

# **BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

**Spokane Public Facilities District - Board of Directors Meeting via Zoom and  
at the Numerica Veterans Arena Boardroom | Wednesday, April 8, 2026 at 12:30 pm**

## **ITEM #1 TO ORDER**

Board Chair Eakins convened the April 8<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting of the Spokane Public Facilities District at 12:30 PM.

## **ITEM #2 ATTENDANCE**

In attendance were Board Chair Cami Eakins, along with Board Members Dan Rey-Bear, Paul Read, and August Richardson. Vice Chair Jon Neill was excused from this meeting. District personnel attending in person included Jessica Deri, Mike Gaffaney, Paul Christiansen, Jennifer Kletke, Nic Lawrence, Ryan Gallagher, Melissa Coulter, Steve Marsh, Shaundra Scott, and Kaila Jones

Guests attending in person included Scott Taylor and Aiden Hubbard from CarPark and Jay Stewart from the Spokane Chiefs.

*Chair Eakins opened the PFD Board of Directors' meeting by calling the April 8th meeting to order.*

## **ITEM #3 CONSENT AGENDA**

**Chair Eakins presented the Consent Agenda items:**

- PFD Board Minutes from March 25th.
  - *Mr. Read has moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Mr. Richardson seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.*

## **ITEM #4 DISTRICT BUSINESS**

**August Richardson to Present Visit Spokane's Lodging Tax Request**

- Mr. Richardson presented a \$50,000 lodging tax funding request from Visit Spokane for the Crave Northwest event scheduled for July 2026. He also explained that following the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee (LTAC) meeting, news broke that the event organizer, Eat Good Group, led by Adam Hegstead, owes more than \$150,000 to Spokane Valley Center Place.
- The LTAC unanimously recommended approval before the legal issue became public. The event, which is expected to attract 3,000 attendees and 1,000 room nights, will be held in Riverfront Park.
- Ms. Curran explained that the article about the debt was published after the LTAC meeting and emphasized the importance of the board having complete information before deciding, considering the PFD's partnership with Center Place.
- Mr. Richardson recommended delaying the vote for two weeks to allow Visit Spokane to reassess whether they still want to pursue the funding request.
- The Board reached consensus to delay the vote until the next board meeting on April 22<sup>nd</sup>.

## **ITEM #5 CEO UPDATE**

**Fire Marshal Interviews**

- Ms. Curran announced that she spent Monday, April 6th, on the interview panel to hire the new fire marshal.
- They recommended a strong candidate to move forward, and the mayor will meet with the top two candidates before a final decision is made.

**All Five PFD Venues Are Operating at High Capacity with Strong Event Schedules**

- Ms. Curran provided updates on the busy activity across all PFD venues, including:
  - The Chiefs win at Home before their drive to Prince George and the upcoming Journey concert.

- The USA Women’s Wrestling National Championships are coming up at The Podium, followed by many volleyball, wrestling, judo, and karate events. The Podium also recorded record-breaking food and beverage sales over the recent weekend.
  - Spokane Sports has successfully booked summer events at The Podium, which wasn’t originally expected to be a summer venue.
- The Washington Education Association Conference and other staple events are returning to the Convention Center.
- There are various shows coming up at the First Interstate Center, including Tina Turner Tribute, Eli Young Band, and Dr. Neil deGrasse Tyson.

### **Lodging Tax Committee Meeting & Pricing Discussion**

- Ms. Curran reported that questions have arisen about Convention Center pricing, which happens periodically during market dips. Right now, the convention market is experiencing a slight dip, but this is consistent across similar-sized markets nationwide.
- Mr. Richardson confirmed that these market challenges are not unique to Spokane.
- Ms. Curran announced that a meeting is scheduled for tomorrow (April 9th), during which our Directors, Ms. Deri and Mr. Christiansen, will walk through our pricing and explain conversions and related costs.
- Ms. Curran reported that Mr. Romero will present the lodging tax matrix at the next board meeting, outlining funding sources and allocations. He will also bring his recommendations on committee structure, including term limits and the membership process, which have never been formally established.

### **Best of Washington Employer Award**

- Ms. Curran brought up that our HR Director had an announcement:
  - Ms. Kletke shared that an employee nominated the PFD for the Best of Washington and Best of Northeast Washington Employer Awards in January.
  - We had about 50% of our employees respond to the survey, and we recently received confirmation that the PFD is a winner and in the top 10, but final placement details are not yet available.

### **Questions Raised by Board Member, Mr. Rey-Bear**

- Mr. Rey-Bear raised concerns from Seattle FC season ticket holders about beer pricing and coffee options at The Stadium, explaining that the season ticket holders noted that our beer prices were higher than in Seattle and that there were no local coffee options.
  - Ms. Curran explained that the volume difference likely accounts for pricing differences, noting that Seattle Reign games average 7,000–8,000 attendees versus 1,600 in Spokane.
    - The issue came up during planning with the Reign organization, but volume affects pricing, and the deal structure with the food and beverage company may differ as well. Prices are approved by the board based on competitive analysis conducted within the last one to two years.
  - Ms. Curran also explained that, regarding the coffee, Indaba is our current provider and is local, so the PFD needs to improve signage to communicate that our coffee is locally sourced.
- Mr. Rey-Bear asked for an update on the ongoing dispute with the City of Spokane regarding their parking tax.
  - Ms. Curran confirmed that we had a second legal review by the PFD’s other law firm, which confirmed the PFD’s position that the city cannot tax PFD parking.
    - There is a statute stating cities and counties cannot tax PFD parking, and the city is citing a different statute that applies to transportation districts, not public facilities districts.
  - Ms. Curran explained that she has had conversations with the Mayor and City Council President Betsy Wilkerson, during which the Mayor suggested having the Attorney General weigh in, and Council President Wilkerson expressed interest in requesting a legal review on the city’s end.
  - In our last letter to the city, we laid out our position that taxing our parking is illegal and that collecting an illegal tax would create liability for the PFD. We asked for a response by April 15th, requesting that the city agree that the PFD does not owe the tax.

- Mr. Read suggested that future discussions be held in executive session if the matter moves toward litigation.
  - Ms. Curran agreed, emphasizing the desire to remain a good partner to the city and to avoid public conflict.

## **ITEM #6 PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Chair Eakins calls for any public comments.

- Jay Stewart, VP of the Spokane Chiefs, provided an update on the team's season and praised the emergency action plan executed.
  - The regular season ended with strong attendance, concessions, and parking numbers, selling about 12,000 tickets to their last three playoff games and selling out their Thursday night game in 20 hours.
  - The team was eliminated by Prince George on Sunday, so exit meetings were held yesterday, and the players will be back in their hometowns by Friday.
  - At the Thursday night home game against Prince George, one of their players collapsed on the bench with a ruptured spleen.
    - Our emergency action plan worked so well. AMR was already on hand. The second ambulance arrived in 10 minutes, and the patient was on the stretcher by 12 minutes.
    - The player was out of surgery by the end of the game and has since been discharged and is driving home to Calgary with their family.
    - The patient's father, a former paramedic, was very impressed and appreciative of our response.

## **ITEM #7 ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the Board adjourned at 1:16 PM.

Shaundra Scott, Clerk of the Board

Approved by the Board of Directors at the following Board Meeting.