

**CRDA Venue Committee Conference Call
Meeting Minutes
Connecticut Convention Center
100 Columbus Boulevard, 5th Floor
Hartford, CT 06103
January 12, 2018
2:00 PM**

Members Present Via Phone: Board Chair Suzanne Hopgood, David Jorgensen, Mike Matteo and Sean Fitzpatrick

Staff: Executive Director Mike Freimuth, Kim Hart

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. and the minutes of the November 1, 2017 meeting were approved on a voice vote.

Mr. Freimuth updated members on the following:

1. XL Center

Agreements: Mr. Freimuth reported that we are moving closer to execution of three agreements related to the XL Center, including a new five-year Wolfpack agreement with Madison Square Garden. The agreement will include protections for both parties in the event the XL Center is sold.

Also being discussed is a lease extension for UConn men's and women's basketball and ice hockey. That extension is likely to cover the next three seasons and will also include provisions related to the sale of the arena. In addition, Spectra is close to signing an extension to the current XL naming rights deal. All three of these agreements will require Venue Committee and full CRDA Board approval.

Sale: Mr. Freimuth also reported that Stafford Sports is drafting an RFP for the sale of the XL Center, as required by the General Assembly. That draft is expected to be completed in March or April.

Acquisition of Northland Space: A plan of action is expected to be on the agenda for the February Board meeting.

Metal Detectors: The new metal detectors purchased for the XL Center were employed for the first time last evening at the Disney “Frozen” show. The layout worked well and there were no issues, though the real test will be a larger event, such as this weekend’s UConn men’s basketball game against Villanova.

2. Pratt & Whitney Stadium at Rentschler Field

Mr. Freimuth reported that after a disappointing football season, Spectra is working to reduce operating costs over the winter in order to reduce the projected end-of-year deficit. New snow plow equipment and utilization of the Stadium’s building management system have resulted in savings on outside contracting and utility costs. Because attendance numbers did not reach the levels estimated by UConn, the building could end the year with a deficit, which will need to be covered by a UConn payment (per the terms of our lease agreement) and the tapping of Stadium reserve funds.

3. CT Convention Center

Mr. Freimuth noted that the Convention Center is entering into a three-month busy season, with the building running ahead of budget projections.

4. CT Tennis Center

Although progress has been made, the CT Tennis Center has not yet reached its sponsorship goal for next year’s tournament. The Foundation has until CRDA’s February Board meeting to meet its goal and the future of the tournament will be weighed at that meeting. Mr. Matteo asked that firm information on sponsorships be provided to members prior the February meeting.

5. Dillon Stadium

Mr. Freimuth reported that following the selection of Hartford Sports Group (HSG) as the preferred team at Dillon Stadium, CRDA staff has been meeting with HSG and the City to work out a management structure and business deal for that facility. A draft agreement has been circulated and CRDA is focused on (1) ensuring that adequate funding is available for the City to keep the building running and (2) that community expectations are met.

A conservative examination of the State tax revenue that could be generated by a USL team indicates that it can justify at least \$6.65 million of State bond funds being invested in the project. Construction estimates are running higher, but CRDA staff are working with HSG to reduce those numbers. Mr. Freimuth noted that additional investment in Colt Park, along with the Dillon renovations, should also be pursued.

The next meeting of the Venue Committee is scheduled for February 2, 2018.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:35.

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