



SPECIAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES: THE BOARD'S VISIONING EXERCISE

Monday, 7 November 2022 11:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
T-Mobile Park: Club 1 Conference Room, 5th Floor

SUMMARY

OF THE MEETING'S KEY DISCUSSIONS AND TENTATIVE AGREEMENTS

CALL TO ORDER / WELCOME

Board Chair Carol Nelson called the special meeting to order at 11:35 a.m. pursuant to notice. Joining the meeting in person were Board Chair Carol Nelson; Board Vice Chair Chris Marr; Board Members Mike Fong, Stacy Graven, Omar Riojas, and Andrea Sato. Board Member Brian Surratt joined via video conferencing (12:05 to end). Also joining in person were Executive Director Joshua Curtis; Legal Counsel Tom Backer; and Facilitator Jim Reid. Special guests included Seattle Mariners CEO John Stanton (in person; 12:00 p.m. to 12:35 p.m.); Mariners Executive VP/Legal Counsel Fred Rivera (via video conferencing; 12:15 p.m. to 1:05 p.m.).

PUBLIC COMMENT

No written public comment was received.

FACILITATED BOARD VISIONING DISCUSSION

THE CONTEXT FOR THIS MEETING

This meeting came at a time of new beginnings for the Public Facilities District (PFD). The membership of the Board of Directors has changed significantly in the last several years. The leadership of the Board also recently changed. The PFD's role and responsibilities continue to evolve. Therefore, the goal for this meeting was to define the Board's vision for strengthening the PFD's relationships with the Seattle Mariners and the surrounding neighborhoods—SODO, Pioneer Square, and Chinatown/International District.

THE PFD'S PARTNERSHIP WITH THE MARINERS

The Board's discussion of the PFD's relationship with the Seattle Mariners opened with a conversation with Mariners CEO John Stanton and Executive VP/Legal Counsel Fred Rivera, who attended during a forty-five-minute block early in the meeting.

The Mariners and the Board recognize that we are partners in ensuring that T-Mobile Park is maintained to the standards of the lease. We also recognize that for the fans' experience to be everything that the Mariners want it to be, the two partners must expand their horizon beyond the walls of the stadium to include the surrounding neighborhoods. Public safety, transportation, economic vitality, and housing are some of the issues that could be affected by expanding the organizations' horizon. If the ballpark is to be a catalyst for neighborhood revitalization, the Mariners and the PFD must work as partners to align their visions and coordinate their efforts, particularly in strengthening relationships with the community groups within SODO, Pioneer Square, and Chinatown/International District.

The Mariners would like T-Mobile Park to be to Seattle what Fenway Park is to Boston and Wrigley Field is to Chicago. Board members cited Denver as a model because the Colorado Rockies' stadium, Coors Field, has melded into the surrounding neighborhood, thus strengthening the neighborhood and improving the fans' experience from the moment they arrive in the neighborhood to attend the Rockies' games.

Board members expressed appreciation for the Mariners who are maintaining the ballpark at the high level required by the lease. The Mariners' executives thanked the Board for their partnership in serving the community. They also observed that the PFD's long-term view helps the Mariners see things a little differently.

ASSUMPTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS AROUND THE BOARD'S ROLE

Joshua Curtis provided the Board with both the 1995 PFD Mission Statement and the 2016 revised Mission. Whereas the original mission focused on designing and building the ballpark, the new statement focuses on enhancing the ballpark, the fans' experience, and the neighborhood. Here is the PFD Mission Statement (2016):

"To maintain and enhance our iconic baseball park in order to promote the success of Major League Baseball in the State of Washington, enhance fan enjoyment, and contribute to an economically successful, safe, desirable, innovative and walkable stadium neighborhood."

Reacting to the new mission and their discussion with the Mariners' executives, the Board identified these assumptions about the role of the PFD:

- The “four corners’ perspective,” with its focus inside the ballpark, is more prescriptive than the vision that the fan experience is improved by making the surrounding neighborhoods better.
- Investments in the stadium will be more enduring by also focusing on adjacent space outside the four corners.
- The PFD’s engagement in Stadium District planning contributed to expanding the PFD’s vision and role.
- The Board needs to be strategic about defining the boundaries of the PFD’s scope of influence because some issues and projects are potentially controversial.
- A way to conceptualize the PFD’s scope is to consider projects as they fall within “concentric rings” gradually receding in proximity to the stadium. The Neighborhood Improvement Fund (NIF), with potential for impacts adjacent to the ballpark, might be in Ring #1. Projects promoted by the Seattle Seahawks and Public Stadium Authority (PSA) around Lumen Field might be in Ring #2. Projects with broader regional impacts that affect T-Mobile Park and the fan experience, such as transportation hubs, could be in Ring #3.
- Creating a set of principles that guide the board’s engagement in issues is difficult because it depends on the issue or project. We need to be somewhat ad hoc so that we can be flexible and nimble. The following questions could help the board determine what, if any, role they want to play when new issues arise:
 - Is the issue a priority for the Mariners? If so, what is their interest and position?
 - What is the PFD’s best role in this situation? Leader, partner, supporter, observer?
 - Is the issue a priority for partners? If so, what is their interest and position?
 - What is the PFD’s best role in this situation? Leader, partner, supporter, observer?
 - If none of the above, does this issue have a material impact on the PFD mission and/or adopted principles?
 - Do we have the necessary information to determine what role the PFD should play? If not, how do we procure this information?
 - Do we have the necessary staff or consulting capacity and/or expertise? If not, how do we allocate the resources to secure it?
 - Do we have any points of leverage, such as our currency as a public entity? How could we exercise that leverage?

ISSUES CRUCIAL TO THE PFD'S PROGRESS IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS

Ballpark Maintenance:

It is the role of the Board to ensure that the Mariners are meeting the standards for operations and maintenance in the lease. The Board is interested in providing the greatest value when engaging in the oversight of ballpark maintenance.

To achieve this, the Board asked Joshua to work with the PFD's consultant, Bryan Slater of CAA ICON and Trevor Gooby at the Mariners, to elevate the level of Board discussion to "10,000-foot oversight." Bryan would continue to analyze investments and expenses at the line-item level and would make recommendations to the Board on how to incorporate his findings into a new tracking system.

The tracking system would enable the Board to take a high-level view while preventing projects from falling through the cracks. For example, if expenditures were delayed from one year to the next, the system would alert Joshua and the Board so that the PDF could ask the Mariners for an accounting of when the delayed projects will be completed and at what cost.

The system would also enable the Board to use its tours of T-Mobile Park and comparable ballparks to the greatest advantage. By prioritizing the things that the Board is focusing on to achieve maintenance standards at T-Mobile Park, the Board would be able to focus on those same items when touring other ballparks. This could benefit the Mariners, too. We would jointly review the handful of things at the other ballparks that both the Mariners and PFD are concerned about and interested in at our own ballpark.

Relations with the PSA and Neighborhoods

The Board agreed that it should meet with the Board of the Public Stadium Authority (PSA) if and when there is an important issue to discuss. Joshua is routinely engaged with John Marchione, the PSA's Executive Director, to ensure open communication and close collaboration between the two public authorities.

Sometime shortly after the Stadium District planning process is completed might be an appropriate time for the two Boards to meet. The agenda might include sharing the list of issues that each organization is most interested in and monitoring, and how the issues of interest to one might affect the issues of interest to the other. Transportation, public safety, and housing may be areas for coordination if not partnership.

Similarly, Joshua regularly meets with representatives of the SODO, Pioneer Square, and Chinatown/International District, so Board members expect him to alert them if an issue arises that the Board should weigh in on.

Neighborhood Improvement Fund

The Board agreed that the PFD needs to be prepared to respond to requests, such as from the Seattle Mariners, for funding from the Neighborhood Improvement Fund (NIF). The PFD needs to scan the landscape, maintain relationships, and be diligent and prepared.

Preparations for the All-Star Game, to be held at T-Mobile Park next July, should provide the PFD with insights about how we might improve a situation or fix a problem. We might provide leveraging opportunities and serve as the catalyst by taking an action that would otherwise not get done. The PFD should emphasize equity in the use of the NIF.

Stacy Graven volunteered to join Omar Riojas in considering requests for NIF funding or leveraging opportunities and making recommendations to the entire Board.

THE PFD'S CAPACITY

The last item of business was a discussion of the organization's capacity to fulfill its role. Carol Nelson expressed an interest in engaging all Board members in ways that are meaningful and satisfying to them. As the new Board Chair, she also wants to solicit the input of everyone in determining the agendas for the Board meetings. There was a general consensus that agendas should include "topic-based conversations."

Board members were also invited to have one-on-one coffee or lunch meetings with Joshua to facilitate a deeper understanding of the issues and to offer their perspectives and ideas.

The importance of Board members attending the annual comparison ballpark tour was reiterated. In Spring 2023 the Board and staff are planning to tour the ballparks of the New York Mets, New Your Yankees, and Washington Nationals. Prior to touring these ballparks, the Board will tour T-Mobile Park and focus on the highest priorities of items that need to be tracked. These are likely to be the items that the Board will examine and discuss during the tours of the New York and Washington, DC ballparks.

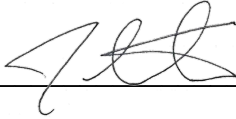
Finally, there was a brief discussion of producing an annual report whose primary audience would be state and county elected officials.

TAKEAWAYS

At the end of the meeting, Board members said that the meeting "put us on track" by helping Board members get to know each other better, providing the Board with a good understanding of what's going on, and setting the stage for more efficient use of time and talents.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Board, Chair Nelson declared the meeting adjourned at 4:10 pm.



Joshua Curtis,
Recording Clerk



Carol Nelson, Chair
Board of Directors, Public Facilities District