Columbus Sports & Entertainment Authority

Minutes

June 8, 2026 ● 1:00 pm

Columbus Civic Center, Hospitality Suites

400 4th St, Columbus, GA 31901

ATTENDANCE:

Voting Members Present – Andy Luker (Chair), Robert Wadkins (Vice Chair), Ashley Woitena (Secretary), Herman Lewis (Treasurer), Mike Welch, Gerald Miley, and Morgan Moore

Voting Members Absent – Jim Rutland

Ex-Officio Members Present – Holli Browder, Ryan Pruett, Kelly Phillips, and Jeff Croop

Ex-Officio Members Absent – Jeremy Miles, Deputy City Manager Lisa Goodwin, Charles Auer

Visitor(s) Present: Deputy City Manager Pam Hodge

1. **Call to Order**
   - Andy Luker, Chair, called the meeting at 1:04 pm.

2. **Roll Call**
   - Authority Department Secretary – Zeanne Abano, Civic Center

3. **Approval of Minutes**
   - Minutes for May 11 and Special Called Meeting on May 26, approved. Robert Wadkins made the motion to approve. Gerald Miley second.

4. **Presentation & Discussion -** presented by Missy Kendrick, Choose Columbus
   - Project scope: ~154-acre South Commons area (includes A.J. McClung Stadium, Civic Center, Ice Rink, South Commons Baseball fields and associated legacy facilities)

   - Due diligence & market study:
     i. Initial city allocation: $250,000 for due diligence
     ii. Phase I due diligence completed by Barge: ~$90,710
     iii. Additional boring/testing required: additional ~$60,000 (exceeded initial $250k).
     iv. Market study commissioned (KB Advisory Group): ~$34,000 (some items pending coordination with master planner, including anti-displacement work).

- Master planning:
    i. RFQ received 10 proposals; anonymous review committee narrowed to top firms; Nelson (firm that worked on Atlanta Battery) selected – master planning contract - ~$199,000
    ii. City Council asked for an additional $250,000 to cover master planning and contingencies; Choose Columbus is also applying for a $250,000 EDA grant that could offset that city allocation.
    iii. Stakeholder kickoff meeting scheduled for June 17; invitations being sent and additional stakeholder list to be included. Civic Center representatives (Andy Luker, Chair) invited.

- Legacy facilities:
    i. Master plan will include and account for legacy facilities but does not propose redeveloping or removing them – intent is to integrate them into a mixed-use, sports-themed plan while preserving necessary parking and access.
    ii. Missy emphasized redevelopment funding is from private developers/investors (ground leases/private ownership for new development) and will not directly fund city-owned facility upgrades; however, master plan and market study will highlight needs and may drive attention/funding for existing facilities.
    iii. City must decide whether to retain ownership and lease parcels or sell land to developers – this decision will affect development approaches.

- Concerns Raised:
    i. Several board members expressed concern that existing legacy facilities (A.J. McClung Stadium , Civic Center, Softball Complex and Ice Rink) may be overshadowed, underfunded, or left needing upgrades without direct funding in the redevelopment plan. Board requested that master planning explicitly incorporate considerations for how surrounding redevelopment should highlight and recommend necessary upgrades to those facilities.
    ii. Environmental/contamination concerns related to nearby business (e.g. Gas stations) were noted and are part of the additional due diligence testing.
    iii. Need for improved long-term maintenance and funding planning for city-owned facilities was raised (if the city remains ownership).

5. **RFP & Procurement Updates**
    - Chair followed up with Purchasing on outstanding RFP(s); concerned about publishing timing relative to June 30 deadline and potential need to extend if not published in time.
    - Invitation to finalize RFP evaluation committee composition at the July meeting; recommended composition: 3-4 authority members (voting), alternate voters, and city advisors (non-voting).
    - Follow-up required on slab-of-concrete quotes (Allen Minton awaiting two additional quotes)

6. **MOU with Parks & Recreation**
    - Meetings held with Parks & Rec staff; consensus to position Sports Entertainment Authority to be responsible for operation/oversight of all four facilities with budgeting coordination.

- Parks & Rec will provide MOU template. Board to review and vote by mid-July (target July 13 mentioned).

7. **Financial Reporting**
   - Board requested regular monthly financial statements from each facility (general income statement/ Profit & Loss statement)
   - Jennifer McVay, Civic Center Finance Manager to provide year-end profit & loss statement and set format for monthly updates

8. **Public Comment –** NONE.

9. **Adjournment –** Meeting adjourned at 1:15 pm. Robert Wadkins made the motion to adjourn. Ashley Woitena second.

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

Next meeting is scheduled for ***Monday, July 13, 2026, at 1:00 pm****,*

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