

**DULUTH ENTERTAINMENT AND CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING**

May 19, 2021

A Special Board Meeting was held Wednesday, May 19th, 2021 in the DECC French River Room.
Board Members Present: Chair Pat Mullen, Vice Chair Lynne Williams, Secretary Mary Finnegan, Don Ness, Peter Singler, Laura Mullen, Bill Nelson, Martha Bremer, Roz Randorf
Board Members Absent: Carrie Heffernan, Matt Baumgartner
DECC Staff Present: Roger Reinert, Renae Matt, Jeff Stark
Others Present: Dan Hartman, Kate Ferguson – DSPA, Noah Schuchman – City of Duluth

P. Mullen called the meeting to order at 12:05 PM, following a walking tour of the DECC Waterfront and potential cruise facility space within the DECC. A quorum of directors was present.

NEW BUSINESS

Cruising Discussion: The board took time to discuss the intent of the meeting regarding the potential cruising space. Amongst the topics discussed were the length of the lease term with Customs and Border Protection (CBP) for the potential facility space, the option to see a comparable lease, and whether or not there were plans in place if the DECC made the decision not to host the cruising facility.

It was clarified that, at this time, the board was not being asked to approve the facility. They were being asked to commit to the specific space outlined so the drafting of the design proposal could move forward.

Board members expressed their thoughts on the potential community impact, advantages, as well as concerns. A request was made for the City of Duluth to consider a written agreement that would hold the City accountable for the construction and capital costs instead of the DECC. It was noted by Schuchman that this would be a reasonable consideration for the City and that he could work with the board to draft a reasonable agreement. Another mention was considering if the City and DECC could both be named on the CBP lease, rather than the DECC alone.

The board expressed interest in a milestone timeline of how the project would proceed once the space was committed. Schuchman and Ferguson agreed that they could present an estimated milestone timeline to the board, if it was desired. There was additional discussion regarding the environmental considerations for the cruise ships, as well as the environmental research labs aboard the ships.

The board also discussed the space requirements for health screenings. It was confirmed that those discussions are taking place and screening areas will be addressed.

The board asked that an estimated cost per square foot be collected prior to signing a lease, giving them a baseline to weigh the decision. It was also requested to see a comparable lease, or a lease template, for the board to review.

It was noted that a vote would be held at the next board meeting, on May 26, to commit the DECC to the proposed space. It was agreed that Ness and Schuchman would work together to draft the language clarifying the ask of the Board.

Board members were asked to send remaining questions prior to the next board meeting on May 26 so they could ensure their questions could be answered.

The board was presented with an announcement from the City of Duluth requesting partners to submit their qualifications for destination marketing by June 4. The Board discussed potential advantages and disadvantages for submitting the qualifications of the DECC.

It was agreed they wouldn't rule out the option, but would continue the discussion, taking into account the positive impact it could have on the community and region as a whole.

P. Mullen adjourned the meeting at 1:06 PM.

Upcoming Meetings

The next regular meeting will be held June 30, 2021 at 11:30 AM at the DECC.

Minutes reported by Renae Matt, Executive Assistant.

Submitted by:

Patrick Mullen, Chair

Mary Finnegan, Secretary