloria Juarbe, Director of Human Resources; Tom Ryan, Senior Director of Plant Operations and Facilities; Jennifer Diaz, Assistant General Counsel; Molly Kievit, Executive Director of Commercial Strategy; Hilary Barker, Director of Procurement; Brittany Robbins, Director of Marketing & Communications; David Kennedy, General Manager of Entertainment; Vickee Danz, Senior Director of Development; Pi Tao Hsu, Director of Treasury and Capital Management; Alexander Buckles, Director Of Business Diversity; Tiffany Wright, Business Diversity Program Manager; Tony Lightner, Director of Internal Audit; Mae Hill, Senior Director Of National Accounts; Mark Bickler, Senior Director of Sales; Rachel Genschoreck, Assistant General Counsel; Cynthia McCafferty, Hawthorne Strategy Group; Matt Schalk, Hyatt Regency McCormick Place; Rupi Jain, Huntington Securities, Inc.; Scott Carlson, PFM; Dustin Arnheim, Choose Chicago; Robert Leff, Choose Chicago; Samantha Costanzo, Huntington; Kelly Hutchinson, Katten; Pat Doerr, Hospitality Association; Jim Meyer, Choose Chicago; Kristen Reynolds, Choose Chicago; Angela Hearn, Choose Chicago; Alan Bell, Charity & Associates; Cahal Mowery, Choose Chicago; Lisa Nucci, Choose Chicago; Maria Calderon, Compliance Officer and Board Administrator

General Matters:

A1. Roll Call: Chairman Bethke, called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m. and Ms. Calderon called roll.

A2. Approval of Minutes: Chairman Bethke called for the approval of the minutes from the July 21, 2026, Regular Board Meeting.

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

Roll call vote. Record as:

Jeffrey Bethke, Chairman – Yes	Sam Kukadia – Yes
Dr. Sonat Birnecker Hart – Yes	Terrance McGann – Yes
Sol Flores – Yes	Sherman Wright – Yes

The motion passed.

A3. Public Comment.

There was no public comment.

Report from MPEA Chief Executive Officer. Ms. Clark introduced Chris Konecki as General Manager of McCormick Place. Ms. Clark reported that Mr. Konecki brings a unique combination of operational expertise, industry leadership, and customer perspective to the role. Having spent 16 years at McCormick Place before leading operations for the Chicago Auto Show, he understands the campus from both the venue side and customer side of the business.

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Ms. Clark reported that the International Manufacturing Technology Show (IMTS) was on campus and yesterday she joined them for the show kick off with a button-push, the IMTS 2026 version of a ribbon cutting. IMTS is the largest trade show in the Western Hemisphere. This year, they are anticipating more than 100,000 manufacturing professionals, exhibitors and industry leaders coming to McCormick Place. As one of the largest and most important trade shows in North America, IMTS showcases the scale, expertise, and operational excellence that define the campus. IMTS is nearing its 100-year anniversary, and 54 of those years have been spent in Chicago.

Ms. Clark reported August started with the Black Women Expo and the Global Business Travel Association, GBTA. This year was also the Black Woman's Expo 31st year, continuing as one of the nation's largest and longest-running events focused on African American women, featuring a "We Matter!" theme along with beauty, health, financial empowerment, culture, entrepreneurship, and family-centered programming. A unique aspect of the GBTA Convention 2026 was its global reach, bringing together more than 5,500 attendees from 47 countries, including travel buyers responsible for over $46 billion in annual business travel spending. The event brought nearly 400 exhibitors, 90 education sessions, and extensive networking opportunities, generating an estimated $18.5 million economic impact for Chicago.

Ms. Clark reported the campus hosted the 2026 Biennial International Convention of the American Federation of State County & Municipal Employees. This is one of the largest gatherings of public service workers in North America. The convention served as the highest governing body of AFSCME, where delegates from locals, councils, and retiree chapters across the nation came together to debate resolutions, establish union priorities, elect leadership, and shape the future direction of the organization. The American Chemical Society's National meeting included more than 10,000 scientific presentations, hundreds of exhibitors, and over 15,000 attendees. This was also a notable year for the Society celebrating its 150th anniversary. This group is returning in 2029, 2030, and 2032 with additional years under consideration.

Ms. Clark reported on the impact of the supplier diversity efforts. Recently, MPEA received a heartfelt message from Ida Nelson, owner of Ida's Artisan Ice Cream & Treats, expressing how meaningful her partnership with McCormick Place and OVG Hospitality has been for her business. "McCormick Place and OVG haven't just given us visibility, you've trusted us with business, created meaningful opportunities, respected the value of our product, shared your resources, advocated for us, and now are helping open doors to distribution and opportunities beyond the McCormick Place campus. That is what partnership looks like to me." Ms. Clark stated that Ida's story is exactly why these programs matter. What began as a small local business has grown significantly through opportunities on the campus, demonstrating how McCormick Place can serve not only as an economic engine for Chicago, but also as a catalyst for entrepreneurship and community growth.

Ms. Clark shared another significant sustainability milestone for the campus. McCormick Place recently achieved Platinum Level Certification under the Events Industry Council's Sustainable Event Standards, advancing from the Gold Level Certification earned last year to the program's highest distinction. This recognition reflects the continued leadership in integrating environmental stewardship and social responsibility across the operations while helping event organizers deliver more sustainable events. In fact, fewer than 10 other facilities worldwide have achieved this certification. Ms. Clark congratulated Cullyn Doerfler, Senior Sustainability Manager, and Joshua Figueroa, Sustainability Manager, whose leadership, dedication, and hard work have been instrumental in helping McCormick Place achieve this important recognition. Their efforts, alongside those of the broader sustainability team and partners, continue to drive meaningful progress and set a high standard for the industry.
Ms. Clark reported that yesterday, the rooftop garden was featured on NBC Chicago's Matt in the Morning. Filmed last month, three segments highlighted the annual honey harvest at the McCormick Place Rooftop Garden. The video was played to show part of a segment featuring Chef Michael and some of the incredible food he and the hospitality team put together using the produce harvested right on the rooftop. Ms. Clark reported it is bird migration season and the

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film that has been applied to Lakeside Center continues to be effective. Since August 1, there have only been 3 collisions.

Ms. Clark reported that the Hall C escalator project was complete. This project was driven directly by customer feedback, as event organizers and exhibitors consistently told the campus that Hall C was difficult to find and felt disconnected from the rest of the campus. In fact, the concept originated from a customer sketching the solution on a napkin. Today, that idea is a reality and a testament to how seriously MPEA takes customer feedback. The new escalator improves visibility and wayfinding, enhances traffic flow, and makes one of the premier exhibit halls more accessible for customers and attendees. Ms. Clark thanked the Development and Operations teams for making this project happen in time for IMTS.

Finally, Ms. Clark wanted to recognize Larry McKinley, Chief Security Officer, for representing McCormick Place and MPEA at the Coliseum Summit US 2026 at Wrigley Field. Mr. McKinley joined venue and sports industry leaders from across the country for a discussion focused on security, public safety, emergency preparedness, and life safety in large public venues. His participation reflects the expertise that exists within the organization and reinforces McCormick Place's reputation as a leader in creating safe, secure, and exceptional experiences for guests, employees, and partners.

Report from Controller. Ms. Lovelace Nieves presented the financial results for July and August 2026.

Report from Chief Financial Officer. Mr. Bormann presented the tax collections for July and August 2026.

Report from Choose Chicago: Ms. Reynolds reported her team is growing and they have a new Vice President of Communications and Content, Meryl Vissel. Ms. Reynolds presented a video showcasing the City. Ms. Reynolds introduced Lisa Nucci, Chief Marketing Officer, who presented on planner interest and messaging. Ms. Nucci reported on value messaging - stronger resources to tell value stories. Ms. Nucci reported that they are working on customization for every trade show because they each have a unique audience they are trying to attract.

Ms. Nucci reported that they are getting more granular and surgical when they talk about advertising to potential new trade shows. They are advertising by industry and audience backed by new research.

Ms. Nucci reported on content-built side-by-side with MPEA which includes exploring: black-owned business for events; a day at McCormick Place; how to plan a small meeting; the best time to meet in Chicago; hotel collections; what's new on the Magnificent Mile; disability-owned businesses for your next event; why medical meetings Choose Chicago; and search unique venues.

Ms. Nucci reported on what they are looking ahead: a new campaign, Winning Winter Campaign; a sharper MPEA partnership by making the whole convention experience shine; a bolder messaging playbook; and richer storytelling assets letting planners tell the story.

Ms. Reynolds addressed the Board's inquiry about Artificial Intelligence (AI) and stated that Choose Chicago has engaged a company called Unchained, which is an AI specialist. The new hire of the VP of Communications and Content will assist with AI efforts.

Mr. Arnheim reported on the year-to-date results on convention center events on the books by peak size for 2018-2030. Mr. Arnheim reported that 2028 is back to pre-pandemic numbers with 19 events, 2029 with 18 events, and 2030 with 22 events. Mr. Arnheim reported on 2026 major wins: Splunk, 2027; American Urological Association, 2029; American Nurses Association, 2030; American College of Chest Physicians, 2033; HIMSS, 2035; and American Diabetes Association, 2041. Mr. Arnheim reported that they are only 85% where they were last year through the end of August, a little bit behind.

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Mr. Leff reported on their acquisition list, which was developed approximately three years ago in collaboration with MPEA and the Chicago Convention Alliance. The original list of 250 has events that rotate both domestically and internationally. There were events missing from the list and it has been enhanced to 350 to create a larger universe of events. The list consists of a combination of corporate, association, and legacy events that are occurring in other cities that can be brought to Chicago. Mr. Leff reported they attend events at trade shows and customer events. Recently, they attended the America Society of Association Executives annual meeting in Indianapolis and partnered with MPEA for client dinners.

Mr. Leff reported on recent initiatives: capitalizing on emerging innovation/technology industry sectors (including quantum and clean energy); targeting destinations under construction (i.e. Dallas, Salt Lake City); targeting Las Vegas business as they prioritize sports tourism and entertainment; launching Winning Winter Campaign; and sending "Proactive Proposals" with "first and best offers" to defined targeted accounts.

Review of Covered Actions and Eligible Agreements:

C1. Consideration of Approval of New Master Professional Services Contracts for Professional Design, Engineering, & Consulting Services.

Moved by Member Kukadia, seconded by Member Wright, and the remaining members present voted approving item C1.

Roll call vote. Record as:

Jeffrey Bethke, Chairman – Yes	Sam Kukadia – Yes
Dr. Sonat Birnecker Hart – Yes	Terrance McGann – Yes
Sol Flores – Yes	Sherman Wright – Yes

The motion passed.

C2. Consideration of Approval of Ordinance No. MPEA 26-02 – Authorizing the Issuance, Sale and Delivery of the Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority's McCormick Place Expansion Project Refunding Bonds of 2026.

Moved by Member McGann, seconded by Member Wright, and the remaining members present voted approving item C2.

Roll call vote. Record as:

Jeffrey Bethke, Chairman – Yes	Sam Kukadia – Yes
Dr. Sonat Birnecker Hart – Yes	Terrance McGann – Yes
Sol Flores – Yes	Sherman Wright – Yes

The motion passed.

C3. Consideration of Approval of Fiscal Year 2027 Affirmative Action Plan.

Moved by Member Birnecker Hart, seconded by Member McGann, and the remaining members present voted approving item C3.

Roll call vote. Record as:

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Jeffrey Bethke, Chairman – Yes	Sam Kukadia – Yes
Dr. Sonat Birnecker Hart – Yes	Terrance McGann – Yes
Sol Flores – Yes	Sherman Wright – Yes

The motion passed.

C4. Consideration of Approval of Contract Not-to-Exceed Increase for Information Technology Solutions, Products & Services.

Moved by Member Wright, seconded by Member Flores, Member Kukadia voted present, and the remaining members present voted approving item C4.

Roll call vote. Record as:

Jeffrey Bethke, Chairman – Yes	Sam Kukadia – Yes
Dr. Sonat Birnecker Hart – Yes	Terrance McGann – Yes
Sol Flores – Yes	Sherman Wright – Yes

The motion passed.

C5. Consideration of Approval of Resolution No. MPEA 26-04 – Adopting the Amended and Restated Bylaws and Regulations of the Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority.

Moved by Member Wright, seconded by Member McGann, and the remaining members present voted approving item C5.

Roll call vote. Record as:

Jeffrey Bethke, Chairman – Yes	Sam Kukadia – Yes
Dr. Sonat Birnecker Hart – Yes	Terrance McGann – Yes
Sol Flores – Yes	Sherman Wright – Yes

The motion passed.

C6. Consideration of Approval of New Reference Contract for Carpet Floor Mats, Carpet Tiles, Vinyl Tile, Supplies and Accessories.

Moved by Member Kukadia, seconded by Member Wright, and the remaining members present voted approving item C6.

Roll call vote. Record as:

Jeffrey Bethke, Chairman – Yes	Sam Kukadia – Yes
Dr. Sonat Birnecker Hart – Yes	Terrance McGann – Yes
Sol Flores – Yes	Sherman Wright – Yes

The motion passed.

C7. Consideration of Approval of New Contract for Annual Hoist Inspection and Motor Control Repair Services.

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Moved by Member Wright, seconded by Member Birnecker Hart, and the remaining members present voted approving item C7.

Roll call vote. Record as:

Jeffrey Bethke, Chairman – Yes	Sam Kukadia – Yes
Dr. Sonat Birnecker Hart – Yes	Terrance McGann – Yes
Sol Flores – Yes	Sherman Wright – Yes

The motion passed.

C8. Consideration for Approval of Contract Extension for Elevator and Escalator Maintenance Services.

Moved by Member Wright, seconded by Member Kukadia, and the remaining members present voted approving item C8.

Roll call vote. Record as:

Jeffrey Bethke, Chairman – Yes	Sam Kukadia – Yes
Dr. Sonat Birnecker Hart – Yes	Terrance McGann – Yes
Sol Flores – Yes	Sherman Wright – Yes

The motion passed.

D1. New Business.

There was no new business.

D2. Adjournment.

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

Roll call vote. Record as:

Jeffrey Bethke, Chairman – Yes	Sam Kukadia – Yes
Dr. Sonat Birnecker Hart – Yes	Terrance McGann – Yes
Sol Flores – Yes	Sherman Wright – Yes

The motion passed.

Time meeting adjourned at 11:02 a.m.

DocuSigned by:
Jorge Ramirez
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Approved: October 27, 2026 Secretary/Treasurer or Assistant Secretary