

Columbus Sports & Entertainment Authority

Minutes

August 10, 2026 • 1:00 pm

Columbus Civic Center, Hospitality Suites

400 4th St, Columbus, GA 31901

ATTENDANCE:

Voting Members Present (In Person) – Andy Luker, Ashley Woitena, Herman Lewis, Gerald Miley, Morgan Moore

Voting Members Absent – Robert Wadkins, Mike Welch, Jim Rutland

Ex-Officio Members Present – Jeremy Miles, Ryan Pruett, Charles Auer, Jeff Croop

Ex-Officio Members Absent – Holli Browder

Virtual Members Present: Deputy City Manager Lisa Goodwin and Lt. Kelly Phillips

Visitor(s) Present: Deputy City Manager Pam Hodge (virtual)

1. Call to Order

- Andy Luker, Chair, called the meeting at 1:03 pm.

2. Roll Call

- Authority Department Secretary – Zeanne Abano, Civic Center

3. Approval of Minutes

- Chair provided time to review prior meeting minutes. Motion to approve by Morgan Moore; second by Gerald Miley. July minutes approved.

4. Executive Director Search Firm – RFP Update

- Robert Wadkins submitted emails and names to Purchasing.
- Meeting scheduled with Heather (Purchasing) to finalize RFP review plan and process.
- Purchasing will brief committee on RFP procedure/timeline; full timeline to be shared by Robert after meeting with Heather.
- Anticipated search process duration once firm is selected; approximately 3-4 months (dependent on firm and city purchasing timelines).

5. Pouring Rights RFP Update

- Current Pepsi pouring rights contract expires September 15.
- Purchasing manager can extend current contract up to one year to allow a complete RFP process and avoid last-minute rush
- Letters of support received from Lions and River Dragons (Jeff Croop and Roger Beck) citing positive partnership; venue leadership (Kanise Wiggins) supportive.
- Motion to approve recommending one-year extensions through Purchasing. Motion to approve by Morgan Moore; second by Ashley Woitena. One year extension approved; RFP to be properly scheduled thereafter.

6. Facility Fee Proposal (Sporting Events)

- Proposal: Implement a \$1 facility fee on sporting event tickets
- Rationale: Projected ~200,000 tickets could yield up to ~\$200,000 annually if sales meet/exceed prior season.
- Exclusions proposed: already-purchased season tickets, existing group sales, military tickets and comps.
- Display/communication: fee to appear as “Facility Fee” on Ticketmaster (consistent with concerts); message to clarify fee benefits the building, not tenants.
- Discussion: considered public sensitivity due to concurrent ticket price increase by tenants; starting at \$1 seen as a prudent step, with potential future adjustment.
- Note: other events (concerts) continue with standard facility fees (typically \$5), subject to promoter rebates in certain cases.

7. Concessions and Lease Terms

- Upcoming concession contract timelines discussed; interest in avoiding rushed RFPs and aligning with broader planning.
- Quality/cleanliness concerns noted; desire for higher standards and options.
- Tenants requested: two-year lease extensions and removal/adjustment of the 90-day termination clause.
- Discussion points:
 - i. Ensure Legal review (Lucy Sheftall) to protect city interests and consider venue-specific differences
 - ii. Compare contracts across Civic Center tenants rather than to external facilities (e.g. Clingstones) due to differing contexts and investments.
 - iii. Gather tenants requested changes and concerns for informed review
- Direction: Columbus Civic Center Interim Director (Kanise Wiggins) to coordinate with Legal and return with recommendations.

8. South Common Development Update

- Choose Columbus leading planning for surrounding area (retail, hotel, residential).
- First look of the draft expected this week; subsequent public hearings for input.

- Redevelopment does not include the four Authority properties (Ice Rink, Civic Center, A.J. McClung Stadium, South Commons) but may impact them; hope for complementary city investment in properties

9. Ice Rink Roof Update

- No new update; continued follow-up with City (Allen Minton) on mitigation options vs. full replacement.
- Prior discussion referenced multiple leaks and potential partial fixes.

10. Public/Stakeholder Comments (as discussed during items)

- Tenants (Jeff Croop and Roger Beck) expressed support for Pepsi extension and articulated rationale for adjusting/removing 90-day termination clause due to ongoing investments and operational risk.

11. Adjournment

- Meeting adjourned at 1:55 pm. Motion to adjourn made by Ashley Woitena; second by Gerald Miley.

Minutes Recorded by: Zeanne Abano, Civic Center, Authority Department Secretary

*Next meeting is scheduled for **Monday, September 14, 2026, at 1:00 pm,***

Columbus Civic Center, Hospitality Suites, 400 4th St, Columbus, GA 31901