

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**  
**of the**  
**MASSACHUSETTS CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY**  
**July 20, 2023**

A meeting of the Massachusetts Convention Center Authority (“Authority”) was convened on July 20, 2023, at the John B. Hynes Veterans Memorial Convention Center (the “Hynes”), 900 Boylston Street, Boston, MA and via MICROSOFT TEAMS MEETING OR JOIN BY TELEPHONE: DIAL-IN NUMBER 1-857-702-2232; CONFERENCE ID: 585 163 740#.

Members in attendance at the Hynes or via MICROSOFT TEAMS were the following: Emme Handy, Carlos Aramayo, Cindy Brown, Sheena Collier, Xiomara Alban DeLobato, Michael F. Flaherty, Ashley Groffenberger, Meg Mainzer-Cohen, Dr. Aisha Miller, Paul Sacco, Khushbu Webber, and Gwill York. Cynthia Brown and Michael Donovan did not attend.

Staff members in attendance at the Hynes or via MICROSOFT TEAMS were the following: David Gibbons, Christopher Donato, Mike Esmond, Lily Daley, Diane DiAntonio, John Donahue, Erin Anderson, Devin Taylor, Robert Noonan, Dave Silk, Phil Crohan, Brendan Flynn, Joanne Pages, and Mark O’Leary.

Also in attendance, Sean Dolan, Joseph Flanagan, Michael Bocchino, and James Boucher of MGM Springfield and Herschel Herndon the new Chief Diversity Officer for the Authority and Board Special Counsel Tom Kiley.

**I. ROLL CALL**

Chair Emme Handy called the meeting to order at 9:36 a.m., and a quorum was established by a roll call.

Emme Handy	Present
Carlos Aramayo	Present
Cynthia Brown	Not Present
Sheena Collier	Present
Xiomara Alban DeLobato	Present (Remote)
Michael Donovan	Not Present
Michael F. Flaherty	Present
Ashley Groffenberger	Present
Meg Mainzer-Cohen	Present
Dr. Aisha Miller	Present
Paul Sacco	Present
Khushbu Webber	Present
Gwill York	Present

## **II. MINUTES**

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the minutes of the June 15, 2023, Board Meeting were unanimously approved by roll call vote.

Emme Handy	Abstain
Carlos Aramayo	Abstain
Sheena Collier	Abstain
Xiomara Alban DeLobato	Abstain
Michael F. Flaherty	Abstain
Ashley Groffenberger	Yes
Meg Mainzer-Cohen	Abstain
Dr. Aisha Miller	Abstain
Paul Sacco	Yes
Khushbu Webber	Yes
Gwill York	Abstain

## **III. MINUTES**

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Executive Session minutes of the June 15, 2023, Board Meeting were unanimously approved by roll call vote.

Emme Handy	Abstain
Carlos Aramayo	Abstain
Sheena Collier	Abstain
Xiomara Alban DeLobato	Abstain
Michael F. Flaherty	Abstain
Ashley Groffenberger	Yes
Meg Mainzer-Cohen	Abstain
Dr. Aisha Miller	Abstain
Paul Sacco	Yes
Khushbu Webber	Yes
Gwill York	Abstain

## **IV. CHAIR TO ADDRESS THE BOARD**

Newly appointed Board Chair Emme Handy introduced herself and welcomed the new Board Members.

## **V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

David Gibbons welcomed the new Board Members and congratulated them on their appointments.

Normally I would report to you how busy we are and the recent highlights and details. Suffice it to say that we are in the midst of one of the busiest and most successful summers in all of our

facilities. However, today I would like to step back and introduce you to our leaders and get a quick satellite view of the responsibilities and achievements of each team. The Authority is a complex economic engine that annually induces three quarters to a billion dollars of economic activity across the Commonwealth. Achieving this takes a dedicated team of very focused managers, directing and guiding hundreds of talented, aspiring, and diverse employees and also managing complex specialty teams through our contract partners.

Before we start, allow me to share a few key lessons learned during my time here. Horizons – never in my career have I dealt with such far off horizons. We have sales of events through 2038; “build it and they will come” is “build it they are coming!” Capital planning and process – our portfolio has a theoretical replacement cost of \$100 million a year. Depreciation – we, the government, do not pay taxes so we disregard depreciation at our peril. It is the cost of wear and tear. We need to not just stay ahead of that unrelenting reality but strategically add to our asset base and wisely direct and steward the resources in hand. This combination of unique timeframe and daunting capital needs tempers the strategic decision making here at the Authority. I look forward to working with you as we calibrate our compass and steer the Authority to the future horizon.

Let me touch on that Portfolio. The Hynes is the birthplace of the Authority. With a working group from the Back Bay community and the major hotels, we are currently embarking on a four-year plan to stabilize the key systems, bring it into compliance with current codes, address decades of deferred maintenance and projects and stand it up for another three decades. We will be updating you in September.

At the BCEC and the South Boston campus, the core building is in the “middle age” of maintenance and enhancements, sunsets, and warranties! New amenities will include the “No Name” cafe and a podcast studio to be called “Unconventional Boston”. The Lawn On D has been a very successful outdoor event space which has been a commercial and community success story. We are in the process of updating the previously issued white paper for the Pavilion on D, “a compelling urgency”. East of D, there is currently an RFP process to develop an eco-system around eastside hotels. We will be seeing submissions in September. For parking, there is a potential in the future to create a westside garage that would enter from both Summer and Haul roads. We hope to be exploring this exciting opportunity with all stakeholders by year’s end.

In Springfield, at the Mass Mutual Center, with the arena, convention space, new parking garage, and event space, we expect to have a five-year strategic plan updated in September.

Regarding the Boston Common Garage, Transportation Director Shannon Smith will update you on the key role we play in the community with our parking, buses, ferries, and are great transportation staff.

Before we start with the listed speakers, I would like to introduce the soon-to-be-newest member of our team - Herschel Herndron. Herschel will be joining us next week as our Chief Diversity Officer. Herschel has flown in from Minneapolis to be here today and will officially be on board next week.

Herschel will play a critical role in shaping and sustaining efforts that advance a diverse, equitable, and inclusive culture across the Authority, while making diversity a priority for the organization in developing its workforce, working environment, regional convention industry partnerships, and procurement strategies. The Authority is committed to providing a diverse and inclusive environment for everyone who works at or visits our facilities, and we are thrilled to have Herschel on board to help us deliver on that commitment.

While we are discussing diversity, I want to congratulate our Director of Purchasing, Brendan Flynn, and his team for once again being recognized by the Supplier Diversity Office for their “outstanding participation in the Commonwealth’s Supplier Diversity” efforts. With our huge purchasing power, it is crucial that we use that power wisely.

Now let me introduce you to our team.

1. Finance - Michael Esmond, Chief Financial Officer
2. Legal - Christopher R. Donato, General Counsel
  - a. Introduced Special Counsel Tom Kiley
3. Events – Diane DiAntonio, General Manager
4. Human Resources – Devin Taylor, Director of Human Resources
5. Building Services and Capital Projects - John Donahue, Chief of Operations & Capital Projects
6. IT / Public Safety – Robert Noonan, Chief Information Security Officer
7. Communications – Dave Silk, Director of Communications & External Relations
8. Transportation – Shannon Smith, Director of Transportation
9. Boston Convention Marketing Center (“BCMC”) – Milton Herbert, Jr., Executive Director
10. MassMutual Center (“MMC”) – Sean Dolan, General Manager

## **VI. NEW BUSINESS**

### **1. Committee Assignments**

Chair Emme Handy informed the Board that there are currently three Committees: Executive Committee; Administration, Finance and Personnel Committee; and Development and Construction Committee. The primary responsibility of each Committee is as follows:

#### **Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee of the Board is charged with the responsibility of guiding the Authority's efforts on future strategy or expansion, board oversight during the implementation of any major undertaking or policy formation, acting as the Board's compensation committee, engaging the Executive Director on setting annual performance goals and emerging strategic business issues or needs, including but not limited, to annual review of executive director duties, responsibilities, performance, and such other matters as the Board Chair shall direct.

#### **Administration, Finance and Personnel**

The Administration, Finance and Personnel Committee of the Board shall serve as the Authority's Audit Committee and shall be charged with the responsibility of reviewing the annual budget and personnel policies, reviewing operations and service contract awards greater than \$250,000, reviewing and assisting in the formulation of the Authority's long term financial planning, and such other matters as the Board Chair shall direct.

#### **Development and Construction**

The Development and Construction Committee of the Board responsibilities shall include the review and oversight of major construction, including BCEC, Hynes, Boston Common Garage and MassMutual Center capital projects, design and construction contract awards greater than \$250,000, as well as oversight of engineering issues relating to the protection and maintenance of the Authority's physical assets and such other matters as the Board Chair shall direct.

Each individual Committee will have a Chair who will be appointed by the Board Chair.

In addition, the Board has the following officers: Vice Chair (currently Board Member Cindy Brown); Treasurer (traditionally the Secretary of A & F or his/her designee); Secretary (currently vacant); Assistant Treasurer (traditionally the Authority's CFO – Michael Esmond); and Assistant Secretary (traditionally the Authority's General Counsel – Christopher R. Donato).

Chair Emme Handy informed the Board that the Board will vote to ratify the Committee assignments, the appointed Committee Chairs, and the Board Officers at the next Board meeting.

## 2. Calendar Update

Chair Emme Handy informed the Board that she intends to follow the calendar schedule created by the previous Board Chair until the end of 2023. The schedule will be forwarded to the new Board Members as soon as possible.

## 3. NAACP Event Update

Executive Director David Gibbons gave the Board an update on the planning for the upcoming NAACP event at the BCEC.

In 2019, Mayor Walsh asked us to organize an effort to secure the 2020 NAACP convention for Boston. A wish, an aspiration but an underlying business deal no less. With Milt Herbert, Michael Munn, and Caitlin Naigle on Sales, Joyce Leveston, our then General Manager, along with Joclynne Bynoe on our Event and Operations Team, Martha Sheridan the newly arrived CEO of Meet Boston, and Lori Nelson from the Mayor's Office of Diversity, we crafted the deal and put out the red carpet for the National Site Committee. That is when I met Michael Curry, the Head of the New England Region for NAACP. With Michael's guidance and incredible determination, we were able to bring it across the finish line. It was this Board who then guaranteed 'the deal' so that the ink could dry on the contracts.

Later that summer, we flew off to the 2019 NAACP Convention in Detroit to extend a warm invitation for the following year in Boston. Then Covid hit and we had to find new dates and here we are.

That last morning in Detroit, we hosted and served a special breakfast for the NAACP leadership as they wrapped up their event. Doug Williams had flown out with us to curate the culinary side of the breakfast to highlight some of the great food that can be found in Boston. Waiting tables with me and helping Doug autograph Boston aprons was Joclynne Bynoe who now, four years later, gets to land this one. Joclynne is the Event Manager of this convention and is going to give you a look at what is in front of us and who is on the VVIP list.

Joclynne informed the Board the Vice President, amongst others, is expected to attend the NAACP event.

## **VII. OLD BUSINESS**


No old business.

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

A motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned by a unanimous roll call vote at 11:37 a.m.

Emme Handy	Yes
Carlos Aramayo	Yes
Sheena Collier	Yes
Xiomara Alban DeLobato	Yes
Michael F. Flaherty	Yes
Ashley Groffenberger	Yes
Meg Mainzer-Cohen	Yes
Dr. Aisha Miller	Yes
Paul Sacco	Yes
Khushbu Webber	Yes
Gwill York	Yes

ATTEST:

  
Christopher R. Donato  
General Counsel

Dated: 9/18/2023