

CRDA Venue Committee Meeting
DRAFT Meeting Minutes
September 6, 2024
3:00 p.m.

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

Staff Present via Microsoft Teams: Mike Freimuth, Anthony Lazzaro, Joe Geremia, Bob Houlihan
Kim Hart

Guests Present via Microsoft Teams: Ben Weiss, OVG

Chairman Robinson called the meeting to order at 3:00 and then recessed the meeting until 3:30. At 3:30, the meeting was reconvened and the minutes of the December 1, 2023 were approved on a voice vote.

I. XL Center

- a. Wolfpack Lease – Mr. Lazzaro outlined the Lease for Committee members. The building’s manager, OVG, has asked CRDA to relocate the Wolfpack sales office from the XL Center atrium to space in the adjacent Double Tree hotel. After a brief discussion, the following was approved:

*Lease Agreement – 315 Trumbull Third Unit Owner, LLC
(the “Wolf Pack Sales Office Lease Agreement”)*

Background:

The Oak View Group has requested that CRDA relocate and fit-out new office space for the Wolf Pack sales office. The new office will be located at 315 Trumbull Street in a portion of the Double Tree by Hilton Hartford Downtown hotel immediately adjacent to the XL Center; the office is currently located in the atrium of the Civic Center in property owned by the Northland Group.

CRDA shall execute a sub-lease with OVG for use of such space.

Monthly Basic Rent: Year 1: \$5,000
Years 2-5: \$5,000 plus CPI adjustments

Construction Cost: ~\$30,000

Term: Five (5) years, cancellable after Year Two or upon the termination of the affiliated American Hockey League franchise. After Year Two, the Lease Agreement shall be assigned to the then existing manager of the XL Center.

MOTION

The CRDA Venue Committee recommends the Lease Agreement to the CRDA Board of Directors for approval in accordance with the terms and conditions provided above.

- b. **Construction Status** – Mr. Houlihan walked Committee members through a diagram of the XL Center’s event level showing the various areas slated for renovation. Most of these areas are in current back-of-house spaces and construction activity should have minimal impact on patrons.
- c. **Naming Rights Update** – Mr. Weiss updated Committee members on OVG’s search for a new naming rights sponsor. As reported in the press, XL has opted not to renew its sponsorship beyond June 30, 2025. Mr. Weiss explained that OVG has a very competent team assigned to the search and they have engaged in conversations with multiple entities about naming rights for the overall facility, as well as for various components of the building such as club spaces. A number of Committee members noted that the timing of the rebranding was fortunate given the physical renovation underway.

II. Connecticut Convention Center

- a. **Event Update** – Ms. Hart noted that the 21st annual ConnectiCon Convention returned to the Convention Center on July 18th – July 21st and that the event was a resounding success. Approximately 52,000 people were in attendance over four days and the building set a new record for concession revenue. Upcoming events include Connecticut Horrorfest, as well as the Connecticut Science Center Gala, the 45th Annual Home Show and the Connecticut Association of Land Surveyors’ annual meeting.

In response to a question from Mr. Diaz-Matos, Ms. Hart indicated that an estimate of the ConnectiCon event’s economic impact on the City will be provided at the September 19th Board meeting.

- b. **Construction Updates** – Ms. Hart reported that the replacement of pavers and repair of waterproofing and drainage on the Convention Center’s riverfront esplanade is expected to begin in about three weeks. The work should take about three months to complete, weather permitting.

In addition, repair work on the building's outside elevators has been held up by difficulties sourcing replacement parts but it should begin within next month. Mr. Lazzaro explained that budget constraints during construction of the Convention Center eliminated the lobbies but used interior-rated components for the elevators. The resultant exposure to the elements has damaged the mechanical systems. The new elevators will be designed for exterior use.

III. **Pratt & Whitney Stadium at Rentschler Field**

- a. Upcoming Season – Mr. Weiss noted that the UConn Huskies will play their first home game on September 7th and preparations are underway in the building for the new season.
- b. Construction Updates - Ms. Hart reported that on June 7th, the State Bond Commission approved \$5 million in funding for roof repairs, renovation of team facilities and minor projects at the Stadium. An RFP for locker room renovations was issued earlier this summer and responses are currently being evaluated by selection committee including representatives of CRDA, OVG and UConn.

Mr. Houlihan also noted that CRDA and OVG are negotiating with cell companies leasing antenna space at the Stadium to relocate equipment during replacement of the roof membrane, the next big project scheduled at PWS.

The next Venue Committee conference call is scheduled for **October 4, 2024**.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:57 p.m.