



DECC AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING

December 15, 2022, Meeting Minutes

CALL TO ORDER

A Regular Board Meeting was held Thursday, December 15, 2022, via Zoom. The meeting was rescheduled as a virtual meeting due to inclement weather. Chair Lynne Williams called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM. A quorum of directors was present.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Chair Lynne Williams
Vice Chair Peter Singler
Secretary & Treasurer Matthew Baumgartner
Bill Nelson
Martha Bremer
Carrie Heffernan
Laura Mullen
Tony Sertich
Jason Vincent
Pat Mullen
Mary Finnegan

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

None

DECC STAFF PRESENT

Dan Hartman
Jason Reid
Ronni Murphy

OTHERS PRESENT

Media

PUBLIC OPEN COMMENT PERIOD

Chair Williams asked for a review of the public open comment period sign-up sheet, or raised hand via the Zoom feature, no members of the public signed up for comment.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Chair Williams reviewed the consent agenda. The consent agenda included the meeting agenda and meeting minutes from the regular meeting on November 17, 2022. MOTION to approve the consent agenda requested by Chair Williams; motion made by Secretary & Treasurer Baumgartner and seconded by P. Mullen. Motion unanimously carried.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Executive Director Hartman provided an update outlined by the updated strategic framework as defined at the Board Retreat in August 2022.

- 1.** First, Hartman shared current challenges including: organizational chart challenges; the community parking problem; and potentially missing guest feedback. Hartman noted that he continues to review the organizational chart to determine if there are more efficient ways to organize at the middle management level. Hartman shared that the first two weekends in December saw extremely high-volume parking at the DECC facilities. Hartman continues to work on communication strategies aimed at ensuring DECC parking is utilized and that guests have access to parking without long wait times. Hartman aims to increase guest feedback by releasing more consistent guest experience surveys during events.
- 2. Policies & Procedures:** Hartman shared that updates have been made to the DECC Procurement and Purchasing Policy to include procurement provisions. Hartman also shared that more than twenty operational policies have been created and/or updated in 2022.
- 3. Contract Management:** The Curling Club has submitted the \$100,000 lump sum payment to the DECC, as agreed upon at the July 27, 2022 Regular Board Meeting. The Curling Club has also indicated that they are open to discussing options for a new contract lease.
- 4. Community Connection:** Hartman provided several updates related to community connection.

Beginning in January, Hartman will host Sunrise Coffee on Thursday mornings at the DECC. Sunrise Coffee is a free event that will allow participants to enjoy DECC spaces, watch and/or photograph the sunrise, and gather during some of the colder months in Duluth.

Additionally, Hartman and team are currently researching the possibility of offering free movies in Harbor Side Ballroom in February.

Hartman shared a cruising update with the group. The Viking Polaris, sister ship to the Viking Octantis (the ship that docks in Duluth for cruising), was determined to have design inefficiencies. Due to this, both ships are being sent to Norway for repair, which will result in less cruising visits to Duluth in 2023. Hartman noted this will allow opportunities for Duluth to look into adaptations for turn around location options, and provide time to apply for federal funding applications for baggage handling fees, etc.

Hartman shared updates regarding the DECC's social media performance: in the last 28 days Facebook reported a 671,102 reach and Instagram reported a 68,571 reach. The DECC has published 394 posts on Facebook in the last 28 days.

Heffernan arrived at 4:13 PM

Hartman shared an update on the DECC's media snapshot.

Earned media 7.9 million, is as follows: Foreigner - 140,000; Arrowhead Ice Show - 2,447,100; Bacon, Bloodies, and Bands - 640,000; Duluth Winter Village - 3,843,000; Festival of Trees - 720,000; Comedy at the DECC - 16,510; DECC (venue coalition article) - 41,400; The Nutcracker - 121,924.

DECC in media (non-earned media) 14.9 million, is as follows: CSS Thanksgiving Dinner at the DECC - 1,841,189; Curling Club reopens - 558,000; Duluth tourism - 3,564,777; TPIS - 232,390; Sister Cities Christmas Trees DECC - 162,140; Pearl Harbor Ceremony - 453,000; Traffic - 19,800; Hockey - 91,000; MLK event - 51,720.

5. Economic Impact: Hartman provided several updates related to economic impact.

Hartman shared that convention sales are at \$2,107,000 sold in 2022.

Hartman shared an infographic regarding projected attendance for conventions: 2019 - 31,200 projected attendees vs. 2023 - 47,123 projected attendees. Hartman is working with staff to track projected and actual attendance via the event tracking analysis form.

Hartman provided an update regarding the 2022 Winter Village at the DECC. Winter Village had an estimated 17,000 in attendance. The slight decrease in attendance resulted in higher sales for vendors and the DECC. Hartman estimates that Winter Village will provide \$70,000 net profit for the DECC due to parking, alcohol and concessions sales, and vendor booth rentals. Hartman noted the following opportunities for next year: a "wow" item to draw attendance despite other winter village competition; improved coffee and cocoa set up; and better-quality alcoholic beverages.

Hartman provided an entertainment update. The DECC hosted 66,877 attendees for entertainment in 2022 compared to 58,258 attendees for entertainment in 2019. The DECC also hosted 23 entertainment events in 2022 compared to 15 entertainment events in 2019. Hartman attributes these successes to an increased focus on entertainment and selling more shows in Symphony Hall as compared to previous years.

6. Capital Planning: Hartman shared that he and the team are currently researching vendors for potential upgrades to the Symphony Hall carpeting after July 1, 2023.

Hartman noted that bonding updates could occur in January, or as late as May.

Hartman reminded Board Members that it would be ideal to complete a feasibility study of DECC Arena in the near future. Hartman is currently looking at options for bids for a feasibility study.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive

1. Chair Williams provided an update on behalf of the Executive Committee. Chair Williams asked Board Members to review the draft 2023 Board Calendar as included in the supplemental materials. Chair Williams noted that the calendar is a reference item and can be considered a living document. Vice Chair Singler suggested that Board Members review the calendar and add items to it for review as applicable.
2. Chair Williams noted that the committee reviewed the Procurement and Purchasing Policy.
3. Secretary and Treasurer Baumgartner thanked Chair Williams for her service to the DECC Board and for her leadership on the Executive Committee.

Finance

1. Reid provided an update on behalf of the Finance Committee. November financials are not complete due to the limited number of days between month end and the Finance Committee meeting. The committee met in December and reviewed updates to the DECC's Procurement and Purchasing Policy.
2. Reid shared that payroll and benefits are now being managed by Supporting Strategies, due to the departure of the DECC's Payroll and Benefits Associate. Reid noted that Supporting Strategies has been helpful in providing tools and recommendations to streamline operations and better serve employees.
3. Chair Williams shared that Hartman presented the DECC's 2023 budget, as approved by the Board, to the City Council. Per Hartman, the presentation went well and there was an engaging conversation regarding the DECC's budget.

Governance

1. Bremer provided an update on behalf of the Governance Committee. The committee reviewed the Procurement and Purchasing Policy. The committee plans to continue policy work in 2023.

Ad Hoc - Guest Experience

1. L. Mullen provided an update on behalf of the Ad Hoc Guest Experience Committee. The committee met in December for a final wrap up meeting and created the summary report as included in the supplemental materials.
2. The committee reminded Board Members of the importance of Ambassadorship and asked that Board Members continue to fill out the guest experience survey after attending events at the DECC. The pared down guest experience survey now explores: accolades, issues, and ideas.

NEW BUSINESS

Chair Williams extended thanks to Officers and committee Chairs that served in 2022. Chair Williams reminded Board Members of the proposed 2023 Officer slate:

- Chair: Peter Singler
- Vice Chair: Martha Bremer

- Secretary & Treasurer: Laura Mullen

MOTION to approve the proposed 2023 Officer slate requested by Chair Williams; motion made by Secretary & Treasurer Baumgartner and seconded by Finnegan. Motion unanimously carried.

Hartman introduced the updated Procurement and Purchasing Policy noting that the policy was updated in response to a finding on the DECC's 2021 audit. MOTION to approve the updated Procurement and Purchasing Policy requested by Chair Williams; motion made by Vice Chair Singler and seconded by Bremer. Motion unanimously carried.

OLD BUSINESS

No Old Business was discussed.

OTHER

No other business was discussed.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Williams requested a motion to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 4:58 PM.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

The next regular meeting will be held January 26, 2023, location to be determined.

Submitted by:

Lynne Williams, Chair

Matthew Baumgartner, Secretary &
Treasurer

Date

Date