

LANSING ENTERTAINMENT & PUBLIC FACILITIES AUTHORITY

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES

August 25th, 2026

At 8:09am, Vice Chairperson Collins called the LEPFA Board of Commissioners to order in Rooms 101-102 located at the Lansing Center; 333 East Michigan Avenue; Lansing, Michigan 48933.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Paul Collins, Dustin Howard, Charles Mickens, Tracie Kent, Patrick Spyke, Crystal Thomas (EO), Rawley Van Fossen (EO)

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Kenric Hall, Lolo Robison, Deyanira Nevarez (EO)

OTHERS PRESENT: Tony Watson, Kirby Doidge, Kristy Doak, Rachel Beatty, Ryan Tess, Ruth Young, Elizabeth Krochmalny City of Lansing, Julie Pingston Choose Lansing, Jack Alexander

Vice Chairperson Collins called the LEPFA Board meeting to start at 8:11am.

III. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE AGENDA:

1. The Finance Committee suggested adding the following to the agenda: review and approval of the quantitative incentive portion of the FY26 Incentive Evaluation.

Motion to approve the agenda as presented with the addition of the amendment proposed

MOTION: Commissioner Spyke **SECOND:** Commissioner Mickens **MOTIONED CARRIED**

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

1. Julie Pingston – Choose Lansing

- a. The hotel and motel ballot proposal for Ingham County passed—62% yes and 38% no.
- b. Choose Lansing is now working with the Ingham County Board of Commissioners on how the money will be used for community assets.
 - i. The Lansing Center is at the top of the list according to everyone Julie has spoken to.
 - ii. There will be more discussion about it at the end of October.
 1. This month, they will figure out how they want to use the money and how it will be collected.
 2. This will also be going to the hotels so that they can adjust how they work with the county.

V. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

1. June 23 Board Meeting

Motion to approve the previous minutes as presented

MOTION: Commissioner Howard **SECOND:** Secretary/Treasurer Kent **MOTIONED CARRIED**

VI. REPORTS

1. Chairperson – Kenric Hall

- a) Chairperson Hall could not attend.

2. Legends Global Report – General Manager / Assistant General Manager

a) Tony Watson

- i. He introduced the commissioners to the new Director of Food and Beverage, Ruth Young.
 1. She unfortunately doesn't have a report because she started work last week.
 2. Kirby Doidge will cover financials for Food and Beverage in his report.
- ii. The Lansing Center has a new HR manager, Frances Clark, who started a couple weeks ago.
 1. She was unable to attend the board meeting but will be introduced at the next one.
 2. She is posting a few open positions in the kitchen to prepare for the busy season.
- iii. The Lansing Center has a few more open positions.
 1. There's always been an Operations Manager position open, but now they are

actively looking to fill it, since Mike Horning, the Maintenance Manager, retired.

- a. The department will be realigned, and the Operations Manager will take that role's place.
 2. There is also a Sponsorship and Activation Manager position open, which will take over special events and any fundraising or sponsorship related items.
 3. There are Foodservice Supervisor positions open.
 - a. One of the current supervisors is leaving for culinary school.
 4. There is an Executive Sous Chef position open.
 - a. This will hopefully be filled internally.
- iv. Rachel Beatty, marketing manager, is now attending the board meetings.
 1. She has taken over with Tony operations for this year's Silver Bells and the Silver Bells 5K.
 2. The first committee meeting for the event happened this past Friday and was very well attended and received.
- v. Groesbeck Golf Course is still waiting on the health inspection report for their new kitchen equipment.
 1. When that happens, they can be fully operational with the new food and beverage concession offerings.
- vi. The Lansing Center was slower in June and July, but staff took that opportunity to do several maintenance projects around the building.

3. Finance Committee – Tracie Kent & Kirby Doidge

a) Tracie Kent

- i. The Finance Committee met last week and reviewed financials for July 2026.
- ii. They also had a conversation about the City of Lansing and capital discussions.

b) Kirby Doidge

i. July Financials

1. Lansing Center

a. Revenue

- i. The center brought in \$168,000 in revenue, which is under the anticipated budget by \$32,000.
 1. They recognize the lack of appropriate revenue appropriation that is not currently filled and want to catch up on the revenue.
 2. The \$75,000 with a \$0 revenue per actual is signage and promotion outside of Silver Bells.
 - a. With this, they are hoping to increase sponsorship and promote events that bring in revenue.
 - b. Nothing is on the books yet, but they are hoping to capture some of that increase by the end of this year.

- ii. Compared to last year, which was \$114,000, this year was \$182,000.

b. Expenses

- i. They are under the anticipated budget by \$61,000.
 1. The center hoped to activate this month with sales incentives, but unfortunately, the events they were looking for were not in the area.
- ii. The finance committee discussed the utilities line item and its difference this year.
 1. The wildfire smoke was being sucked into the building with the outside air, so the utility budget had to go toward sucking the smoke out.
 - a. The finance committee asked Kirby to estimate the total cost of fixing this, which was \$15,000.

c. Overall

- i. After adding in all non-operating together with revenue and expenses, the center was ahead of the anticipated loss for the month by \$61,000.
- ii. They are ahead of the anticipated budget by \$56,000, year-to-date.

1. Question from Secretary/Treasurer Kent to Kirby

Doidge: For the Lansing Center, under the LEPFA amount, why is the month-to-date negative and the year-to-date positive?

- a. Kirby said that it was an error and would be fixed.

2. Groesbeck Golf Course

a. Revenue

- i. The course was under the anticipated budget by \$38,000.
 1. The delayed health inspection for the new kitchen equipment did affect concession revenue.
 2. The rounds and cart fees, the biggest revenue drivers, were also down.
 - a. This is due to the wildflower smoke and the couple days of extreme heat.
 - b. It is an estimated \$10,000 loss in rounds.

b. Expenses

- i. The course incurred all the expenses of a normal month but not as many golfers.

c. Last Year Comparison

- i. Expenses were down compared to the previous year.
- ii. This month, there was \$178,000 revenue. Last year, it was \$181,000.
 1. **Question from Commissioner Spyke to Kirby Doidge:** What governmental agency is responsible for the kitchen equipment inspections?
 - a. It is the County Health Department.

3. Jackson Field

a. Expenses

- i. Maintenance of equipment and supplies and materials are at zero.
 1. They paused on those repairs and connected with the City of Lansing on the best action moving forward.
 2. Lots of upgrades need to happen, and they are trying to decide on the right process, especially for items over \$10,000.
 3. There are still quotes on items that need to be fixed immediately.
- ii. The field was under the anticipated budget by \$17,000.
 1. This appropriation will be used for HVAC upgrades.

Motion to accept the July financial reports as presented

MOTION: Commissioner Spyke SECOND: Commissioner Howard MOTIONED CARRIED

- ii. The Finance Committee discussed the capital projects and the stadium's needs.
 1. HVAC is the largest Jackson Field issue.
 - a. In the last three years, there has been \$250,000 in HVAC repairs.
 - b. There is also \$273,000 in quoted HVAC repairs that have not been completed.
 2. These capital items were paid with the appropriation instead of using pulled over salaries and wages, largely due to cash.
 - a. The appropriation mainly went to spin down the reserves to the article of incorporation threshold, which is 60 days operating. At Jackson Field, they are close to that deadline.
 3. In the June committee meeting, they compared the cost of repairing to replacing HVAC. They met with Trane and developed a plan.
 4. They are sending the large capital items to the city for approval or denial as LEPFA does not have the budget to fix them.
 - a. They also have a tentative meeting scheduled to follow up with Commissioner Thomas and Kirby Doidge regarding it.
- iii. The Finance Committee wants approval for the quantitative incentive portion of the FY26 budget, as qualitative will be discussed during new business.
 1. Revenue for 2026 was 7.2 actual; the anticipated budget revenue was 6.7 for a positive budget variance of \$500,000.
 2. Expenses for 2026 were 7.7, and 7.8 was budgeted for a positive budget variance of \$161,000.

3. The following is the positive budget variance total in pulling out the capital and depreciation for each part of the complex:
 - a. There was \$668,000 variance for the Lansing Center.
 - b. There was \$145,000 variance for Jackson Field.
 - c. There was \$300,000 variance for Groesbeck Golf Course.
 - d. In total, the anticipated operating was beat by almost \$830,000, which is the full incentive for corporate.
 4. Per the contract, the quantitative is 25% of the total positive budget variance, which is \$75,000 for corporate—half the management fee.
 - a. The Finance Committee needs approval to award the \$75,000 total based on the contract.
- iv. **Question From Commissioner Spyke to Kirby Doidge:** Weren't there no staff bonuses last year because of the transition in management?
1. Kirby confirmed that that was correct. He was still completing the LEPFA audit when Legends Global took over management.

Motion to approve the FY26 quantitative incentive evaluation in accordance with the recommendation of the executive committee

MOTION: Commissioner Spyke SECOND: Commissioner Mickens MOTIONED CARRIED

4. Personnel Committee – Dustin Howard

- a) The committee discussed many roles that are being integrated, changing, or moving.
- b) Commissioner Howard complimented Tony Watson and the staff for communicating well and doing a fantastic job.

5. Strategic Planning Committee- Charles Mickens

- a) Commissioner Mickens deferred to Tony for the report.
- b) The Strategic Planning Committee met and briefly discussed the qualitative KPIs. They also discussed plans with the changing and adding of staff roles and positions.

6. Director /Staff Report

a) Kristy Doak, Director of Sales & Service

- i. In June, the following two events stood out: IBEW and the Michigan Environmental Compliance Conference.
 1. IBEW hosted a one-day gala that brought in 950 people and over \$80,000 in food and beverage.
 2. The Michigan Environmental Compliance Conference hosted a three-day conference which brought in 922 people, 80 exhibitors, and about \$112,000 in food and beverage dollars.
- ii. In July, the following two events stood out: Capital City Comic Con and Mid-American Coin.
 1. Capital City Comic-Con is a usual Lansing Center event and, this year, it brought in 6,574 people, 260 exhibitors, 350 hotel rooms that staff are aware of, and a total economic impact of over \$900,000.
 2. Mid-America Coin is a new event for the center and for Michigan and will be back in the facility for at least two more years.
 - a. It was a five-day public event that brought in over 500 people.
 - b. The US Mint was also present.
- iii. The sales team is working on securing more events for the summer.
 1. The city is more of a business than a leisure town, so the sales team is focusing on more public events related to that.
 2. Kristy thanked Mady Rush for her research and her getting the client Jurassic Quest, which is a dinosaur and LEGO event for July 2027.
 3. The team also secured Tattoo Fest Lansing for August 2027.
- iv. The sales team has also secured other events throughout the year.
 1. The same group who hosted the Michigan Environmental Compliance Conference committed two additional events for 2027.
 - a. Their conferences typically range between 600 and 1,000 people.
 2. They also secured the American Society of Plant Biologist Midwest section for 2027.
- v. The sales team hosted a few high-level site visits this month.
 1. Sweet Adelines International had a site visit, which is a choral singing group looking for an event in 2028-2029.
 2. The Michigan Potato Industry Commission had a site visit and is looking at an event for 2030-2031.
 3. Michigan Farm Bureau has a site visit for their annual meeting next week.
 - a. They've been in Grand Rapids for 30 years, but the Lansing Center

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- is one of their two final choices that is not Grand Rapids.
 - b. They are currently looking at a 3-year contract for late November or early December of 2028-2030.
 - vi. The sales team is creating a customer advisory board, a select group of meeting planners or people who host events within the facility and the Lansing region.
 - 1. It is a way to gather candid feedback and to identify emerging trends. They are researching how to grow as a facility and how to compete better with other locations.
 - 2. They will likely meet quarterly, but for now, the group will start with a one-day, moderated collaborative meeting in November.
 - a. Six people are currently confirmed, but they are looking to have 9-10 people total.
 - vii. There has been great progress on the customer surveys since May.
 - 1. Every category score increased from 2-5% each.
 - a. Overall experience went from 48% to 52%.
 - b. Meeting needs went from 58% to 63%.
 - c. Working with partners went from 63% to 67%.
 - 2. 83% of groups responded, which is higher than the average.
 - viii. **Comment from Commissioner Spyke:** He thanked the staff for doing the comic con events. These types of events are widely talked about in his institution, and his staff loves them. They appreciate any initiatives that bring that quality of life.
 - b) **Ryan Tess, Director of Operations**
 - i. In June and July, they started painting the first floor, and it was done on the date of appearance.
 - ii. The elevator tile project has started and is currently underway.
 - 1. There was a delay in the tile shipment.
 - 2. Two of the three elevator facades are now completed.
 - iii. Internet sales are starting the fiscal year strong.
 - 1. They are about 27% more than the previous fiscal year.
 - 2. August has typically had the biggest sales to date, so they're hopeful for next month's report.
 - c) Groesbeck Golf Course was slower in June and July.
 - i. They completed the carpet and flooring in the clubhouse.
 - ii. They improved most of the bunkers, also known as sand traps.
 - d) He thanked Commissioner Howard for his help with Trane, who is doing work out at Jackson Field.
 - i. Ryan met with them last week to possibly amend the contract and free up funds for new units.
 - ii. In theory, staff would take the excess funds and go slower on the repair process, doing one unit every 3-4 years.
 - e) The baseball season is ending at Jackson Field, around September 6th, and then operations will winterize the stadium.
 - f) **Rachel Beatty, Marketing Manager**
 - i. **Groesbeck Golf Course**
 - 1. The Films and Fairways events, with Lansing Public Media Center, has finished.
 - a. The three following movies were shown over the summer:
 - i. There was the Legend of Bagger Vance, which had 30 people in attendance.
 - ii. There was Happy Gilmore, which has 120 plus in attendance.
 - iii. There was The Greatest Game Ever Played, which had 20 people in attendance.
 - b. Next year, this event will show popular movies rather than golf themed ones to increase more overall attendance.
 - c. They may also send out home mailers rather than just post on social media—to get the community that's within walking distance to show up.
 - 2. The marker dedication and poster unveiling event had 25 in attendance.
 - 3. The Groesbeck Golf Course Championship was brought back after several decades, with 13 in attendance.
 - a. Kirby Doidge, the Assistant General Manager, participated and won.
 - 4. The Parent and Child scramble, a family tournament, had 11 teams.
 - 5. There is one more upcoming event to close out the Centennial season, the Superintendent's Revenge.
 - a. It is a four-person scramble on October 11th.

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6. The earned media to date is a total of 30,000 reach and a publicity value of 1,000.
- ii. **Lansing Center**
 1. There were the Grand Concert Series events, which are still ongoing.
 - a. On June 18th, there was the Jazz Big Band with an estimated attendance of 100 people.
 - b. On July 9th, there was Be Kind, Rewind Unplugged, which had 175 plus in attendance.
 - c. On July 23rd, there was Full House Band, which had 50 plus in attendance.
 - d. On August 20th, there was supposed to be the Dangling Participles, but their event was cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances.
 - i. It has been rescheduled for September 10th.
 - e. On August 27th, there will be Don Middlebrook.
 2. Margarita Fest has been cancelled because it was not cleared for this year.
 - a. Hopefully, it can happen next year.
 - iii. **Silver Bells in the City**
 1. Fundraising to date is \$213,000.
 - a. Last year's goal was \$238,000.
 2. They are looking for a Grand Marshal and a Vendor Village sponsor, the latter being a first for this event.
 - a. They are also looking for a Community Sings singer.
 - b. If any board members have suggestions, please email Rachel.
 3. There are 15 parade applications currently, which are all due September 4th.
 - a. Vendors typically apply at the last minute, so staff are expecting a large increase in applications soon.
 4. There are 4 band applications, which are also due September 4th.
 5. There are 25 vendor applications, which are due September 30th.
 6. There are 23 tree nominations, and the harvest date is November 4th or 5th, depending on where the tree is located.
 - a. The delivery will be November 7th in front of the Capitol, which is about a week later than normal.
 - i. This will be better because the tree will be sparser.
 7. The drone and fireworks contracts are pending.
 8. There is a new race director for Silver Bells 5k, Joe Dimambro, the executive director at Playmakers Foundation.
 9. There will potentially be a race livestream through Gray Media, which is Fox 47/WILX.
 - iv. **Social Media**
 1. There were 86 posts, with 110,000 impressions and 7,000 engagements.
 - a. Engagement rate is 6.4, and post link clicks are 470.
 2. The following is a breakdown for each property:
 - a. With Google searches for the Lansing Center, there were 237,000 impressions, 14,900 clicks, and 6.3 click through ratio.
 - i. The Google Analytics were 9,469,000 views and 9.4 active users.
 - b. For Groesbeck Golf Course, there were 166,000 impressions, 8,410 clicks, and 5.1 click-through ratio.
 - i. The Google Analytics were 11,000 views and 4.4 active users.
 - c. For Silver Bells in the City, there were 4,000 direct visits, 4,800 views, and 3,600 unique visitors.
 - v. **Email Marketing**
 1. There were nineteen campaigns sent out, which is a total of 225,000 sends, 8,887 openings, 3.5% click unique open, and over 1,000 net growth.
 2. There were 16 campaigns sent out for Groesbeck.
 - a. There was a total send of 121,000, over 3,500 opened, 7.1 unique quick open, and a net growth of 2,900.
 - vi. Email marketing is transitioning from MailChimp to Klaviyo.
 1. It will save money and is run through Legends Global's email marketing system, which will streamline and centralize.
 2. The engagement rate with MailChimp has not been great and also often sends emails to the spam folder, so hopefully, this change will fix those issues.
 3. Legally, SMS text messaging isn't typically possible, but the legal department is looking into that.

VII. COMMISSIONERS AND STAFF COMMENTS

None

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

None

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. FY26 Qualitative Incentive Evaluations

- a. In June, the board put the following 5 KPIs in place and set the following metrics during committee meetings in July and August:
 - i. Employee satisfaction
 1. Due to when these were voted on, staff did not have time to get an employee satisfaction score.
 - ii. Customer satisfaction
 1. Standards for year one of transition was 50%. The final number came in at 52%.
 2. Customer response rate standard for year one was 60%, and the final number was 89%.
 - iii. Contractual obligations
 1. They looked at number of meetings held and the revenue for each entity.
 - iv. Building assets
 1. They evaluated where the building was in better condition than prior to takeover.
 - a. With the carpeting, painting, and various other upgrades, the committees agreed that this KPI had been met.
 - v. Economic impact
 1. In the first half of 2026, there were 171 total events, 132,000 total attendance, and an estimated economic impact of 19 million.
 2. The 2025 economic recap was the following: 191 events, 109,000 attendance, and an estimated economic impact of 9.5 million.
 - a. These numbers come from Choose Lansing, which uses the Anderson Economic Impact Study 2023 Visitor Related Economic Benefit Study.
 - i. They provide the dollar figure estimate for a single day meeting and for an overnight stay.
 - ii. **Question from Tony Watson to Kirby Doidge:** Are these estimates or solid numbers?
 1. These are projections based on the numbers they had at the time. Choose Lansing calculates based on calendar year, whereas LEPFA does it based on the fiscal year.
 - b. Overall recommendation from the strategic and executive committees is to award in full the qualitative portion of the incentive program.
 - i. **Comment from Vice Chairperson Collins:** The board members knew that the beginning of the fiscal year would be messier because they were implementing the contract on the fly. They have good suggestions for improvements in 2027 for the KPIs. He supports the recommendation to award in full.
 - ii. **Question from Commissioner Van Fossen:** Why is only qualitative being discussed here?
 1. Quantitative was discussed during the finance committee report because it is essentially an award to the management company. Qualitative is related to staff.
 2. **Statement from Commissioner Van Fossen:** On behalf of the mayor's office, they have seen major improvements, and their expectations have been far exceeded. He cannot wait to see what else Tony Watson and Legends Global has in store.

Motion to approve the FY26 qualitative incentive evaluation in accordance with the recommendation of the executive and strategic committee

MOTION: Secretary/Treasurer Kent **SECOND:** Commissioner Howard **MOTIONED CARRIED**

Question from Commissioner Spyke: He asked Kirby to repeat the economic impact numbers from the previous year before adjournment.

Comment from Secretary/Treasurer Kent: She had a discussion with David Buckenberger from Choose Lansing about the economic impact of an overnight hotel guest. She did not remember the exact

numbers and did not want to be quoted on them but was impressed to see the impact a daily guest has. It was higher than she expected, and she was encouraged by the positive impact.

Julie Pingston commented that they do the study every third year and that the numbers are probably higher since the last time they did it.

- X. **ADJOURNMENT - Date, Time, Location of Next Meeting:**
At 9:09 AM, meeting was adjourned.

MOTION: Commissioner Howard **SECOND:** Secretary/Treasurer Kent **MOTIONED CARRIED**

NEXT MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR:

SEP 22, 2026 8:00 a.m.

Location: The View – Jackson Field

Respectfully submitted,

Emily Shaul, Recording Secretary