

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF THE
SPORTS & EXHIBITION AUTHORITY OF PITTSBURGH
AND ALLEGHENY COUNTY
SPORTS COMMISSION
HELD THURSDAY, JUNE 9, 2022
REMOTELY VIA ZOOM CONFERENCE
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA
COMMENCING AT 12:07 PM. E.S.T.

A meeting of the Board of Directors of the Sports & Exhibition Authority of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County Sports Commission (the “Sports Commission”) was held upon proper notice on Thursday, June 9, 2022, commencing at 12:07 P.M. E.S.T. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and guidance from public health experts, the meeting was conducted remotely via the online conferencing platform Zoom.

Members of the Commission present:

Sen. Jay Costa, Chairman
Sen. Wayne Fontana, Member
Tracey McCants-Lewis, Member
Michael Quatrini, Member

Also Present:

Rosanne Casciato, Mary Conturo, Doug Straley, Rhea L. Thomas, Paul McDonald Jr., Theresa King, Desmond Bentley, Edith Ruiz and Jhason Dixon of the SEA; Morgan Hanson, Solicitor; Clarence Curry, CFC-3 Management Services.

Senator Jay Costa called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance. Ms. Mary Conturo followed with a roll call of the board members and advised that a quorum was present.

Beginning with public participation, Senator Costa asked if any members of the audience would like to address the board. Members of the public were offered participation by email, telephone, or the Zoom chat function. Mr. Paul McDonald Jr. stated that the Sports & Exhibition Authority of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County (“SEA”) had not received any comments via email, no one registered to speak via telephone, and no comments were submitted via the Zoom chat

function thus far. Seeing no request from the public to address the board, Senator Costa moved to the next item on the agenda, approval of the minutes from the meeting of Friday, March 4, 2022. A motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved.

Senator Costa continued to the next item on the agenda, authorization to amend the Act 42 EDTF Restricted Account Programs and Procedures.

Ms. Conturo stated we had one round of 2022 applications for the Sports Event Funding Program (“SEF”) in January. In preparation for the next round of applications some revisions are recommended. The SEA board adopted certain revisions and these changes are now brought to the Sports Commission Board for approval.

Under the existing programs and procedures, costs incurred prior to the grant agreement being signed would not be eligible for reimbursement. We have found this to be restrictive and recommend that the provision be removed and dealt with on a case-by-case basis. For example, this provision made it difficult for an applicant to commit to a venue at the application stage if that expense was intended to be the cost to be funded by the SEF program.

Ms. Conturo continued stating that in gathering information for economic impact we have learned that some changes are warranted. We request information about attendance and had been asking that it be broken it down by whether it was from Allegheny County, from outside of Allegheny County but within PA, from outside of Pennsylvania or form outside the United States. We have learned through this process that the most useful way to measure the impact of attendance is to understand whether the attendance is local, the result of a day trip or generating an overnight stay. The revisions therefore use those categories.

Ms. Conturo then noted that after the SEA board approves an application a notification letter is sent to the applicant. The existing programs and procedures require the applicant to

accept and return the notification letter within 30 days, and then execute the contract within 30 days after that. It is recommended that the 2nd 30-day period for the execution of the contract be removed. An event may occur up to 2 years from the application date. It may be more useful in some cases to wait on signing the contract until closer to the event date, when more detailed information could be included. By removing the provision this can be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Senator Costa asked if there were any questions from the board.

Senator Costa, however, confirmed that this does not change the requirement that disbursement of SEF program funds will only be made on a reimbursement basis, that the event must in fact occur.

Ms. Conturo confirmed that there is no change to the provision that disbursement will be made, only on a reimbursement basis as any award given is conditioned on the event happening.

Senator Costa stated if an applicant is granted an award, we can then look at their expenses from the date of their application, providing the event occurred and the appropriate documentation was submitted.

Senator Fontana stated the event must take place and we will not disburse any money before the event takes place.

Ms. Conturo confirmed this is correct.

Mr. Hanson stated these changes are to provide additional flexibility to the Sports Commission and create incentives for additional applicants.

Mr. Quatrini stated if an organization made a down payment of rent prior to the contract being signed it would be possible for the organization to get reimbursement whereas before they could not.

Ms. Conturo confirmed this is correct.

Mr. Hanson stated this is the educational process that we learned from the prior round of applications.

Mr. Quatrini stated that an applicant may not be sure what it will be getting reimbursed for.

Ms. Conturo stated that, as been our practice, the expenses that will be approved for reimbursement in each case will be made part of the Sports Commission / SEA approval.

Senator Costa asked if there were any questions from the board.

Hearing none, he asked for a motion to approve. On a motion duly made, seconded, and unanimously carried, the following resolution was approved:

RESOLUTION NO. SC008

RESOLVED that the amended Act 42 EDTF Restricted Account Programs and Procedures provided, as adopted by the Sports & Exhibition Authority of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County (“SEA”) at its meeting of June 9, 2022, with appropriate information filled in and completed, are hereby accepted and adopted by the SEA Sports Commission; and further that the proper officers of the SEA Sports Commission are hereby authorized to do all acts as may be necessary and proper to carry out the intent and purpose of this resolution. All resolutions or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this resolution are hereby repealed or rescinded, canceled or annulled so far as the same affects this resolution.

Senator Costa asked if anyone in the audience desired to address the board.

Mr. McDonald Jr. stated that the public was provided with three options for public participation: email, telephone, or the Zoom chat function. No public comments were submitted via email, there were no registrations to submit a public comment via telephone, and no comments were submitted via the Zoom chat function.

Senator Costa asked if there were any additional comments or business.

Mr. Quatrini stated at the last board meeting we discussed increased promotion of the program.

Ms. Conturo acknowledged that in addition to the distribution of the press releases to over 100 recipients most sport related, added efforts have been made to develop a broader reach, with a particular concentration on social media impact. We have collaborated with SportsPITTSBURGH and are taking advantage of their experience, expertise, and the “marketing infrastructure” that they have in place.

Ms. Conturo asked Theresa King to speak about the marketing plan.

Ms. Theresa King stated we reached out the City of Pittsburgh, Allegheny County as well as SportsPITTSBURGH and each is willing to share our press release and include our announcement in their social media communications. SportsPITTSBURGH will be sending out an e-blast that will target sporting organization located in Allegheny County.

Ms. Conturo stated the e-blast and social media will state when the program is opening, when the program has opened, and a reminder of when it closes.

Ms. McCants-Lewis stated that recognizing our goals with diversity we should post the announcements with Vibrant Pittsburgh, the African American Chamber, and the Courier. The Courier provides the paper and possibly also social media. We should look into both.

Senator Costa asked where the four previous applicants heard about the program.

Ms. Conturo stated that two were from the press releases, one was through SportsPITTSBURGH and the fourth was through Senator Fontana. Adding social media will assist in reaching some of the smaller entities.

Mr. Quatrini stated we should look into a professional marketing or communications firm to broaden our search.

Ms. McCants-Lewis stated we can also advertise with the Pittsburgh sports teams.

Ms. Conturo confirmed that we will contact the teams.

Senator Costa stated we should start advertising in September and October for the January applications, when the Steelers, Penguins and Panthers are playing to maximize our audience.

Senator Costa asked if there were any additional comments or business.

Ms. Conturo stated the members received the monthly financial report and asked if there were any comments or questions regarding the information or the set-up of the form. Does it provide the information the members would like, in a form that is easily understood? Senator Fontana confirmed that the form of the report met his needs.

Ms. Conturo further stated the SEF application and guidelines will be placed on SEA website on June 10, 2022.

Senator Costa, with there being no additional comments or business, asked for a motion to adjourn. Upon a motion duly made, seconded and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned at 12:36 P.M.