

WASHINGTON STATE MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL STADIUM PUBLIC FACILITIES  
DISTRICT

Monday, November 13, 2023, 11:30 AM  
Public Facilities District, Conference Room  
T-Mobile Park, Club 1 Conference Room, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Seattle, Washington 98134

**SPECIAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

The PFD held a Special Meeting of the Board of Directors in-person and in a manner consistent with guidance from the Attorney General's office. Virtual access was provided via a Microsoft Teams conference system (video or phone) upon request. Members of the public desiring to leave a comment but not able to attend the meeting in person were asked to submit comments to [curtisj@ballpark.org](mailto:curtisj@ballpark.org) at least 24 hours prior to the meeting start time.

**CALL TO ORDER / WELCOME**

Chair Carol K. Nelson called the meeting to order at 11:35am, pursuant to notice. Board Members joining the meeting in person: Vice-Chair Chris Marr, Brian Surratt, R. Omar Riojas, Stacy Graven, Andrea Sato and Mike Fong. Staff and consultants present: Joshua Curtis (Executive Director), Annie Thenell (Office Manager), and Tom Backer (Legal Counsel). Also present from the Seattle Mariners, were Vice President for Strategy/Analytics Chris Kennedy (11:50-12:30) and Mariners Executive VP/Legal Counsel Fred Rivera (11:50-12:30 and 2:00-2:45).

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

No written public comment was received.

**FACILITATED BOARD DISCUSSION**

**BUILDING TEAMWORK AMONG THE BOARD AND STAFF**

To kick-off the retreat, the Board and staff answered this question: "What is a significant experience in your life that has led you to serve the PFD. Everyone answered with their own personal reflections on the reasons for their service.

At the end of this session, Chris observed that we are here to invest in baseball, improve the fans' experience, and the experience of people who are not fans but are in the neighborhoods.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. The PFD's primary role is to work with the Mariners on what is going on inside the ballpark while maintaining an interest in the impacts of the ballpark on the surrounding neighborhoods and community.
  - The Board credits Fred Rivera for the Mariners' greater interest in the impacts of the ballpark on the neighborhoods.
  - Board members recognize that the financial sustainability of the ballpark and its impacts on the neighborhoods and region is a major interest and responsibility.

2. **The Board's priorities in 2024:** a) Stadium District and neighborhood relations; b) Neighborhood Improvement Fund (NIF); and c) Ballpark Reference List and trips. The context for the agreement on priorities is provided in points 3-6.
3. **Relations with the Seattle Mariners.** The relationship with the Mariners is good. The comments of Mariners representatives Fred Rivera and Chris Kennedy indicated this. The Board cited four factors for the improvement of this relationship during the past few years: a) the new lease; b) both the Mariners and PFD agree that the ballpark should achieve the standards of what the team and PFD consider to be the top ten baseball stadiums in Major League Baseball (MLB); c) under John Stanton's leadership, the Mariners consider the PFD a partner; and d) Joshua Curtis has worked hard to strengthen the relationship by cultivating better communications and collaboration between the PFD and Mariners.
  - Everyone acknowledged that the PFD needs to continue to work hard to maintain and strengthen the relationship.
  - Brian Surratt observed that Climate Pledge Arena, the new home of the Seattle Kraken, has raised the bar for sports facilities in Seattle. Board members agreed and observed that there is more pressure to ensure that T-Mobile Park remains a first-class facility among MLB ballparks and the facilities in our region.
4. **Neighborhood Relations.** As the Board deepens its understanding of the neighborhoods that surround the ballpark, it can determine the appropriate role for the PFD. The PFD doesn't need to be a broker between the Mariners and neighborhoods. There might be a role for the PFD to play in working with neighborhood representatives; for example, investing some Neighborhood Improvement Funds in improvements that could strengthen our neighborhood.
  - In considering a role, the Board needs to be mindful of geography and issues. What are neighborhoods and issues that would be appropriate for the PFD to be engaged in given its mission?
  - Board members suggested to Joshua that a standing item on the Board's meeting agendas should be an update on what is occurring within the neighborhoods. Of particular interest at this time is Chinatown/International District because the PFD has more recently been focused on what is happening south of T-Mobile Park.
  - At the end of the retreat, the Board generated other ideas for how to connect to the community. See #8 for those additional recommendations.
5. **Neighborhood Improvement Fund (NIF).** Use the NIF to strengthen relationships with the neighborhoods. Stacy Graven, Omar Riojas, and Joshua will present to the Board criteria by which to determine when the Board might commit funding to a project and examples of projects that might be funded using the criteria.

- There are different perspectives among Board members on the size of the PFD's Operating Fund annual surplus and the how the PFD should invest/spend these funds at the end of the year.
  - There appeared to be consensus that the PFD should continue refine the criteria used to identify the feasibility of NIF projects. The board asked Joshua to work with Stacy and Omar to identify other possible investments that are currently out there regardless of their current feasibility to allow for a review by the board.
6. **Ballpark Reference List and Trips.** By September 2024 the Mariners and PFD will develop the Ballpark Reference List, the list of ten MLB ballparks that helps guide the standards by which T-Mobile Park is assessed.
- By the end of the first quarter of next year, the criteria should be identified, consistent with the Lease.
  - During the second and third quarters the Mariners and PFD will work on the Top Ten List.
  - In March the ballparks that the Board and Mariners' representatives will tour should be finalized.
  - Board members were urged to join the tour(s) of comparable ballparks. Some Board members suggested that in touring other ballparks, these issues should be uppermost in everyone's minds: a) maintenance and operations; b) role the ballparks played in community revitalization; and c) community uses of the ballparks.
7. **Funding organizational opportunities.** In addition to discussing the NIF, the Board said that:
- a. Since Joshua took the helm as Executive Director, the PFD's engagement in the community has grown substantially.
  - b. The PFD is using consultants who have connections to government agencies and community organizations, which benefits us because they can tap into their connections to help us build relationships throughout the community.
  - c. There are a lot of opportunities to sort out, and prioritizing is imperative. This condition should be reflected in the budget. For example, if we should need to engage in discussions about the King County Campus, a budget proposal should be developed.
8. **Board meetings and outreach opportunities.** To strengthen Board understanding and engagement:
- a. Add to our regular board meeting agendas a standing item of discussing issues that are "swirling around us" so that we can have deeper conversations about issues that might affect us or that we may choose to influence.
  - b. Periodically discuss broad, regional topics, such as the health of the Seattle-area sports economy. We could invite guest speakers on these occasions.
  - c. Link our website to the Mariners' website and collect data on how many visits our website receives.
  - d. Give the Annual Report to neighborhood businesses and partners. A group of us (for example, Joshua and two Board members) could present it in-person to generate awareness and interest in the PFD's work.

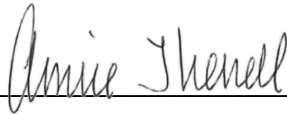
- e. Joshua should look for opportunities to invite Board members to community conversations.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

There was no executive session.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the Board, Chair Nelson declared the meeting adjourned at 3:42 pm.



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Annie Thenell,  
Recording Clerk



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Carol Kobuke Nelson, Chair  
Board of Directors, Public Facilities District