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# SPORTS AUTHORITY

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## INTERNSHIP COMMITTEE

### Meeting Minutes

November 4, 2021, at 1:45 PM

The meeting of the Sports Authority (“the Authority”) Internship Committee was called to order by Ms. Rosalyn Tillman, Chair, at 1:45 PM on November 4, 2021, in the Stokely Boardroom of the Visit Knoxville Visitor Center located at 301 South Gay Street.

In attendance were Rosalyn Tillman, Chair of the Sports Authority Internship Committee, Darris Upton, Knox County Diversity Development Manager, Kim Bumpas, President of Visit Knoxville, Cheryl Ball, City of Knoxville Deputy Chief of Economic and Community Development, and Stephanie Welch, Chief Economic and Community Development Officer and Deputy to the Mayor of the City of Knoxville. Sports Authority Internship Committee meetings are publicly noticed.

#### Report on Tampa and Houston Sports Authority Internship Programs – Bumpas

Mrs. Bumpas explained that the initial description of the Tampa Sports Authority Internship Program most closely matched the description of the internship program that the Knoxville/Knox County Sports Authority is building which is why she reached out to the head of their program. During that discussion, it became clear that the Tampa Sports Authority Internship Program had several differences such as:

- Budget
- Contracts
- Management and booking of the facilities
- 3 Tampa Bay Buccaneer facilities

The Tampa Sports Authority Internship Program is completely geared towards filling paid and unpaid positions within the facilities managed by the Sports Authority.

Mrs. Bumpas then explained that she called the Houston Sports Authority and found that it is set up much like the Tampa Sports Authority. The Houston Sports Authority Internship Program also offers paid and unpaid placements and has a budget.

Mrs. Bumpas further explained that she also spoke with Mr. Kirchhofer with Boyd Sports to inquire about how that internship program operates. Mr. Kirchhofer confirmed that Boyd Sports has reserved two internship placements per year for Sports Authority interns. Individuals selected by the Sports Authority could begin their placements in May or June of 2022. Then beginning in 2023, the interns would be placed in January or February with placements lasting 7-9 months. He also provided Mrs. Bumpas with an outline of the Boyd Sports internship program. Mrs. Bumpas presented the committee with documents that describe the Boyd Sports internship program and how the placement opportunities are categorized. Another document presented by Mrs. Bumpas to the committee explained the online application process for the Tampa Sports Authority’s internship program. Mrs. Bumpas suggested using the information gained from the documents as a baseline from which to build.

Mrs. Bumpas stated that the online application would live on the Visit Knoxville website and that Mrs. Ball would craft the application process based upon instruction from Mrs. Tillman and Visit Knoxville would facilitate uploading that information and marketing the program in partnership with the City and the County.

Mrs. Tillman asked if Boyd Sports would be willing to expand the number of placements accepted from the Sports Authority Internship Program. Mrs. Bumpas replied that expansion was not discussed but that Mr. Kirchhofer stated that the Authority could help dictate the roles into which the interns were placed. Mrs. Tillman stated that there are many areas within this project that would be beneficial to students. The agreement to place two interns with each vendor is a great starting point. She then asked with what other vendors or contractors besides Boyd Sports would the Sports Authority interns be placed. Mrs. Bumpas explained that during the September meeting, the committee discussed placing two interns with four companies during the inaugural year of the program. Possible companies that were discussed included Boyd Sports, Baker Donelson, Public Financial Management, Inc. (PFM), Cumberland Securities Company, Inc., Denark Construction, and Visit Knoxville. Lawler Wood LLC. having recently been chosen as the owner's representative for the Authority, Design Innovation Architects, and One Knoxville Soccer are other possible options.

Mrs. Ball asked if the vision is to begin the program by placing interns within four companies and see which other companies express an interest in participating in the program from there. Mr. Upton replied that these are the areas of focus with which to begin and as the project progresses the internship program can grow.

Mrs. Bumpas pointed out that One Knoxville Soccer is not currently ready for two interns. Mrs. Tillman agreed and added that the setup being discussed today is simply a base but that the program will expand from it.

Mrs. Ball asked if the interns would start in June 2022 and work for three months over the summer or if the internships would run through the fall semester. Mrs. Tillman replied that the original idea was that the internships would last 6-8 weeks. Boyd Sports is asking that their interns work for a longer duration. Similar to Project Grad, the duration of each internship would be determined by the organization with which the intern is placed based on their need. Mrs. Ball stated that longer-term internships provide a richer experience for the interns as well as the organization into which they are placed. Mrs. Bumpas quoted Mr. Kirchhofer by saying "I think we'll be crafting something specifically for the Sports Authority spots since the term will start in June and be limited to 6-8 weeks. Is there an option to start earlier than June? If not initially, maybe after the first year, we could consider these candidates for the full seven-month internship." Mrs. Bumpas went on to say that in year two, Boyd Sports would hold two spots for seven-month internships which would begin in January of 2023. Those interns would work in Sevierville. She explained that for 2022, Boyd Sports would design two placements that would begin in June and work until the end of the season. Mr. Upton asked if those would also work in Sevierville. Mrs. Bumpas replied that the positions could work in both locations because Boyd has work in Knoxville as well.

Mrs. Bumpas explained that although nothing is defined, options are available. Mr. Upton added that the groundwork exists with which to build upon.

#### Draft Program Outline Document Review - Tillman

Mrs. Tillman presented the committee with a draft program outline and explained she developed the outline from meeting notes. She asked that the committee review the outline, discuss what revisions and additions might need to be made to it, decide where each person's responsibilities are, and determine the next steps to develop a plan of action.

Mrs. Tillman asked for clarity about the capacity in which Mrs. Ball would be working with the internship committee. Ms. Welch explained that Mrs. Ball will act as a liaison from the City of Knoxville to assist the internship committee.

Mrs. Tillman explained that because that the Sports Authority has neither budget nor staff, she spoke with the director of AmeriCorps about the possibility of providing a staff person who could act as an overseer for the internship program for about a year. AmeriCorps requires a matching payment. Mrs. Tillman stated that the director of AmeriCorps also suggested that she speak with Mr. B. Miller at the University of Tennessee Knoxville because he might be able to create the infrastructure for the program and act as a program director. Mrs. Bumpas stated that Mr. Miller typically places students from his classes that need internship hours into internship positions. She added that students in his classes would not typically be those who would fulfill the Sports Authority Internship

Program's diversity and need-centered vision. Mrs. Tillman explained that she is exploring possibilities to find resources that can assist in making the internship program a successful reality.

Mrs. Tillman then asked Ms. Welch if the Economic and Community Development department could be a resource for a person who could provide program oversight. Ms. Welch asked for clarity about what responsibilities that person would have. Mrs. Tillman replied that the organizations with which the interns are placed will supervise the interns on a day-to-day basis but that she would like the Authority to have someone in place to provide oversight, evaluation, mentorship, and monitoring. Mrs. Bumpas expressed concern that in the initial phases a person dedicated to that role would have little to do once the interns are placed and suggested that the committee take on that role. The interns would be placed into well-established internship programs. She further suggested that the committee could perform surveys and exit interviews upon term completion. Mrs. Tillman explained that she would like this program to provide its interns with a person with whom they could consult, ask questions, and express concerns regarding their placement. Ms. Welch stated that as the program grows and becomes more successful, the possibility of dedicating a staff person to an oversight role would be more viable.

#### Contractor Discussion Related to Internships – Welch

Ms. Welch explained that the contractors and subcontractors who will be part of the development and operation of the stadium with whom she has spoken about the Sports Authority Internship Program are excited about it. Their biggest need is the desire to identify and attract students of color into the pipeline for professional positions within their fields and they welcome any assistance that the Authority can give them towards that effort. Some of the organizations have developed internship programs already in place into which they are eager to place this program's interns once they are recruited, screened, and nominated.

Mrs. Bumpas reiterated the commitment expressed by Boyd Sports to hold two placements for interns from this program starting in the summer of 2022 with a 6–8-week program and continuing thereafter beginning in January or February with placements that last 7 months. She also stated that due to the legal issues that exist regarding diversity and inclusion that Mr. Oso explained in previous meetings, the program would need to recruit geographically or by zip code and carefully state the goals for the program.

Mrs. Welch explained that there are two agreements in which she is involved in negotiations: the lease agreement and the development agreement. She explained that the lease agreement is with Boyd Sports whose commitment has been explained by Mrs. Bumpas. Ms. Welch believes that the developer would also agree to hold two placements per year for both years that the stadium construction is expected to last for a total of four placements and that those placements would be in professional fields such as construction management, architecture, or engineering. This section of the contracts will not contain any language about the diversity of the interns.

Mrs. Ball asked if the internships would be credit-based. Mrs. Welch replied that initially, they would not be credit-based but they could be in the future. Mrs. Bumpas explained that Visit Knoxville does not offer paid internships. Ms. Welch stated that Denark offers both paid and unpaid internship placements based on the needs of the intern because the credits are an academic requirement for some of them.

Mr. Upton explained that some of the organizations from whom he receives proposals have begun to add language that addresses inequities and the recruitment of people from underrepresented and minority communities within their proposals. The organizations that accept interns also have the ability to ask about the diversity of the candidates who are being presented to them. Mr. Upton stated that the Economic Development Administration (EDA) is currently providing grant funding for programs that address equity and support diversity and inclusion and could be a source of funding for this internship program. Ms. Welch agreed that once the program is built, researching sources of funding would be a good step.

Ms. Welch explained that both consultants with whom she spoke expressed concern about the lack of diverse candidates available for placement within their programs. In order for the students to receive a meaningful experience working with professionals in leadership positions, those students must first have received some academic training; therefore, only juniors and seniors are accepted into the internships that they offer. Students

of color are highly sought after in these fields because there are so few of them. This program would create a much-needed pipeline into these career fields. Mrs. Tillman stated that the lack of numbers underscores the need for and the importance of the type of program that the committee is creating. She stated it will be important that the program make use of every available resource, such as Project Grad, in identifying and recruiting participants.

Mr. Upton explained that during the process of recruiting an intern for the Knox County Office of Diversity Development he found no available students of color at a master's degree level. The hope with the Sports Authority Internship Program is that once it is built, it will attract diverse candidates. Ms. Welch reiterated that the organizations with which she spoke are truly excited about this internship program. They expressed a strong desire to participate and asked if there was a way to attract students of diverse backgrounds earlier than the junior and senior levels to create a more robust pipeline and how they could help do that. Ms. Welch expressed that a strong desire to be part of the solution exists. Mrs. Ball stated that in her experience with a previous employer, the same challenge arose and underscored the importance of making intentional efforts to start the conversation about targeting and attracting students of color into a wider range of career paths.

### Next Steps

- Contractually obligate the developer and the lessee to hold two internship placements for Sports Authority Internship Program recruited and nominated interns through the terms of their respective agreements. The suggested language as read from the lease agreement:
  - **Internships.** Tenant agrees to provide at least two placement opportunities each academic year (during the term of this Agreement) for interns recruited and nominated by the Sports Authority. The process for intern recruitment, nomination, and placement will be addressed through a separate Internship Program Agreement between Tenant and Authority. Authority-nominated interns accepted by Tenant will participate in meaningful opportunities to engage in projects and activities that provide exposure to professional career pathways, such as sports management, event planning, and marketing. The Internship Program Agreement will address placement-specific variables such as internship terms, job descriptions, supervision, intern reports, and compensation.
- Create the Sports Authority Internship Program using available resources and information provided by Mrs. Tillman's outline as well as the information provided by Boyd Sports.
  - Create a structure. Mrs. Ball commented that for the first year it might be best to recruit the student and then place them in the most appropriate position based on their needs and qualifications.
  - Determine what resources will be used to assist with the identification and recruitment of candidates.
    - Identify name and contact information for academic programs.
  - Develop a method of program evaluation to assist with developing a program that meets the needs of the students as well as their hosts.
  - Create the jot form for the application process, upload it to the Visit Knoxville website, and market it.
  - Review the zip code research needed for targeting information.
  - Create a proposal based on the available resources and structure that can be accomplished by February.
  - Create a marketing piece such as a flyer or other document to advertise the availability of the program.
  - Create a contract agreement template for the host organizations.

Mrs. Bumpas explained that it is important to remember that the candidates will be placed into quality internship programs that already exist and to try to be mindful of that when creating the parameters. She expressed that a candidate applying to a program would seek out details rather than generalities. To create the program

based upon the timeline that has been laid out, the structure of the program must be laid out as soon as possible. Quality candidates begin to apply for placements in February. She reminded the committee that Boyd Sports has agreed not to fill two of their spots between February to June until this program sends them candidates. It would be disappointing if the program were not able to meet that timeline.

Mrs. Ball asked how often the committee meets. Mrs. Tillman informed her that the Sports Authority Internship Committee meets monthly. Mrs. Bumpas stated that a December meeting date had not been set. Mrs. Tillman suggested that a Zoom meeting might be helpful. Ms. Welch explained that publicly noticed meetings must be held in person but that she felt much of the work could be completed. Mrs. Bumpas expressed that, with a few edits and branding, the outline provided by Mrs. Tillman defines the program well and can easily be made ready by February. Mr. Upton commented that the task is made simpler because the program is starting with a small number. As the initial group goes through the program, certain aspects can be changed and enhanced in preparation for the next group. He commented that the outline is a fantastic starting point. Mrs. Tillman stated that the contract from Project Grad could be used as a base.

Ms. Welch stated that a December meeting would be possible. Mrs. Tillman explained that her availability is extremely limited in December. Mrs. Bumpas explained that no public notice would be needed if only one member of the Authority was present. She suggested that between this meeting and January, the committee create an email roundtable and share all available documents in editable form. The committee could then discuss and make any necessary changes and then approve the documents in the publicly noticed January meeting. Members of the Authority would not be able to discuss the items with each other but could communicate via non-Authority members.

#### Adjournment

Mrs. Tillman adjourned the meeting at 2:53 PM.