

CRDA Venue Committee Meeting
APPROVED Meeting Minutes
October 13, 2023
2:00 p.m.

Members Present via Microsoft Teams: Committee Chair Andy Bessette, Andrew Diaz-Matos and Board Chair David Robinson

Staff Present via Microsoft Teams: Mike Freimuth, Anthony Lazzaro and Kim Hart

Guests Present via Microsoft Teams: Ben Weiss, OVG

The virtual meeting was called to order at 2:03 p.m. by Chairman Bessette. A vote on the minutes of the May 9th meeting was tabled for the next meeting as they had not been distributed to members with the agenda.

I. XL Center

1. Sportsbook – Mr. Freimuth reported that approximately 100 to 130 transactions are occurring at the new sports betting lounge on weekend days, with about 10-50 transactions per weekday. Weekly transactions total between 350 and 500. He noted that there have not been events within the arena as of October 1st to determine the impact on sportsbook traffic when the XL Center is operational.
2. City of Hartford Lease – An amended XL lease with the City of Hartford has been reviewed by committee and is pending full City Council approval.
3. Building renovations and OVG Deal – Mr. Freimuth reported that CRDA is finalizing an agreement with OVG that will see the management company contribute \$20 million toward the renovation of the XL Center. CRDA is pricing the renovation work now to ensure it can be completed for the \$100 million in total State and OVG funds that will be available for the work.

Noting that the renovation will shift the arena’s event mix toward more concerts, Committee members requested information on what the building’s financials are expected to look like. Mr. Freimuth indicated that he would meet with OVG and provide the estimated pro formas to Committee members. An updated construction plan and operating projection will be presented to the full Board at its next meeting.

4. Events – Ms. Hart reported on the upcoming hockey and basketball seasons at XL:
 - i. Wolfpack – Season starts October 20th.

- ii. UConn Men's Basketball – XL season starts November 11th against Stonehill. Eight Other games will include Mississippi Valley State, Manhattan, St. John's, Georgetown, Xavier, Butler and Marquette.
- iii. UConn Women's Basketball (7) – XL season starts November 8th against Dayton. Other games will include Louisville, Butler, Marquette, Providence, Seton Hall Creighton.
- iv. UConn Men's Hockey (5) – XL season starts October 28th against UMass Lowell. Other games will include Dartmouth, 2 games against University of Maine and a CT Ice Tournament with Yale, Sacred Heart and Quinnipiac

II. Pratt & Whitney Stadium

Ms. Hart reported that UConn has played two games at the Stadium this season, averaging just under 14k per game. Per caps have averaged \$23.66.

The US vs. Germany soccer match will be held on October 14th and will likely be the largest event in the Stadium's history. Parking will be at a premium and fans are encouraged to carpool and arrive early. In addition to the Stadium lots, we will be utilizing offsite lots at Silver Lane Plaza and the old Showcase Cinemas site, a Pratt lot and a nearby DOT lot.

As discussed at previous meetings, the FY24 bond package includes \$12m for renovations and improvements at the Stadium and CRDA will be requesting that full amount from the Bond Commission in December. The first projects will include Tower and Concession Stand roof replacements, IT and Security improvements and Structural Repair Work (including caulking). An RFP for a construction manager will go out shortly. An additional \$12m will be available in FY25 and these will hopefully be the first of five tranches that will be needed to complete the estimated \$60m in work identified in the Populous report.

III. Connecticut Convention Center

Ms. Hart reported that an RFP for a Convention Center building and food services manager was issued on October 4th and interested bidders will walk through the building next week. Proposals are due on November 20th.

The Beyond King Tut immersive experience will close on Sunday after two months in the building and about 30,000 tickets were sold over this period. The building will host nearly 600 people this weekend for the Science Center's annual gala.

There are no capital improvements underway at this time, however, in early January, the facility will be replacing its domestic hot water system. That project is estimated to total about \$200k.

The next Venue Committee conference call is scheduled for **November 3, 2023**.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.