



AUTHORITY BOARD MEETING

Date/Time: Wednesday, June 17, 2026; 12:00 P.M.

Location: BMO Center Board Room—Lower Level
300 Elm Street, Rockford, IL 61101

MINUTES

Board Members Present: Bobbie Holzwarth Kevin Schwitters Rudy Valdez
Tom Walsh Craig Thomas Miles Nielsen

Board Members Absent: Megan McCoy John Phelps
Staci Brown

Others Present: Tim Rollins, Attorney
Alderman Chad Tuneberg
Kevin McCarthy, Winnebago County Liaison
Marico Holland, WTVO
Brandon Berry, Legends Global (via telephone)
Todd Cagnoni, City Administrator, City of Rockford

Staff Present: Gretchen Gilmore, General Manager, Legends Global
Doug Johnson, Assistant General Manager, Legends Global
Jackie Powers, Finance Coordinator/RAVE Board Secretary, Legends Global

Craig Thomas calls the meeting to order at 12:03 pm.

In acknowledgement of Craig Thomas stepping down as Chairman, City Administrator Todd Cagnoni addresses the board and thanks Craig Thomas on behalf of the City of Rockford for his leadership and dedication and presents him with a certificate and the key to the city. Gretchen Gilmore presents Craig Thomas with an award of recognition and gift bag, also thanking him for his time as Chairman. Craig Thomas thanks everyone for their recognition.

Rudy Valdez nominates Bobbie Holzwarth as Chair of RAVE Board of Directors. The nomination to appoint Bobbie Holzwarth passes unanimously.

Bobbie Holzwarth thanks Craig Thomas for his service and leadership during his time as Chairman and informs the board Craig Thomas will continue to serve on the board as a director.

MINUTES – The minutes from the April 29, 2026, meeting are approved.

MOTION: To approve the April 29, 2026, minutes made by Rudy Valdez, second by Craig Thomas. Motion passes unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- **Finance Committee**

Mr. Tom Walsh, Chair

Tom Walsh defers to the Treasurer's Report.

- **Executive Committee**

Mr. Craig Thomas, Chair

No report at this time.

- **Belonging & Community Partnerships Committee**

Mr. Rudy Valdez, Chair

Rudy Valdez discusses the success of the community grant program and the possibility of a future increase in the available funding. Gretchen Gilmore discusses the scorecard and highlights volunteer activities and the free Coronado Summer Cinema Series. Gretchen Gilmore explains rental rates for community members at Davis Park are being finalized and will be communicated to the board upon completion. Gretchen Gilmore informs the board there is a current grant application under review, with \$5,000 remaining in the grant fund.

- **Content Creation & Programming Committee**

Mr. Kevin Schwitters, Chair

Kevin Schwitters informs the board the committee is developing new ideas and highlights a possible festival, competition, and fitness activities. More information will follow as the committee finalizes their activities.

- **Marketing & Social Media Committee**

Ms. Megan McCoy, Chair

Gretchen Gilmore informs the board that Legends Global will be rolling out a Marketing network focusing on driving revenues and expanding our marketing support at each corporate level. BMO Center has eliminated the onsite Director of Marketing and Private Events role and instead will be hiring a Sales Manager to better serve our current needs in Private Events and Premium and Sponsorship Sales.

- **Hockey Advisory Committee**

Mr. Craig Thomas, Chair

Craig Thomas reports he has met with Chicago Blackhawks leadership to inform them of the transition in RAVE Board leadership and that we look forward to continuing to work with them.

- **Capital Planning & Infrastructure Working Group**

Mr. John Phelps, Chair

No report at this time.

TREASURER'S REPORT – Mr. Tom Walsh, Treasurer

Tom Walsh gives a brief overview of the presented financials and proposed budget and defers to Gretchen Gilmore. Gretchen Gilmore reviews the April financials and year-to-date comparisons along with the year-end financial forecast. Gretchen Gilmore states she is pleased with the year-end position. Tom Walsh and Craig Thomas commend the upward trend of the profits over the last few years, allowing subsidy funds to be used for capital improvements.

MOTION: To approve April 2026, financials made by Tom Walsh, second by Rudy Valdez. Motion passes unanimously.

Gretchen Gilmore reviews the FY27 budget, noting it is the most aggressive budget we have developed. Gretchen Gilmore briefly discusses the effect of competition from the Hard Rock Casino on our ability to offer and sell events and acknowledges we need to work harder to secure quality shows and sales. Gretchen Gilmore praises Assistant General Manager Doug Johnson on his efforts to secure events, and notes bookings will continue to be challenging next season as well. Gretchen Gilmore informs the board that she will include a forecast with the financials she provides to the City of Rockford to keep them updated on our financial position throughout the year. Craig Thomas questions if the direct competition from the Hard Rock Casino is tied to their own upcoming market competition from a new casino opening in Beloit, WI. Doug Johnson states he will be

providing more solutions to the board in upcoming months. Gretchen Gilmore informs the board we anticipate higher insurance costs but, as a result of capital improvements, we should incur lower utility charges. Gretchen Gilmore reviews budgeted events and placeholders for events, along with anticipated events at Davis Park. Bobbie Holzwarth inquires about room in the budget to fund initiatives for market competition. Gretchen Gilmore states the community fund is to be used at the discretion of the board and notes Doug Johnson is adept at booking and providing incentives to promoters.

MOTION: To approve the FY27 Budget, made by Tom Walsh, second by Craig Thomas. Motion passes unanimously.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT – Ms. Gretchen Gilmore, GM

Gretchen Gilmore informs the board that a new auditor has been hired. Gretchen Gilmore reports that both the elevator project and the lighting project at the Coronado Theatre will be reviewed and re-bid, and the exterior façade and streetscape projects will take place during the theatre shutdown in July and August. Gretchen Gilmore states the plasterwork project will likely take place during our winter break in theatre events. Gretchen Gilmore informs the board there is a committee working on events to commemorate the 100-year anniversary of the Coronado Theatre in October 2027.

Gretchen Gilmore updates the board on progress at Davis Park and that the City of Rockford has approved funds for the purchase of equipment at the park.

Gretchen Gilmore reports on the bid opening for phase II of the exterior elevated concourse and explains phase II has been broken into two parts, taking place this and next summer. Bulley & Andrews out of Chicago was the lowest responsible bidder for the project.

MOTION: To approve Phase II of the BMO Center Elevated Concourse and Curtain Wall Repair to Bulley & Andrews Concrete Restoration for the base bid of \$1,768,329.60 and approval for the Chair to approve awarding Alternate I to Bulley & Andrews Concrete Restoration for \$1,587,286.60 if the Chair determines, along with the General Manager, funds are available to fully fund the project within the next 60 days, made by Rudy Valdez, second by Craig Thomas. Motion passes unanimously.

Gretchen Gilmore informs the board that the generator testing went well, and the cooling tower project is slightly delayed and projected for July. Gretchen Gilmore relays we have hired MHI consulting to create the specifications, go to bid, and manage the replacement of the second lobby escalator.

Gretchen Gilmore states Legends Global renewed their Agreement with TicketMaster and there will likely be a modest increase with VIP, platinum, and secondary market tickets. We are onboarding with Legends Global for Project Admission, which integrates our premium tickets on the website, facilitating purchase by patrons.

Doug Johnson reviews the success of May events and states he is excited about upcoming events. Doug Johnson states he has high expectations for the new sales position we have created.

Bobbie Holzwarth introduces a video of a portion of Craig Thomas's interview for the 1834 Alliance project to share with the board the thoughts, passion, and vision reflected in our most recent Chairman.

COUNSEL'S REPORT – Attorney Tim Rollins

No report at this time.

CHAIR'S REPORT

No report at this time.

OLD BUSINESS:

None at this time.

NEW BUSINESS:

None at this time.

ADJOURNMENT – The Authority Board adjourned at 1:15 P.M.

MOTION: To adjourn made by Craig Thomas, second by Bobbie Holzwarth. Motion passes unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jackie Powers, Authority Board Secretary/ FOIA Officer