LANSING ENTERTAINMENT & PUBLIC FACILITIES AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES
December 10, 2024

At 8:07 a.m. Chairwoman Maureen McNulty-Saxton called the special meeting of the LEPFA Board of Commissioners to order in rooms 201-202 located at the Lansing Center; 333 East Michigan Avenue; Lansing, Michigan 48933.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Paul Collins, Kenric Hall, Dustin Howard, Larry Leatherwood, Danielle Lenz, Charles Mickens, Charles Randall (Ex-Officio), Maureen McNulty-Saxton, and Rawley Van Fossen (Ex-Officio).

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Desiree Kirkland (Ex-Officio), and James Stajos.

OTHERS PRESENT: Kasey McFadden, and Tristan Wright - Lansing Entertainment & Public Facilities Authority; Joe Abood -Lansing City Attorney's Office; Rachel Beatty, Mindy Biladeau, Kirby Doidge, Mike Horning, Dan Matwiczyk, Paul Ntoko, Angela Sees, Justice Shankel, Joy Tenjeras, Ryan Tess, Greg Webber, and Emily Woodard- Lansing Center Staff; Julie Pingston, David Buckenberger- Choose Lansing; Kate Hude- Dykema AMS; Mike Ellis- Lansing State Journal; and Jack Alexander- Public.

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE AGENDA: There was no agenda for this meeting.

There was a brief hold as the Board waited for the presenter to arrive.

Jake Brower entered at 8:16 a.m.

Larry Leatherwood entered at 8:16 a.m.

Tristan Wright entered at 8:21 a.m.

V. REPORTS:

A. RFP PANEL'S REPORT- Chairwoman Maureen McNulty-Saxton introduced Jake Brower- Chief Strategy Officer for the City of Lansing, and the LEPFA Request for Proposal (RFP) Distributor to present on the LEPFA RFP committee's findings and recommendation.

1. **PROPOSAL OVERVIEW:** Jake Brower explained that in August, an RFP was initiated to explore management options for Lansing's entertainment facilities: the Lansing Center, Jackson Field Stadium, and Groesbeck Golf Course. The goal of the RFP is to ensure high-quality operations, maintain facilities, support capital improvements, and establish financial stability with reduced City funding.

2. **RFP TIMELINE AND EVALUATION CRITERIA:** Jake Brower noted that the RFP committee comprises a joint evaluation committee with representatives from various entities, including Jake Brower (City of Lansing), Kenric Hall (LEPFA Board), David Buckenberger (Choose Lansing), Zac Clark (Lansing Lugnuts), and Katherine Hude (Dykema AMS), a Lansing Center client. The RFP process, launched in August, included informational meetings, facility tours, and proposal submissions by October 8, 2024.

3. **EVALUATION CRITERIA AND DESIGN OF THE PROCESS:** The committee conducted interviews with five respondents and scored proposals based on organizational capacity, method of approach, budget, and maintenance strategy. The process prioritized transparency and rigor. The RFP process focused on identifying top-tier talent through measurable, weighted evaluation criteria.

4. **OVERVIEW OF PROPOSALS:** The RFP process received five strong proposals from the current LEPFA management, ASM Global, Oak View Group, Farbman & Levy, and VenuWorks Inc., each offering a mix of global and regional leadership. All candidates expressed a commitment to working with existing LEPFA staff. The next step is to present the recommended candidate to the board, highlighting their customer service approach and organizational plan. The committee is confident in the future of the Lansing Center with this proposed approach.

B. **RFP PENEL'S RECCOMENDATION-** Jake Brower explained that under the RFP process, five proposals were received, each demonstrating significant experience. The committee recommended ASM Global as the proposed manager for the Lansing Center. ASM Global, with expertise in managing approximately 400 facilities, has a strong commitment to customer service and safety. The recommendation was made with confidence in their readiness to proceed.

Once the board approves the recommendation, contract negotiations will begin in January. A presentation with ASM Global will be scheduled at the Board's convenience, with a decision expected soon after. From January through June 30, the integration and training of current staff will take place, with full implementation set for the start of the new fiscal year in July.

Jake Brower detailed ASM Global's proposal which included a detailed organizational plan that outlines their approach to integrating and engaging current staff at all levels. The plan highlights a commitment to maintaining existing relationships while bringing in new ideas for revenue generation and facility enhancements. ASM Global has also proposed an initial $500,000 investment in the Lansing Center, along with a focus on proactive maintenance and capital improvements. Their proposal emphasizes the importance of community pride and creating a positive culture within the facilities. Additionally, ASM Global is targeting a staff retention rate of 98% and plans to train current staff in a new service culture. The integration process will ensure that the talent already in place is engaged, with opportunities for professional development and efficiencies gained from the resources of a larger organization.

The RFP committee reviewed several proposals, with ASM Global scoring the highest at 7.44, followed by Oak View Group at 6.8, Farbman and Levy at 5.9, VenuWorks Inc. at 5.2, and the current LEPFA management at 4.6. The selection process documentations and associated financial projections will be shared with the Board for review.

Jake Brower explained that the management company that is selected will report directly to the local board, not the City, and will be expected to collaborate with all operational partners. The current oversight structure will remain in place, and the Board will have the final decision on whether to accept the proposal. A transition period of approximately three months is expected, with full implementation by July. There will be options for current employees, who may remain under the existing management structure or transition to ASM Global, depending on the negotiation of the contract. The Board's role will remain the same, overseeing the Lansing Center, with ASM Global serving as the management arm under contract. The vendor will be required to address concerns and ensure the facilities are operated efficiently.

Chairwoman Maureen McNulty-Saxton moved to take the recommendation, along with the information provided by the RFP committee, and any additional documents to be sent after today's meeting. The motion further directed that Board members discuss the materials in their committee meetings throughout December and bring any questions or comments to a scheduled meeting with Jake Brower and the committee. in mid-January. **MOTION:** Commissioner Maureen McNulty-Saxton **SECOND:** Commissioner Kenric Hall **MOTION CARRIED**

VI. COMMISSIONERS AND STAFF COMMENTS:

1. **Commissioner Paul Collins:** Commissioner Paul Collins suggested that it would be helpful to receive a more comprehensive set of information ahead of the January meeting with Jake Brower. Commissioner Danielle Lenz suggested at least a week in advance, so board members have time to review and prepare. She emphasized the importance of having sufficient time to digest the material and produce questions before the meeting. Jake Brower noted that the information is already compiled will distribute to the LEPFA Board within a week or two. He suggested that the documents could be sent to all members by the end of this week.

2. **Commissioner Dustin Howard:** Commissioner Dustin Howard asked if the committee could provide the ASM Global proposal as well as the other four submissions. Jake Brower confirmed and shared that following today's meeting he will be reaching out to ASM Global as well as the other submissions letting them know of the recommendation and the next steps. ASM Global will then provide the RFP committee a contract to begin discussing fine details to submit a full proposal to the LEPFA Board along with the observation scoring summary. Jake Brower noted that he will assist with the negotiations along with the current LEPFA President and CEO, and City Attorneys. This is not the City's contract but the LEPFA Board's contract. Jake Brower noted that the process has been intentional and successful, helping to identify the best options for the facilities. He believes the proposed vision for the Lansing Center, Jackson Field, and Groesbeck Golf Course will ensure these facilities remain a source of pride and contribute to regional economic growth.

3. **Commissioner Maureen Saxton:** Chairwomen Maureen McNulty-Saxton plans to work with LEPFA staff to reschedule the four committee meetings for the first week of January, allowing for a deep dive into the materials. She asked Board members to send any questions from their meetings or individually by mid-January, which she will compile and send before the meeting with Jake Brower and the committee. This meeting would cover financials and other regular matters, while committee meetings will take place earlier in January.

Chairwoman Maureen McNulty-Saxton motioned to move the January 28, 2024, meet to Tuesday, January 21, 2024, as well as the committee meetings to be coordinated outside of the meeting as discussed. MOTION: Commissioner Maureen McNulty-Saxton SECOND: Commissioner Kenric Hall MOTION CARRIED

Additionally, Chairwomen Maureen McNulty-Saxton emphasized the importance of retaining current top-tier staff, as their expertise is crucial to maintaining consistency in financial and operational oversight. Maureen McNulty-Saxton expressed her concern about a new management company coming on board without this trusted staff, which would make tracking overall operations difficult. Jake Brower acknowledged this concern, agreeing that there is a place for current management staff in the proposed structure and committed to reaching out to them directly.

4. **Commissioner Charles Mickens-** Commissioner Charles Mickens requested clarification on the range of prices for the proposed management services. Jake Brower explained that the proposals varied, with Oak View Group being the highest-priced option, followed by LEPFA's current management, ASM Global, VenuWorks, and finally, Farbman and Leby, which was the most affordable but had less relevant experience. ASM Global emerged as the top choice due to its ability to reduce City support costs over five years while meeting Lansing's needs. Jake Brower acknowledged that some proposals only provided first-year costs, while others included five-year projections. He assured the Board that adjustments were made to ensure an accurate comparison by factoring in incentive fees, management costs, and support from Choose Lansing. Jake Brower committed to sending a detailed summary of the cost analysis and noted that all proposals are now public record.

5. **Commissioner Larry Leatherwood-** Commissioner Larry Leatherwood emphasized the importance of keeping current LEPFA staff updated on the progress and educating stakeholders on potential impacts. Chairwoman Maureen McNulty-Saxton assured that the process has been transparent, with staff hearing proposals in real time alongside the Board. She encouraged members to bring impact-related questions to the mid-January meeting for discussion. Jake Brower also committed to organizing and sharing all relevant documents to ensure an informed review. He reiterated his support for ongoing collaboration and transparency throughout the next steps of the process.

6. **Commissioner Rawley Van Fossen-** Commissioner Rawley Van Fossen asked if the other RFP committee members could share general impressions of the process and the proposals they evaluated.

    a. **Commissioner Kenric Hall (LEPFA Board Representative)- Commissioner** Kenric Hall commended Jake Brower for organizing a well-structured and thorough evaluation process, emphasizing that all candidates who submitted proposals were strong contenders. He noted that while the top candidate emerged based on the established criteria, none of the proposals were dismissed outright, as each brought valuable strengths to the table.
    b. **David Buckenberger (Choose Lansing Representative)-** David Buckenberger, Senior Vice President of Choose Lansing, described the evaluation process as thorough and well-structured, noting that all five candidates had strengths and weaknesses. He highlighted ASM Global's strong reputation, extensive portfolio, and experience managing venues of various sizes in Michigan and nearby states. He emphasized ASM’s high standards of service and their ability to bring value through their diverse management practices. Buckenberger also stressed the value of ASM’s staffing systems and culture, which could enhance the performance of the Lansing Center’s existing team. Additionally, ASM’s ability to integrate its systems with the Lansing Center’s existing staff was a key factor in the recommendation. He noted that ASM’s approach aligns with the goal of making the Lansing Center a leading event venue and a stronger competitor in the region.

c. **Kate Hude (Dykema ASM- LEPFA Client Representative)-** Kate Hude from Dykema ASM underscored the importance of considering not just the written proposals but also insights gained from interviews. She pointed out ASM's established presence in Michigan as a significant advantage, contrasting it with competitors who lacked local experience. Hude also stressed the value of ASM's staffing systems and culture, which could enhance the performance of the Lansing Center's existing team.

Jake Brower highlighted the inclusion of diverse perspectives in the evaluation process, mentioning Zach Clark of the Lansing Lugnuts as one of the participants. He emphasized that representatives from governing bodies, Choose Lansing, and direct customers were all involved to ensure the proposals addressed the varied needs and concerns of all stakeholders. Commissioner Kenric Hall expressed optimism about the outcomes and the future direction of the initiative.

7. **Commissioner Paul Collins:** Commissioner Paul Collins expressed the importance of understanding how each proposal met the specific criteria, stating that as a board member, having access to detailed scoring information would be valuable. He acknowledged that the committee's input would be essential for this, and he looks forward to reviewing it.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT:

1. **Daniel Matwiczyk- Superintendent at Groesbeck Golf Course:** Dan Matwiczyk asked for clarification regarding the board's role if ASM Global is selected. He inquired whether the board would retain control or if the decision-making power would shift, particularly concerning finances and management. Jake Brower explained that the board would continue to oversee the contract, ensuring that operations are not hollowed out. ASM Global would not control the finances; instead, LEPFA would maintain its financial autonomy as an Act 31 Corporation. ASM's compensation would come from a management fee, and LEPFA would continue to manage its books, reserves, and capital, with its financial performance reflecting any fluctuations.

IX. AJOURNMENT: At 9:07 a.m. the regular monthly meeting was adjourned. **MOTION:** Chairwoman Maureen McNulty-Saxton **SECOND:** Commissioner Kenric Hall **MOTION CARRIED**

THE NEXT REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR:
TUESDAY, January 21, 2025
8:00 a.m.
LOCATION: Lansing Center; Governor's Room

Respectfully submitted,

Kasey McFadden

Kasey McFadden, Recording Secretary