

# LANSING ENTERTAINMENT & PUBLIC FACILITIES AUTHORITY

## BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES

### OCTOBER 13, 2025

At 3:02 p.m. Chairwoman Maureen McNulty-Saxton called the monthly meeting of the LEPFA Board of Commissioners to order in the Governor's Room located at the Lansing Center; 333 East Michigan Avenue; Lansing, Michigan 48933.

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Paul Collins, Kenric Hall, Dustin Howard, Larry Leatherwood, Charles Mickins, Maureen Saxton, Crystal Thomas, Rawley Van Fossen.

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** Lolo Robison, Danielle Lenz, Tracie Kent

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Kirby Doidge, Paul Ntoko, Ryan Tess, Joy Tebheras, Lilly Konhle, Donna Roy, Lisa Wilton, Bryan Crowe – Legends Global; Kristy Doak- Choose Lansing; Greg Venker (City Attorney)

#### **I. CALL TO ORDER:**

**Chair Saxton called the LEPFA Board meeting to start at 3:02 P.M..**

#### **II. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE AGENDA:**

There were no changes to the agenda.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Hall **SECOND:** Commissioner Howard **MOTIONED CARRIED**

#### **III. LEGENDS GLOBAL**

##### **• LANSING COMPLEX GENERAL MANAGER SELECTION**

**Board Chair Maureen Saxton asked the Committee to provide an update for discussion.**

**Bryan Crowe reported for the committee the following:**

In May, the LEPFA Board approved the selection of ASM Global, now operating as Legends Global, to assume venue management responsibilities for the Lansing Complex. As part of this transition, Legends Global launched a comprehensive nationwide search to identify and appoint the next General Manager to lead the Lansing Complex. The search was initiated to ensure a fair, competitive, and comprehensive process resulting in the appointment of a leader capable of advancing the organization's mission, supporting staff and community stakeholders, and aligning with Legends Global's operational standards and long-term objectives.

This memorandum outlines the recruitment process, evaluation criteria, candidate review, and the Selection Committee's recommendation for final approval by the Board of Directors.

#### **Recruitment and Outreach**

The search was structured to attract a broad and diverse pool of qualified professionals with experience in public assembly venues, convention centers, stadiums, and large-scale event operations.

The position was publicly posted on the Legends Global Careers Portal, which receives national exposure, and was further distributed through LinkedIn, CareerBuilder, and Indeed to capture candidates across multiple professional networks.

Recognizing the value of targeted industry outreach, the committee also authorized paid advertising and promotional placement on the International Association of Venue Managers (IAVM) career portal — the primary national resource for executive-level venue professionals. Additionally, the opportunity was actively promoted during the IAVM National Conference in July, ensuring that senior leaders from across the U.S. were aware of the opening.

This combination of general and industry-specific outreach successfully produced a nationwide applicant pool with a wide range of operational, financial, and leadership.

#### **Application Volume and Timeline**

A total of 46 applications were received. The initial posting was released on May 20, 2025, and reposted on July 23, 2025, to ensure continued visibility and access to additional qualified candidates.

Applications were reviewed on a rolling basis. By August 12, 36 applications had been evaluated, with 10 advancing to corporate HR phone interviews. From those, 8 candidates were invited to participate in virtual interviews with Bryan Crowe, Regional Vice President of Legends Global, who conducted the initial interviews on behalf of the Selection Committee.

The HR phone interviews concluded in early September, and the virtual interviews were completed by September 11. An additional 10 applications were received after August 12, but none met the required experience threshold for consideration.

#### Evaluation and Selection Process

The review process was conducted in multiple stages to ensure fairness and rigor:

1. Qualification Screening - All applications were reviewed to confirm minimum requirements including facility management experience, financial oversight, community and stakeholder engagement, and personnel leadership.
2. HR Pre-Screening - Qualified candidates participated in structured interviews conducted by Legends Global's HR team to assess career background, compensation expectations, willingness to relocate, and alignment with organizational values.
3. First-Round Interviews - Eight candidates advanced to virtual interviews with Mr. Crowe.

These discussions focused on management philosophy, operational experience, leadership approach, and understanding of complex multi-venue operations.

4. Final Interviews - Three finalists were invited for in-person interviews with the Selection Committee at the Lansing Center in late September. Each finalist met with committee members collectively and discussed priorities, challenges, and leadership vision for the Lansing Complex.

#### Candidate Evaluation Summary

Following the final interviews, two candidates emerged as strong contenders for the position, each offering distinct strengths and perspectives.

Tristan Wright brought more than two decades of institutional knowledge and familiarity with the Lansing Complex's operations, budget structures, and community stakeholders.

Her experience represents continuity and depth of understanding. The committee observed, however, that her leadership approach reflected a more historical and operational focus, with limited articulation of a long-term strategic vision. Some legacy relationships with community stakeholders would also require intentional rebuilding to support the next phase of the organization's growth.

William (Tony) Watson, the current Interim General Manager, demonstrated high energy, strong visibility, and collaborative leadership throughout both the interview process and his service in the interim role. Since assuming the position on July 1, 2025, Tony has successfully led the transition of the Lansing Complex under Legends Global management, ensuring continuity in operations and stability for staff. Under his leadership, measurable improvements have been made in operational efficiency, communication, and overall employee morale. Tony has been highly engaged with staff, encouraged open communication and accountability, and has become a visible presence at events, in the community, and across departments. He has also taken initiative in building partnerships with local civic and business leaders, positioning the Lansing Complex as a community-oriented and forward-thinking organization. His management style reflects accessibility, humility, and strategic alignment with Legends Global's culture and standards. While he continues to build experience at the GM level, the committee found him to be adaptable, coachable, and well-suited for continued growth in the role.

#### Committee Recommendation

After comprehensive evaluation of all candidates, the General Manager Selection Committee unanimously recommends the appointment of William (Tony) Watson as the next General Manager, Lansing Complex, Legends Global.

The committee believes that Mr. Watson's leadership, commitment to staff development, operational insight, and alignment with Legends Global's management philosophy position him to lead the Lansing Complex effectively and strategically. His demonstrated success during the interim period — guiding a complex organizational transition while strengthening culture and morale — reflects the qualities the committee believes are most essential for this role.

Upon Board approval, Mr. Watson will continue in his current capacity until formal appointment and contract execution are finalized.

Bryan opened the floor for questions and comments.

**Commissioner Leatherwood:** What was the selection that made the overall decision in selecting Tony? What are the expectations of the GM?

**Bryan Crowe on behalf of the committee:** Tristan Wright had a more status quo method and in response in accordance with the RFP the City of Lansing and the board put that out as they wanted to see change. The expectations are to show the changes requested in the RFP.

**Commissioner Collins:** From the contract, the board is not selecting the candidate, just the approval or not approval of the candidate that was brought to them from the committee. Just wanted to make that clear for all. What would be the next steps?

**Bryan Crowe on behalf of the committee:** They would do another targeted search for another candidate.

**Chair Saxton** asked if there were any other questions about the General Manager or for the Selection Committee. Hearing none. Do we have a motion to accept the hiring committee's recommendation of Tony Watson as the General Manager.

**MOTION: Motion to accept the hiring committee's recommendation of Tony Watson as the General Manager Commissioner Hall SECOND: Commissioner Howard**

**Yes votes:** Paul Collins, Kenric Hall, Dustin Howard, Maureen Saxton.

**Commissioner Leatherwood** requested the vote be put on hold.

**Ex-Officio Rawley Van Fossen commented,** the two Ex-Officio members do not have a vote but on behalf of the City of Lansing and the Mayor they were in favor of the process of selecting the new General Manager. Question was made if the vote had to be the whole board for majority or just those present. It was determined by the City Attorney a simple majority of those present.

**MOTION: Motion to accept the hiring committee's recommendation of Tony Watson as the General Manager Commissioner Hall SECOND: Commissioner Howard**

**Yes votes:** Paul Collins, Kenric Hall, Dustin Howard, Maureen Saxton.

**No votes:**

**Abstained:** Charles Mickens, Larry Leatherwood.

**Motion Passes.**

IV. COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS: None

V. PUBLIC COMMENT: None

CLOSED SESSION:  
PERSONNEL DISCUSS

**MOTION: Go into closed sessions to discuss a personnel matter.**

**Commissioner Hall SECOND: Commissioner Mickens**

3:34 Board went into closed session.

I. CALL TO ORDER:

3:54 P.M. Chair Saxton called the LEPFA Board meeting back regular session.

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Paul Collins, Kenric Hall, Dustin Howard, Larry Leatherwood, Charles Mickens, Maureen Saxton, Crystal Thomas (Ex-Officio), Rawley Van Fossen. (Ex-Officio).

**MOTION: To accept the agreement with the modifications.**

**Commissioner Howard SECOND: Commissioner Hall  
MOTIONED CARRIED**

IX. AJOURNMENT:

At 3:56 p.m. the regular monthly meeting was adjourned.

**MOTION:**

**Chairwoman Maureen McNulty-Saxton SECOND: Commissioner Kenric Hall MOTION CARRIED**

**THE NEXT MONTHLY MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR:  
TUESDAY, October 28, 2025  
8:00 a.m.  
LOCATION: Governors Room Lansing Center**

Respectfully submitted,

Kirby Doidge, Recording Secretary

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