

**CRDA Venue Committee Conference Call
Meeting Minutes
Connecticut Convention Center
100 Columbus Boulevard, 5th Floor
Hartford, CT 06103
September 7, 2018
2:00 PM**

Members Present Via Phone: Committee Chair Andy Bessette, Board Chair Suzanne Hopgood, Mike Matteo, David Jorgensen and David Robinson

Staff: Executive Director Mike Freimuth and Kim Hart

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. and the minutes of the June 1, 2018 meeting were approved on a voice vote.

1. **Dillon Stadium** – Mr. Freimuth reported that the field, bleacher and site work packages have been awarded and demo work at Dillon has begun, with approximately 10-15% of the project completed. Value engineering is also underway in order to keep the project in budget.

The Stadium Use Agreement, one of the key legal documents, is still being negotiated. That document assumes that Global Spectrum will be retained as Stadium manager and that Hartford Sports Group will cover all game day expenses. Day-to-day operating costs will be covered by \$300,000 set aside for that purpose.

2. **XL Center** – Mr. Freimuth noted that CRDA is currently handling four major issues relative to the XL Center:
 - a. **Oak Street** – Venue Committee members have met with Oak Street, the sole respondent to the XL sale RFP, in order to better understand their proposal. The company has been presented with six questions related to the cost of their financing, as well as their proposed management structure for the arena. Mr. Freimuth does not expect any Oak Street action items on the September Board agenda and suggested it would likely be on the October agenda.
 - b. **Acquisition of Northland Property** - Mr. Freimuth reported that a series of meetings have been held between CRDA and Northland regarding acquisition. CRDA is still awaiting a copy of Northland's appraisal of the Trumbull block

- c. **Capital Projects** – Ms. Hart reported on the ongoing capital projects at XL:
- i. LED Light Conversion – The old lights have been taken down and the new controllers are currently being assembled, while the new fixtures are expected early the week of September 10th.
 - ii. Escalator Repair – One of the atrium escalators is up and running, while the other is still shut down for repairs. Spectra hopes to have that working in time for the Elton John concert on September 19th.
 - iii. Replacement of Chillers – This project is on track for next summer.
 - iv. Replacement of Retractable Seating – This project is also on track for next summer.
- d. **New Planning Focus** – Mr. Freimuth reported that SCI Architects and Stafford Sports have been charged with developing a new and more a phased approach to the XL Center transformation. The groups are looking at utilizing the lower bowl for new premium seating options, while leaving the upper bowl as general seating. The potential acquisition of the Northland atrium would create space for much-needed restrooms and concession stands. This additional space would also allow for improved circulation on the existing concourse and reduce the need for a new upper concourse.

SCI and Stafford are also meeting with UConn’s Athletic Department to talk about the University’s needs and what a college sports arena should look like.

3. **Convention Center** – No new capital projects are being undertaken, although there is some work planned within the nearby Front Street district.
4. **Pratt & Whitney Stadium** – Ms. Hart reported that the double header U.S. Women’s soccer event in July netted the building approximately \$160,000. Another major event – the U.S. Men’s Team vs. Peru - is scheduled for October 16th.

The opening game of UConn’s 2018 football season saw only 15,700 fans in attendance. Final loss/revenue numbers are not yet available, but food and beverage numbers were strong. Expanded menu options and new craft beer stands, as well as additional tailgating hours and shuttle service for fans have been instituted by Spectra in order to help attract fans to the games.

5. **Tennis Center** – A report on the 2018 tournament from Anne Worcester was included in the Venue Committee agenda packet. Mr. Freimuth noted that final numbers for the tournament should be available in another month.

The next meeting of the Venue Committee is scheduled for October 5, 2018.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:22 pm.