

CRDA Venue Committee Meeting
DRAFT Meeting Minutes
June 4, 2021
2:00 PM

Members Present via GoToMeeting: Committee Chair Andy Bessette, Board Chair Suzanne Hopgood, DECD Commissioner David Lehman and Andrew Diaz-Matos

Staff Present via GoToMeeting: Mike Freimuth, Tony Lazzaro and Kim Hart

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Bessette at 2:01 p.m. The minutes of the May 7, 2021 meeting were approved on a voice vote.

I. Venue Updates -- Mr. Freimuth offered the following venue updates:

- a. XL Center – The facility will open fully in August and discussions are underway for some potentially large events not long after reopening. Talks continue with Northland over the atrium space, but Mr. Freimuth noted that he needs to get a handle on the budget before those talks move forward.

He noted that the Governor has signed the so-called “Sports Betting” bill, which could have a major impact on XL in two ways. Firstly, the CT Lottery Board is looking to locate two primary betting parlor/entertainment facilities, as well as 12 smaller facilities, around the State and officials have toured the XL as a potential location for one of the primary locations. Secondly, State officials are looking at the possibility of using a portion of expected sports betting revenue to underwrite the XL Center renovation.

- b. Pratt & Whitney Stadium – Ms. Hart reported on the NCAA Lacrosse Championships held at the Stadium over Memorial Day weekend. Despite the cold and rainy weather, over 28k people attended the five games. Concession per caps averaged \$18.50, while suite catering averaged \$40 per person. Final settlement numbers are not expected for about ten days, but Spectra estimates revenues exceeding \$200k. At least six local hotels hosted teams and fans, and the event received great media attention. A number of sources praised the Stadium grounds crew, noting how well the field held up over three days. A number of suite holders reached out to Spectra after the event to say how much they enjoyed it and to inquire about tickets for next year. In response, Spectra and the NCAA will do a pre-sale of 2022 tickets to take advantage of the enthusiasm generated by this year’s event.

Ms. Hart also noted that the Stadium will also hold the U.S. Women’s National Soccer team for an Olympic “Send-off Series” against Mexico on July 1st and July 5th.

- c. CT Convention Center – Mr. Lazzaro indicated that the vaccine clinic is expected to remain on site until June 30th, while the testing will remain until the end of July.

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

The next Venue Committee conference call is scheduled for **July 2, 2021.**

DRAFT