
SPORTS AUTHORITY

INTERNSHIP COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

September 14, 2021, at 1:00 PM

The inaugural meeting of the Sports Authority Internship Committee was called to order by Ms. Rosalyn Tillman, Chair, at 1:08 PM on September 14, 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, Alvin Nance, Chair of the Sports Authority Board of Directors, Stephanie Welch, Chief Economic and Community Development Officer and Deputy to the Mayor of the City of Knoxville, Culver Schmid, Attorney at Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell, & Berkowitz, PC., Oso Olamide, Attorney at Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell, & Berkowitz, PC., Darris Upton, Knox County Diversity Development Manager, Kelly Drummond, City of Knoxville Human Resources Director, Kim Bumpas, President of Visit Knoxville. Members of the media were also in attendance.

Mrs. Tillman introduced herself and asked each person present to do the same. She then asked Ms. Welch to give a brief history and overview of the purpose of the committee. Ms. Welch explained that the committee was formed to research internship opportunities as they related to the proposed multiuse stadium project. The project is in the design phase and many decisions are still being made. The Sports Authority has been formed to provide oversight for the project. If the project receives approval an agreement will exist between the City of Knoxville, Knox County, and the Sports Authority to finance the project. The goal is to have an agreement in place by October 2021 that will allow the Sports Authority to move forward with the project by completing the negotiations, completing the design phase, and beginning construction with a groundbreaking in January or February of 2022. The construction phase is expected to last two years and would result in the stadium opening in the fall of 2023 or the spring of 2024. The location and history of the land upon which the stadium is proposed to be built provide a generational opportunity for East Knoxville. Urban renewal has historically been destructive to the area. This project could help heal the area physically, culturally, and economically. Engaging people who are early in their careers to provide them with a route for involvement with this project and beyond is one way the Sports Authority has identified that could help in the healing process.

Mrs. Tillman added that during the Sports Authority meeting on July 13th, the Sports Authority had the opportunity to add Baker Donelson Law Firm, First Bank, Public Financial Management, and Cumberland Securities to the team. Diversity and inclusion became key factors during that discussion. The question of whether opportunities exist where students could be recruited, given exposure to, and experience in the various fields that these organizations represent. The Knoxville Area Urban League (KAUL) is working hard to ensure that diversity exists in the areas of construction and workforce. The Authority would like to ensure that diversity also exists in the areas of leadership and business that this project will involve as well. Students of color in our community typically do not get opportunities such as this and, as a result, talented students tend to leave and do not return choosing instead to utilize their talents elsewhere.

Mrs. Tillman explained that this committee has the following two goals:

- Provide a program that allows minority students to participate in the various operations of the Sports Authority Board.
- Create a pipeline of minority professionals through internship experiences.

Mr. Schmid asked if the committee would also attempt to provide opportunities on the developer side of the project which would have a more varied array of experiences available in which students could participate. He explained that the opportunities available through the organizations currently involved would be limited in scope due to the needs of those organizations. Baker Donelson, for example, would need law students and would therefore only be able to provide opportunities to students in that field. The scope of opportunities that the Authority would be able to provide would be even more limited. The scope of opportunities available on the development side would be much broader and encompass a wide range of fields from business and sports administration to real estate development.

Mrs. Tillman stated that it would be ideal to include the developer. Several Sports Authority boards have internship programs including Houston, San Jose, and Sioux Falls. They have areas such as sports management, marketing, graphic design, and finance. She then asked if opportunities existed within the organizations that were currently involved that could benefit interns. She mentioned Project Grad and Hands on the Future that could be used as models to bring students in for the summer and expose them to the project as a stepping stone to a larger internship vision in the future.

Mr. Upton stated that the County has had great success with Hands on the Future. This year nearly every senior director that was involved asked if they could hire a student they hosted. Both the host company and the student benefit from this and similar programs. Engaging students at this level exposes them to opportunities that they otherwise would not have. Finding ways to build internship opportunities into this process is extremely important and could be a significant boost to the community.

Mrs. Tillman explained that this program could become a model for other programs in the future.

Mr. Schmid stated that several options exist including:

- Engaging the organizations that are currently participating in the multiuse stadium development project to see what kind of internship opportunities they could offer. These would be limited by the type of work each organization does.
- Offer internship opportunities directly with the Authority. This would also be limited and difficult to define a scope of work for the intern.
- Engaging the developer and owner to ensure internship opportunities exist within the wide-ranging fields that would be available as the project progresses and throughout the life of the agreement. This would need to be negotiated into the agreements that are currently being defined.

Mr. Schmid suggested adding internship requirements into the contract(s) as the best and most beneficial option. He suggested that the Authority be responsible for recruiting participants through programs like Project Grad, Hands on the Future, and First Start as well as local colleges and universities.

Ms. Welch stated that the agreements are in the process of development, therefore now is the time to have these discussions.

Mr. Nance encouraged the committee to be mindful that there is a cost associated with developing and sustaining paid internships that must be accounted for. As the Authority considers approaching the developer with these requests it needs to define where the responsibility for those costs will fall.

Mrs. Tillman stated that many programs are credit-based, meaning that students receive educational credit rather than monetary payment for their time.

Mrs. Bumpas stated that the Visit Knoxville internship program is academic credit-based.

Mr. Schmid explained that when structured with an educational institution, many times internship programs are included in the academic piece. There are also laws associated with internships that will need to be researched. We do not want to add anything to the agreement that could endanger its success.

Mr. Nance suggested that the Authority find ways to create a structured turn-key program that does not add significant cost or eliminates the cost to the developer.

Mrs. Tillman expressed that young professionals who are early in their careers would benefit from experience with the organizations that are associated with the project as well through exposure and network building. She also spoke with Clarence Vaughn from the University of Tennessee who mentioned the added value that student interns can bring to a company. She added that it needs to be a requirement that interns be allowed to assist with the work being done. She hopes that all entities associated with the project be engaged with the internship program. The development of this program will show the Authority's intentionality in terms of working towards economic progress and workforce development in the community.

Mrs. Bumpas asked Mrs. Tillman for the names of the Sports Authorities that she mentioned earlier that had programs such as this already in place. Mrs. Tillman answered Houston, Sioux Falls, and San Jose. Ms. Bumpas said that although those Authorities may have a different structure, she will investigate how they have set up their internship programs to see if any insight can be gained. She also informed the committee that the media would be joining the meeting shortly.

Ms. Drummond stated that when looking at the issue from a diversity and inclusion standpoint, it should be noted that potential participants may not be enrolled in college and would therefore not benefit from an academic credit-based internship opportunity. When available, paid internship opportunities should be made available for those who might need that benefit.

Mrs. Bumpas mentioned that Mrs. Thompson mentioned grant opportunities that may be available to assist the program in offering paid internships.

Mr. Upton mentioned that programs exist with the state that can pay for interns under workforce development. He noted that it is important to value the time that the interns would give to the positions/companies for which they would work because they could go elsewhere and earn money for that time.

Mr. Schmid asked Mr. Olamide to comment on his experience concerning paid as opposed to academic credit-based internships. Mr. Olamide responded that monetarily based internships would be ideal given the target demographic, many members of which do not have the luxury to give of their time without payment.

Mrs. Tillman mentioned that when speaking with her contact at Pellissippi State, she learned that regardless of demographics, students will typically gravitate towards the paid internship opportunities.

With regards to adding an internship program into one of the agreements, Ms. Welch explained that there are three agreements associated with the multiuse stadium project.

- Development Agreement between the Sports Authority and RR Land which owns the property on which the stadium is proposed to be built. This agreement would lay out the

provisions for the construction of the stadium. It would involve construction managers and subcontractors.

- Lease Agreement between the Sports Authority and Boyd Sports which is the entity that will lease the stadium. This agreement will also involve subcontractors who would provide security, custodial services, concessions, etc.
- There may also be a project manager representing the Authority to oversee the implementation of the development agreement.

Ms. Welch explained that, within each of these, there are several factors to be negotiated.

Mr. Schmid expressed that this conversation is timely because if this aspect is going to be added, now is the time to make those additions. He mentioned that he will raise the issue with Mr. Mamantov to see how and where these terms could be added. The details could be fleshed out later.

Mrs. Tillman asked if Mr. Schmid is referring to the developers inside the stadium or those outside the stadium. Mr. Schmid answered that he is referring to the land developer and the operating company which would offer very different scopes of work. The land developer will build the stadium. The operating company will manage the stadium once it is built. A myriad of internship opportunities could exist throughout both areas.

Mr. Nance explained that the different phases of the project will present different internship opportunities. Mr. Schmid added that the scope of the Authority's work is very front-loaded and that when construction begins there would be little for an intern to do; however, the other entities involved would need assistance in a greater capacity.

Ms. Bumpas stated that from a messaging standpoint, this vision could be captured both ways. The program is the vision of the Authority, and the interns are placed among the vendors. The offerings could be communicated through the platform of the Authority, which would administer applications and interviews and then place the interns as and where needed among the vendors working on the project.

Mr. Schmid stated that as the Authority develops, finds funding, and administers the program, the more likely the developer and vendors are to agree to participate. The Authority could take the burden from the developer altogether except for providing the experience for the interns.

Mr. Upton suggested that there are programs that the Authority could utilize, such as Hands on the Future. The host company communicates how many interns they need, provides job descriptions and requirements, Project Grad determines which students would be best suited for which positions and sends the host company a shortlist that they can interview. Organizations can help vet students/participants. Mr. Upton will research ways that the state could help fund this program.

Mr. Schmid suggested that the Sports Authority develop a premier program and be the model for others. If funding could be found, many of the developer's concerns could be eliminated.

Mr. Nance suggested that the Authority communicates to the developer that this is a partnership in which they and the Authority would work together to make the program successful.

Mr. Upton suggested that from a workforce development standpoint the program is providing the developer with the next generation of leaders for the various industries with which they are involved.

Ms. Drummond asked about the proposed timeline for when the Authority would like interns to begin work. Mrs. Tillman stated that next semester, January, would be ideal but might be too soon. Fleshing out the details and developing the program would determine that timeline and that may require that it begins in the summer.

Mrs. Bumpas explained that the Authority possesses the platform to communicate the vision. She added that it is likely that the program would need to start in the summer of next year to ensure that it is developed correctly as well as to determine what opportunities are available, what the requirements are, etc. Visit Knoxville can look at different models and come back to the committee with information from which to choose how to develop this program. The most immediate need would be having the developer agree to the concept.

Mr. Schmid recommended that the Authority develop the program between now and January when the deal is expected to close and be ready to present the offerings in February for summer positions.

Mr. Nance explained that construction will begin as soon as possible after closing.

Mrs. Bumpas advised that the opportunities could be posted in January with effective start dates as soon as March. The structure should be crafted in a way that is effective, sustainable, and representative of the Authority in a positive light.

Mrs. Tillman expressed that the ideal positions made available to the students would be those that expose them to leadership and upper-level positions. Participants in the program need to be exposed to experiences that help them see a future that motivates them to excel. Mr. Schmid added that positions like these would help inspire the best and brightest candidates to remain local. Mrs. Tillman continued that although there is a shortage of skilled tradespeople, the focus of this program would be targeting administration. Mr. Schmid agreed that the Authority desires to attract management and administrators as well as skilled tradespeople.

Ms. Drummond asked if the Authority has begun to contact different departments at the University. Mrs. Tillman has spoken with Clarence Vaughn at the UT Business School as well as her contacts at Pellissippi State. Part of the issue is that many of the students of color enrolled at the local colleges and universities are not from the local area. A premier program could overcome that challenge with strategic, intentional effort.

Mr. Upton recommended that the committee begin thinking about who should be included in the effort to develop this program. Receiving information from people who work in these areas is important. Ms. Welch added that practitioners should be involved as well so that the Authority can ensure that the needs of the community are met.

Ms. Welch stated that the first step is to explain the Authority's internship program vision to the entities with whom agreements are being negotiated.

- Internship opportunities for students/participants of color.
- Expose participants to leadership roles/opportunities in the industries in which they are interested.
- The Authority is willing to create the platform that would recruit and help match participants to positions provided by the vendor(s).
 - Mrs. Bumpas added that if the vendor chose to, they could also have a role in the selection process. Mrs. Tillman explained that Hands on the Future allows the host company to interview potential interns. Mr. Upton stated that department heads interview the interns before making a final decision. He added that job descriptions are also provided to Project Grad so that they are aware of what the internship requires. Ms. Bumpas stated that it is a great opportunity for the intern to practice interviewing.

Ms. Welch went on to outline the required responsibilities as follows:

Host Organization:

- Identify placements within their organizations that would expose students of color to leadership roles within their industry.
- Craft job descriptions for those placements which would outline the responsibilities of the intern.
- Assist in the interview process.
- Provide direct supervision of the interns who fill those placements.

The Authority:

- Develop the platform.
- Create relationships to establish and maintain the internship pipeline.
- Manage the process of internship placement.
- Potential funding.

Mr. Nance asked Mr. Schmid, with the understanding of the intended goal of this internship program, if state money is accepted to assist with funding would the Authority have the ability to focus acceptance into this program to minorities only? Mr. Schmid answered that the programs could focus their efforts on low-income households residing within a specific geographic area but cannot discriminate without running up against constitutional and/or affirmative action infractions. Efforts can be directed towards participants in households that are located within the empowerment zone or who reside within eight miles of the stadium construction site. It could also focus on participants who are first-generation tertiary education students within their families. Ms. Welch added that the language could mirror that of the disenfranchised business enterprise (DBE) language. Mr. Schmid continued that if the Authority develops the turnkey model, then the requirements can be crafted in such a way as to achieve the vision of retaining talented minorities to the community.

Mrs. Bumpas asked the committee members if they would like to have these meetings scheduled monthly and add key members to the committee invitation such as Mr. Vaughn? The meetings can be held in the Visit Knoxville boardroom. The committee agreed they would like to meet monthly. Mr. Nance asked Mr. Schmid if the committee could also meet at his offices. Mr. Schmid replied that public meetings are not yet permitted.

Mr. Upton stated that the Authority can engage with several organizations that do this type of work to get their thoughts and expertise.

Ms. Drummond asked the name of the Pellissippi State contact that Mrs. Tillman and Mr. Upton referred to earlier. Mrs. Tillman replied that her name is Sally Lighter, and she works with internships at the college primarily out of the business school.

Mr. Schmid asked if Pellissippi continues to work with Discovery. Mrs. Tillman answered that she was not sure. Mr. Schmid explained that while he represented Discovery, he assisted them with creating an internship program similar to what the Authority is exploring. Mrs. Tillman stated that Pellissippi State works with several companies to provide interns.

Mr. Schmid asked if Mrs. Bumpas planned to research the Sports Authorities that Mrs. Tillman mentioned earlier during the meeting to see how those programs were set up. Mrs. Bumpas replied that she would research them and send that information to the committee.

Mrs. Tillman explained that the next step is to speak with people and companies that have experience with internship administration and begin to flesh out what the Authority internship program

would look like and how it would run. She asked that the committee members send suggestions about who should be contacted for information on the topic to herself as well as Ms. Welch.

Mrs. Bumpas stated that she will reach out to Mrs. Tillman and Ms. Welch regarding scheduling future committee meetings.

Mr. Schmid will speak with Mr. Mamantov. Ms. Welch will also reach out to him to learn how this topic can be negotiated into the agreements.

Mrs. Tillman asked Mr. Schmid if he thought that the Authority's financial planner, legal counsel, or financial institution would be beneficial candidates to contact regarding internship opportunities. Mr. Schmid explained that it would be more difficult because the scope of their work would be extremely limited as compared to the developer side. He also noted that any opportunities provided by those three entities would be extremely short term whereas the developer side could commit to 30 years of participation. Mr. Nance added that it would be beneficial to inquire with those companies to allow students to get a feel for how those industries work. It would allow them to see what happens behind the scenes when building a stadium such as this. He mentioned that the Authority could ask administrators from the companies to visit the schools to speak with the students during an assembly. Mr. Schmid suggested that the Authority request a representative from either the Boyd group, the City, or the County visit Austin East, Central, Fulton, and other schools to speak with the students about the project and how they can get involved.

Mrs. Tillman informed the committee that Mrs. Bumpas would communicate the date and time of the next meeting.

Mrs. Tillman adjourned the Sports Authority Internship Committee meeting at 1:47 PM.