

LUZERNE COUNTY CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY MEETING

FEBRUARY 9, 2022

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Luzerne County Convention Center Authority was called to order by Chairwoman Donna Cupinski on February 9, 2022 at 12:08PM. Chairwoman Cupinski asked all those present to please silence their cell phones.

The Pledge of Allegiance, led by Carmen Ambrosino, was said by all in attendance.

ROLL CALL – PRESENT: Carmen Ambrosino, Peter Biscontini (via telephone), Donna Cupinski, John Pickering, Eugene Rafalli (arrived shortly after Roll Call), Michelle Reilly (via telephone), John Ruckno, Tony Ryba (arrived shortly after Roll Call), and Tom Woods. Also present were members of ASM Global Administration – General Manager Will Beekman, Assistant General Manager/Director of Finance Carrie Grantuskas, and Director of Marketing Steve Poremba. Mary Jo Kishel of Rosenn, Jenkins & Greenwald and Jerry Lynott from the Times Leader were in attendance. Neal DeAngelo and Gary Zingaretti were absent.

Chairwoman Cupinski welcomed all to the February 2022 meeting of the Luzerne County Convention Center Authority.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Chairwoman Cupinski read a letter from Board Member Neal DeAngelo who resigned from the Board, citing career obligations.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

There were no public comments for this meeting.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

Chairwoman Cupinski asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the January 19, 2022 Regular Meeting as drafted.

A motion was made by Tom Woods and seconded by John Pickering to approve the minutes of the January 19, 2022 Regular Meeting as drafted.

Chairwoman Cupinski asked if there were any questions or discussion and there were none.

ON THE QUESTION: All those in favor of approving the meeting minutes as drafted signified by saying “AYE”. **OPPOSED:** No one opposed the motion. **ABSTAIN:** No one abstained.

The motion carries.

PAYMENT OF BILLS:

Chairwoman Cupinski asked for a motion to approve the payment of the bills totaling \$73,280.35.

A motion was made by John Ruckno and seconded by Tom Woods to approve payment of the bills totaling \$73,280.35.

Chairwoman Cupinski asked if there were any questions or discussion and there were none.

ON THE QUESTION: All those in favor of the motion to accept the payment of bills totaling \$73,280.35 signified by saying “AYE”. **OPPOSED:** No one opposed the motion. **ABSTAIN:** No one abstained.

The motion carries.

An Executive Session was held at this time.

The Regular Meeting reconvened at 12:53PM at which time Tony Ryba and Gene Rafalli joined us after having been stuck in traffic.

GENERAL MANAGER’S REPORT

Thanks, Donna! Good afternoon, everyone.

We’re gearing up for a busy but exciting end to this week. We have Penguins hockey this Friday night. The team is playing pretty well of late, and if the season ended today, they would find themselves sneaking into the playoffs. So, there’s a lot of season left, but they are playing well right now.

Then, as soon as the game ends on Friday, we need to perform an overnight changeover from hockey to basketball, because we are hosting the Harlem Globetrotters on Saturday night. We are really excited about this one. Tickets are selling very well, and while I always give kudos to Steve for marketing efforts, I think he would admit that this specific event is getting a nice boost from “Mighty” Mia Hopkins. Mia, if you somehow haven’t heard, is a Pittston Area graduate who is the newest member of the Harlem Globetrotters, and she will be making her Globetrotters debut in on our building on Saturday night. So that’s a fun story, and we’re excited to be a part of it.

Also, between now and next meeting we will host PIAA High School Basketball Championships on March 3-5 and Blippi on March 8th. Anyone with younger children or grandchildren who like to watch YouTube knows exactly who Blippi is. And then, just two days after our next meeting, we will host John Mulaney who is kicking off his arena comedy tour right here on March 11. Tickets are selling really well for that one and we are expecting a sellout when all is said and done. Coincidentally, John is also hosting Saturday Night Live just prior to visiting us on March 11, so that will give us a nice boost as we get closer to that event.

Lastly, I just want to let everyone know that we recently hired a new Event Manager. Her name is Katherine Sokirka, and she's a rockstar. She has jumped right in and has made an immediate impact. I've known Kat for quite some time, so I'm not surprised by how quickly she has made a difference here, but it's certainly something we are thankful for.

Chairwoman Cupinski asked if there were any questions for Will.

Carmen Ambrosino asked about the likelihood annually, per entertainer, asking them to sign some type of merchandise for a celebrity auction at the end of the year, invite the public in, and have the proceeds go to local charities.

It would be a way for the Arena to say thank you to the artists and the community and to recognize these charities. It would be nice to do that annually; it is a win-win – the artist wins, the Arena wins, and the charity wins. Will Beekman stated that it is a great idea. He added that some artists won't participate, but the majority will. Some of the artists worry that if they sign something that it will end up on eBay and someone will make money on it. It may be hard for the artist to say no if the proceeds are going to a charity. Other venues do that – the Bryce Jordan Center has a wall tile that they have everyone sign and eventually put them up as a Wall of Fame of everyone that has ever been there. Carmen offered to help and be part of it. Chairwoman Cupinski stated the we have a "Hall of Fame" by the locker rooms. Steve Poremba has had a prominent local artist (John O'Connell) do some paintings and have the artists sign it but the unfortunate part is that not too many people get to see it.

Chairwoman Cupinski asked if there was anything else for Will and there was not.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Chairwoman Cupinski stated that we will not have our committees finalized until we find out who has been appointed to the Board. The standing committees will report at every meeting and the ad-hocs will only report when they are active. We have a couple of ad-hoc committees that, as you know, sometimes have no monthly reports. We will keep the active ones on the agenda. When we get a Right to Know request, we will put that on the agenda. With that being said, we will start with our standing committee reports.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE:

Tony Ryba stated that the committee had a meeting on January 31, 2022 via telephone. Chairwoman Cupinski offered a great update and report on the outstanding items in transitioning them over to us – the pedestrian bridges, and the parking lot and paving projects that we are looking at, along with the HVAC repairs and changes. Tony would like to have a standing Buildings and Grounds Committee meeting before the regular monthly meeting if it works for everyone. There are two (2) action items:

- Tony would like to do an assessment on our HVAC equipment.

Chairwoman Cupinski stated that Tom Leonard, who was an engineer that we met, did a report for us on the bridges (it was very thorough) so when we started talking about our

HVAC, she called him to see if he could do it or could he recommend someone. Right off the bat, he was very excited to recommend Smith Miller Associates. Jeff (Nealon) met with the gentleman and they did a walk-thru of the building and it was very informative for both parties. She would like them to do an assessment of our equipment needs so that we do not spend any money that we do not have to. What we would like to do is allow the Buildings and Grounds Committee to authorize for that assessment to be done. We don't have a dollar amount however, because we get ourselves backed into a corner when we put our cards on the table. So, if you will, allow the committee to do that hiring.

Tony Ryba made the motion to hire Smith Miller Associates to do the assessment on our HVAC equipment and it was seconded by Tom Woods.

Chairwoman Cupinski asked if there were any questions or discussion and there were none.

ON THE QUESTION: All those in favor of the motion to hire Smith Miller Associates to perform an assessment on our HVAC equipment signified by saying "AYE". **OPPOSED:** No one opposed the motion. **ABSTAIN:** No one abstained.

Motion carries.

- Tony Ryba stated that the second thing that they discussed at the meeting on January 31, 2022 (and this comes from my other life at the Hazelton School District) where we use an energy consultant to look and broker our energy costs for electricity and natural gas. It would not cost us anything, but I am asking if we can get them to take a look, as an outside set of eyes, what we are paying as far as electricity and natural gas. All they would need would be a couple of our energy bills for those two (2) items.

Tony Ryba made the motion to authorize Provident Energy Consultants to access the Authority's energy invoices and usage in order to perform an analysis to determine if there are any opportunities for energy cost savings and the motion was seconded by Gene Rafalli.

Chairwoman Cupinski asked if there were any questions or discussions and there were none.

ON THE QUESTION: All those in favor of the motion to authorize Provident Energy Consultants to access the Authority's energy invoices and usage in order to perform an analysis to determine if there are any opportunities for energy cost savings signified by saying "AYE". **OPPOSED:** No one opposed the motion. **ABSTAIN:** No one abstained.

Motion carries.

Tony Ryba added that since Chairwoman Cupinski did such a great job on Buildings and Grounds and was always hands-on, he would like to keep her involved in these projects that were started under her Chairmanship. Chairwoman Cupinski thanked Tony.

FINANCE COMMITTEE:

Tom Woods reported that the committee held a meeting today prior to the regular board meeting and they reviewed and approved the new budget. The committee recommends that the Board accepts this new budget. Tom stated that if there are any questions on the new budget that Carrie Grantuskas is with us and can answer them. Tom asked Carrie if she thought that something should be added and Carrie replied no. Carrie stated that they have budgeted for a net operating income for the Arena Operations of \$404,182. As you know, that is before Authority expenses or revenues. And net income after non-operating of \$2,677,846.

Tony Ryba made a motion to adopt the budget and John Pickering seconded the motion.

ON THE QUESTION: All those in favor of the motion to adopt the budget signified by saying "AYE". **OPPOSED:** No one opposed the motion. **ABSTAIN:** No one abstained. Motion carries.

LAND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (ad-hoc):

Michelle Reilly referred to Mary Jo Kishel for a report. Mary Jo reported that they were very pleased to hear from Wilkes-Barre Township this morning and that they have been working with the engineer on the new traffic light. The traffic light will have installed within it a control panel that would allow the WB Township police to set that traffic light, as well as the light at the I81 Exit, on blinking yellow both before and after Arena events. That solves a major issue. At this point the Land Development Committee is looking to see if there are any additional issues that we need to address at this point so that they can finally finalize these.

Chairwoman Cupinski stated that it has been a long time and this news is very encouraging. Tom Woods added that the (WB Township) Mayor is very enthused and impressed.

Chairwoman Cupinski has asked Carmen Ambrosino to take over the Land Development Committee and he has accepted. If there is anything like a ribbon cutting, they will be sure to invite Michelle Reilly. Chairwoman Cupinski thanked Michelle for all that she has done to get us to this point.

OLD BUSINESS:

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS:

There was no new business.

GOOD OF THE ORDER:

- Chairwoman Cupinski read the Resolution for Neal DeAngelo III thanking him for his

vision, leadership, and guidance in keeping the Mohegan Sun Arena one of the most visited institutions in the Northeastern PA region.

Chairwoman Cupinski asked for a motion to adopt the Resolution. The motion was made by Carmen Ambrosino and seconded by John Ruckno to adopt the Resolution.

ON THE QUESTION: All those in favor of the motion to adopt the Resolution signified by saying "AYE". **OPPOSED:** No one opposed the motion. **ABSTAIN:** No one abstained.

The motion carries.

Chairwoman Cupinski thanked everyone.

Chairwoman Cupinski stated that she still did not know when the county was going to make the appointments to the board. It was not addressed at the meeting last night.

- Chairwoman Cupinski announced that Michelle Reilly would be singing the National Anthem at the hockey game on Saturday, February 19, 2022 and that it is important to support her. She added that if anyone is interested in attending the game, please let her know and she will come up with a game plan.

ADJOURNMENT:

The motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Tom Woods and seconded by Michelle Reilly.

ON THE QUESTION: All those in favor of the motion to adjourn the meeting signified by saying "AYE". **OPPOSED:** No one opposed the motion. **ABSTAIN:** No one abstained.

The motion carries.

Chairwoman Cupinski thanked everyone.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:12PM.

APPROVED:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carmen Ambrosino", written over a horizontal line.

Mr. Carmen Ambrosino, Secretary