

**CRDA Venue Committee Meeting
Meeting Minutes
Connecticut Convention Center
100 Columbus Boulevard, 5th Floor
Hartford, CT 06103
May 3, 2019
2:00 PM**

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

Staff: Kim Hart

The meeting was called to order at 2:05 p.m. The minutes of the February 14, 2019 meeting were approved on a voice vote.

Ms. Hart updated Committee members on the various venues:

1. XL Center

The NCAA tournament was a big success, despite issues with delays getting patrons in and out of the building on Thursday when the earlier game ran long. It typically takes a few months to get a final settlement with the NCAA, but preliminary estimates show that the building netted around \$480k, which is significantly higher than the \$200k that had been budgeted for the event. About 47,000 tickets were sold over the three sessions and actual attendance was just under 41,000.

Upcoming events include Paw Patrol family show next weekend, WWE on the 19th and three commencements (St. Joe's ECSU, Central) before the end of the month. Upcoming concerts include Khalid in August and Eric Church in November.

DECD Commissioner Lehman has requested that we take another look at public private partnership opportunities for the XL Center and briefing books have been compiled for entities that might be interested in such a venture.

Related to the issue of public private partnerships, a motion was made to formally reject the sole proposal received in response to the Public Private Partnership RFP issued by CRDA in 2017 and formally close out that RFP process. The motion was adopted on a voice vote.

2. Pratt & Whitney Stadium

Hartford Athletic will play their first home game on May 4th at the Stadium. Approximately 5,300 tickets have been sold for the match, with an additional 6,200 comp tickets distributed. The team is expected to play at the Stadium until work on Dillon is completed.

Tickets are currently on sale for the NCAA Lacrosse Quarterfinals to be held at the Stadium on May 19th. Participating teams will not be announced until the week prior, so it is expected that 80-90% of ticket sales will occur that last week. Some 2,400 tickets have already been sold for the event.

The new seat bottoms were delivered this week and about 250 have been installed. Seat installation in the lower bowl will be completed in time for lacrosse, with the balance being completed between Hartford Athletic games.

3. Dillon Stadium –

The construction team continues to work toward a July 13th opening. The field and bleachers are substantially complete, while finish work remains in the buildings. Site work has presented some challenges and the team is working with MDC to resolve issues related to potential flooding. Excavation work for the new field lights has begun, however, earlier funding issues delayed the ordering of the poles and these are not expected to arrive until late August. The team has opted to play only day games until the new lights are installed in order to avoid the cost of renting temporary light towers.

4. CT Convention Center –

A draft of the Johnson Consulting study of Convention Center operations is expected the week of May 13th. The study will compare assumptions made in the original pre-construction study with actual outcomes and to outline a future business plan taking into account industry trends and changing market conditions.

The State's first mixed martial arts (MMA) event was held at the Convention Center on March 29th and was a great success. Building on enthusiasm for that event, a second event is scheduled for May 31st.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:25.

The next meeting of the Venue Committee is scheduled for June 7, 2019.