



NYS Olympic Regional Development Authority
Board Meeting Minutes
March 19, 2021

Present:

Kelly Cummings, Chair
William Beaney
Cliff Donaldson
Stephen Hunt, ESD
Thomas Keegan
Betty Little
Arthur Lussi
Diane Munro
Christopher Pushkarsh, OPRHP
Jeffrey Stefanko, DEC
Elinor Tatum

Also Present:

Michael Pratt, President/CEO
Michelle Crew, General Counsel

Introduction:

Chair Kelly Cummings called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. and welcomed everyone in attendance.

Ms. Cummings then asked for a roll call, and confirmed a quorum was present. Ms. Cummings explained that the meeting was being videotaped and a link to the recording would be made available on www.orda.org.

Minutes:

On a motion by Ms. Little, seconded by Ms. Munro, the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting held on January 22, 2021 were approved without changes.

All in favor, motion carried unanimously.

Audit Committee:

Mr. Stefanko thanked the committee for its work. He explained that the committee has reviewed ORDA's progress with coming into compliance with EO95, an order designed to use technology for improving government performance while increasing transparency and enhancing citizen engagement. ORDA has appointed Director of Finance Peggy Evatt as its data coordinator, and will be aggregating publishable data for the Open Data NY website. An update on this effort is due August 7, 2021. Mr. Stefanko also reported on recent improvements ORDA has made to its accounts payable process, financial software updates, and increased use of a purchasing module throughout all venues that carefully tracks the approval process.

President's Report:

Mr. Pratt discussed the winter season, highlighting the tremendous growth of ORDA's economic impact in recent years. ORDA developed effective guest assurance policies and operational



protocols in advance of the season, and was also successful in managing employee safety. Mr. Pratt noted that ORDA continued to maintain zero instances of COVID-19 transmission traced to the workplace.

Season pass sales were record-breaking and overall revenue and visitation is up year to date. Due to both online shopping enhancements and encouragement of touchless direct-to-lift ticketing, e-commerce volume tripled this season. Mr. Pratt and Mr. Lussi both noted the growth of midweek business.

Recent improvements that have contributed to ORDA's success include lift replacements at Gore and Whiteface, the new lodge, trails, and snowmaking at Mt. Van Hoevenberg, and lodge and snowmaking updates at Belleayre.

Mr. Pratt briefly highlighted the need to improve the two scoreboards and race buildings at Whiteface. These improvements are in a conceptual stage.

Mr. Pratt's report detailed information about the James Sheffield Speed Skating Oval and Whiteface snowmaking projects, both of which have resolutions for the meeting. The history of the Oval includes it being home to the original Olympic podium and it being integral to laying Lake Placid's foundation for hosting the 1932 Olympic Games. A variety of notable athletes trained and competed at the Oval. Mr. Pratt's presentation went into current times, and the 2020/2021 winter was record-setting for recreational skating at the Oval in terms of both visitors and revenue. Ms. Little noted the importance of the Oval as a tourist attraction. The proposed improvements to the Oval would include modernization and improved sustainability of the facility, it would address the outdated piping, add guest amenities, improve and relocate the entrance, update the lighting, and bring the geometry in line with competitive sport standards. Mr. Pratt featured upcoming events that include the Oval, which include the March 2022 FISU World University Speed Skating Championships. The board briefly discussed how recent and somewhat similar improvements at the Olympic Jumping Complex have positioned that venue well for securing events and providing a reliable, more weatherproof product.

Mr. Pratt detailed several challenges due to the age of the Whiteface snowmaking system, and the large vertical drop of the mountain, which is the greatest in the East. New technologies provide good tracking and real-time information about snowmaking results, which further illustrate some of Whiteface's challenges. The proposed improvements would allow Whiteface to make more snow faster, using less energy. This would open trails earlier in the season and increase guest satisfaction. Ms. Tatum inquired how this project would compare to the snowmaking at the other ORDA venues, and Mr. Pratt explained that while each mountain has its own weather patterns and layout, they have all been updating their systems. Mr. Lussi reinforced the importance of snowmaking to being open, due to short windows of opportunity and the weather changes. Ms. Little asked about NYSERDA programs, and Mr. Pratt explained both NYSERDA and the utilities have been excellent partners in ORDA's ongoing snowmaking improvements.



In conclusion, Mr. Pratt said that in the last two days, ORDA had already sold 2,200 for the 2021/2022 season. Ms. Little noted how the support of New York State has made for tremendous improvements across all the venues, and Mr. Pratt discussed the importance of investing wisely and efficiently, with results that provide positive economic impacts.

New Business:

Resolutions:

#408 Resolution Committing Capital and Granting Conditional Approval for the President & CEO to Enter Into Agreements for the Olympic Center Revitalization Project – James Sheffield Speed Skating Oval and Support Building

On a motion by Ms. Little, seconded by Ms. Tatum.

All in favor, motion carries unanimously, adopted Resolution #408.

#409 Resolution Committing Capital and Granting Conditional Approval for the President & CEO to Enter Into an Amended Agreement for the Belleayre Base Lodge Modernization Project

On a motion by Mr. Donaldson, seconded by Ms. Munro.

Ms. Munro commended the lodge and asked about other building improvements at the venue to accommodate a growing number of guests. Mr. Pratt explained that work would continue on the Overlook Lodge to bring the building back to its original capacity before the Christmas avalanche, and that expansions to the rental shop were being explored.

All in favor, motion carries unanimously, adopted Resolution #409.

#410 Resolution Committing Capital and Granting Approval for the President & CEO to Enter into Agreements for the Whiteface Mountain Snowmaking System Upgrades Project

On a motion by Mr. Lussi, seconded by Ms. Munro.

All in favor, motion carries unanimously, adopted Resolution #410.

#411 Resolution Committing Capital and Granting Conditional Approval for the President & CEO to Enter Into an Amended Agreement for the Olympic Sports Complex – Mt. Van Hoevenberg Base Lodge & Sliding Sports Facility Project

On a motion by Ms. Little, seconded by Mr. Donaldson.



Mr. Pratt explained that when excavation for the foundation occurred, modifications and new materials were required due to the unexpected discovery of underground items including an old fuel tank.

All in favor, motion carries unanimously, adopted Resolution #411.

#412 Resolution Committing Capital and Granting Approval for the President & CEO to Enter Into an Agreement for Professional Auditing Services

On a motion by Mr. Stefanko, seconded by Ms. Tatum.

As Chair of the Audit Committee, Mr. Stefanko explained that ORDA is required to have an annual independent audit, and it does this by contracting with an auditing firm. A new contract is now due, and through an advertised RFP process, ORDA received several submissions. A selection committee comprised of Mr. Stefanko, Ms. Evatt, and other ORDA staff conducted interviews and evaluated the proposals, and it was recommended that EFPR be selected as ORDA's next auditor. The audit committee agreed with this decision and is recommending that selection to the full board.

All in favor, motion carries unanimously, adopted Resolution #412.

Chair:

Ms. Cummings announced that the next meeting is presently scheduled for Friday, April 23, 2021 at 1:00pm.

In closing, Ms. Munro thanked everyone for their responsiveness and commended recent improvements to organizational process.

Mr. Donaldson made a motion that the Chair and President & CEO present a date for a future summer ORDA Board Meeting to be held at Belleayre.

Seconded by Ms. Munro. The board discussed if a winter or summer meeting would be better, and the seasonal opportunities that a meeting at Belleayre would present. Mr. Donaldson then revised his motion to be for the Chair and President & CEO to present a date for a future ORDA Board Meeting to be held at Belleayre. Seconded by Mr. Lussi.

All in favor, motion carries unanimously.

Adjournment:

On a motion by Mr. Donaldson, seconded by Ms. Munro, the meeting of the Olympic Development Authority Board of Directors was adjourned at 2:09 p.m.