



**REGULAR SESSION
BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

DATE: April 23, 2026

TIME: 10:00 a.m.

PLACE: Two DeKorte Park Plaza, Lyndhurst, NJ

Members in Attendance:

John Ballantyne, Chairman

Joseph Buckelew, Vice Chairman

Jill Hirsch, President and CEO

Robert Dowd, Member

John Duthie, Member

Armando Fontoura, Member

Gail B. Gordon, Esq., Member

Michael Griffin, Member (via phone – dropped off at 10:40 am)

Daniel Gumble, Member

Woody Knopf, Member (via phone)

Tom Mullahey, Member

Sam Parker, Member

Eric Pennington, Esq., Member

Marguerite Schaffer, Esq., Member

Louis J. Stellato, Member

Absent:

Michael Gonnelli, Member

Also Attending:

Christine Sanz, Executive Vice President

Laurie Ewing, Chief of Staff

John Duffy, Senior Vice President of Sports Complex Operations & Facilities

Robert Davidow, Senior Vice President of Legal & Regulatory Affairs

Adam Levy, Vice President of Legal & Regulatory Affairs

Anna Acanfora, Vice President of Finance and Human Resources

Sara Sundell, Senior Director of Land Use Management and Chief Engineer

Michael Eleneski, Governor's Authorities Unit

Colleen Mercado, Executive Administrative Specialist

Chairman Ballantyne called the meeting to order.

- I. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- II. **OPENING STATEMENT** – Chairman Ballantyne read the Notice of Meeting required under the Sunshine Law.
- III. **ROLL CALL** - Ms. Mercado took roll call.

Chairman Ballantyne reported that NJSEA and Bergen County Audubon Society (BCAS) held an Earth Day walk at DeKorte Park yesterday and despite inclement weather, fifteen people attended. He noted that NJSEA and BCAS would also be hosting Native Plant Day on Sunday, May 31 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

President Hirsch announced the return of the New Jersey Film Expo which will be held on April 30 at the Meadowlands Arena. She noted that Governor Sherrill would be delivering the keynote, underscoring the State's commitment to New Jersey's film and television sector. She provided an update on the new pedestrian bridge connecting MetLife Stadium and American Dream. She stated that the project was on track for completion next month and recognized John Duffy and his team for keeping the project on schedule.

IV. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND CASH DISBURSEMENTS**

Chairman Ballantyne presented the minutes from the February 26, 2026 Regular Session Board meeting.

Upon motion made by Commissioner Duthie and seconded by Commissioner Stellato, the minutes of the Regular Session Board Meeting held on February 26, 2026, were approved by a vote of 15-0.

Chairman Ballantyne presented the report of cash disbursements over \$100,000 for the months of February and March, 2026.

Upon motion by Commissioner Fontoura and seconded by Commissioner Duthie, the cash disbursements over \$100,000 for the months of February and March, 2026 were approved by a vote of 15-0.

V. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON RESOLUTIONS** - none.

VI. **APPROVALS**

Resolution 2026-14 Consideration of a Resolution Issuing a Statement of Consent for a Proposed Amendment to the Northeast Water Quality Management Plan Pertaining to File No. 24-357 COF/Russo Meadowlands Park LLC - 651 12th Street - New Building, Block 84, Lot 2, in the Borough of Carlstadt.

Ms. Sundell stated that Russo Development requested a Statement of Consent from the NJSEA supporting a proposed amendment to the Northeast Water Quality Management Plan. She explained that the amendment would expand the Bergen County Utilities Authority sewer service area by 2.04 acres to accommodate a planned warehouse and office development in Carlstadt. She said that after reviewing the NJDEP's public notice and associated plans, NJSEA staff recommended approving the amendment and adopting a resolution to formally submit their support to the NJDEP.

Chairman Ballantyne presented Resolution 2026-14. Upon motion by Commissioner Duthie and seconded by Commissioner Dowd, Resolution 2026-14 was approved by a vote of 15-0.

Resolutions 2026-15 and 2026-16

Ms. Sundell stated that the following two agenda items were with respect to two separate applications on the same property, both containing variance requests. She said that two related variance applications were filed by Harvey Rosenblatt (World of Blue, LLC) for properties at 1

and 2 Meadowlands Plaza in East Rutherford, which are part of a single 37.89-acre zoning lot in the Commercial Park zone. She explained that the site included a 427-room hotel with conference facilities and a high-rise office building with a parking garage. Ms. Sundell said that the applicant was seeking variances to allow temporary signage, outdoor events, and retail sales on the property between June 5 and July 26, 2026, aligned with the 2026 FIFA World Cup events at MetLife Stadium.

With respect to File No. 25-444 (Outdoor Events Variance), Ms. Sundell stated that the applicant proposed three designated areas on the property to host outdoor events and retail activities for 52 days during the World Cup period. She explained each of the three bulk variances being requested by the applicant.

With respect to File No. 25-493 (Signage Variance), Ms. Sundell explained that the applicant proposed installing two large temporary vinyl wrap signs on a hotel building, each measuring 20,871.5 square feet, for display from June 5 through July 26, 2026, in connection with the World Cup event. She said that the applicant was seeking relief from multiple regulations to permit significantly larger and longer-duration signage than ordinarily allowed. She explained each of the variances being requested by the applicant.

In summary, Ms. Sundell stated that the requested variances for temporary outdoor events, retail sales, and signage were justified by the unique circumstances of the 2026 FIFA World Cup and the site's proximity to the Meadowlands Sports Complex. She said that given the unprecedented scale of the event, approval of these variances was not expected to set a precedent for future applications. She stated that NJSEA staff determined that the proposals would not negatively impact neighboring properties or conflict with regulatory intent and recommended approval of the requested variances subject to the conditions contained in the Recommendation Report.

The Board had various questions and comments on the above two resolutions. Overall, the Commissioners expressed concern that the applications were not submitted in a timely manner and appeared to be rushed. They questioned whether the applicant would be able to satisfy all conditions by the May 13 deadline and whether staff would have sufficient time to complete a thorough review in advance of the World Cup in June. The Commissioners also inquired whether the two resolutions were co-dependent, and specifically whether the applicant would be permitted to install the proposed building signage in the absence of approval for the outdoor events. With respect to the signage, the Commissioners sought clarification that any approval would not establish a precedent. They further asked whether appropriate legal safeguards could be incorporated into the approval to prevent the installation of similar large-scale signage in the future. Additionally, concerns were raised regarding potential costs to the Authority should the applicant fail to remove the signage and restore the building to its original condition within the prescribed timeframe. It was recommended that the signage resolution be amended to include the stipulation that approvals shall not be issued until all on-site violations are resolved. It was noted that the World Cup was an economic driver for local businesses and that the Authority should support the promotion of local businesses during the course of the event. Finally, it was suggested that, given the complexity and significance of the matter, an executive session involving all Commissioners may have been beneficial. Such a session would have allowed for a comprehensive presentation, real-time questions, and immediate follow-up, rather than addressing these issues for the first time during the public Board meeting.

Ms. Sundell responded to the Commissioners that the applicant began conversations with the Authority soon after they had closed on the subject building in December 2025. She said she had a recent conversation with a representative from the World of Blue and they stated that as soon as they had received staff's draft of the recommendation for review, they began working on the required items and that they expected to submit them to the Authority on or before May 13. She explained that as far as the timing for staff's review and approval, it would depend on what was received from the applicant and if it was all in order, and whether there were still outstanding questions based on what is submitted. She explained that the two applications were independent of each other, and she agreed with the recommendation that the signage resolution be amended to include, as part of the variance approvals, the additional condition that approvals would not be issued until all on-site violations are resolved.

Chairman Ballantyne presented Resolutions 2026-15:

Resolution 2026-15 Consideration of a Resolution Issuing a Decision on the Bulk Variance Applications Submitted as part of File No. 25-444 ML Plaza Owner/2 Meadowlands Plaza – Outdoor Events - FIFA (Variances), Block 108.03, Lots 1 and 2 in the Borough of East Rutherford.

Upon motion by Commissioner Duthie and seconded by Commissioner Stellato, Resolution 2026-15 was approved by a vote of 15-0.

Chairman Ballantyne presented Resolution 2026-16 with the amendment that approvals shall not be issued until all on-site violations were resolved.

Resolution 2026-16 Consideration of a Resolution Issuing a Decision on the Bulk Variance Applications Submitted as part of File No. 25-493 ML Plaza Owner/2 Meadowlands Plaza – Signage - FIFA (Variances), Block 108.03, Lots 1 and 2 in the Borough of East Rutherford.

Upon motion by Commissioner Stellato to approve the resolution as amended and seconded by Commissioner Mullahey, Resolution 2026-16 was approved by a vote of 15-0.

VII. CONTRACTS AND AWARDS

Resolution 2026-17 Consideration of a Resolution Authorizing a Lease Agreement for New Copiers.

Ms. Acanfora explained that this resolution authorizes a 4-year lease agreement with DEC Office Solutions, a state contract vendor, in the amount of \$121,824.00. She noted that the lease amount reflected savings of \$514.00 per month with total savings of \$24,672.00 over the 48-month term.

Chairman Ballantyne presented Resolution 2026-17. Upon motion by Vice Chairman Buckelew and seconded by Commissioner Stellato, Resolution 2026-17 was approved by a vote of 15-0.

Resolution 2026-18 Consideration of a Resolution Authorizing the President and CEO to enter into a Contract with Ladi Construction Inc. of New York for the Arena Stair and Ramp Repairs in East Rutherford.

Mr. Duffy explained that this project addressed the need to repair the concrete ramps and stairs that service entrances and emergency exits at four Arena gates. He stated that three proposals were received in response to a publicly advertised bid and based on staff's review and evaluation of the proposals, it was determined that Ladi Construction Inc. was the lowest responsive bidder in the amount of \$1,328,786.00. He said staff recommended a 5% construction contingency in the amount of \$66,440.00 bringing the total amount to be allocated for this contract to \$1,395,226,00.

Commissioner Gumble asked Mr. Duffy what the difference was between the lowest and highest bidder. Mr. Duffy replied that the difference was approximately \$275,000.00.

Chairman Ballantyne presented Resolution 2026-18. Upon motion by Commissioner Stellato and seconded by Commissioner Fontoura, Resolution 2026-18 was approved by a vote of 15-0.

Resolution 2026-19 Consideration of a Resolution Authorizing the Issuance of a Change Order to StructureCare, LLC for Additional Work Under the Design-Build Services Contract for Structural Reinforcement and Related Improvements to "Parking Deck A" at the Meadowlands Sports Complex.

Mr. Duffy stated that in conjunction with the structural reinforcement of the parking deck, it was determined that the construction and installation of permanent directional signage at Parking Deck A was necessary. He explained that as part of the original project, a lump sum "add/alternate" option was received from StructureCare, LLC in the amount of \$160,000.00 and that staff recommended exercising this option with StructureCare, LLC.

Chairman Ballantyne presented Resolution 2026-19. Upon motion by Vice Chairman Buckelew and seconded by Commissioner Stellato, Resolution 2026-19 was approved by a vote of 15-0.

Resolution 2026-20 Consideration of a Resolution Authorizing a Contract for Hosted "Voice Over IP" Phone Services.

Mr. Levy advised that this resolution authorized the award of a contract for hosted Voice over IP (VoIP) telephone services to Data Network Solutions, an authorized State contract vendor. He noted that the proposed upgrade will support operations at both the Lyndhurst and East Rutherford facilities. He further advised that the contract term was for thirty-six (36) months, with two (2) optional one-year extensions. He stated that the initial setup cost was approximately \$45,409.50, with a recurring monthly cost of \$2,456.60. He explained that over the initial three-year term, the total cost is estimated at approximately \$134,000.00; if both extension options are exercised, the total cost would increase to approximately \$193,000.00. Mr. Levy also noted that the contract included all necessary hardware, software, and training, as well as 24/7 technical support.

Chairman Ballantyne presented Resolution 2026-20. Upon motion by Commissioner Stellato and seconded by Commissioner Mullahey, Resolution 2026-20 was approved by a vote of 15-0.

VIII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION

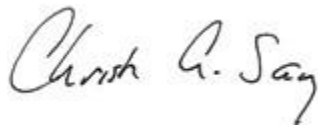
Chairman Ballantyne noted that there was no need for Executive Session.

X. **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business, motion was made to adjourn by Commissioner Schaffer and seconded by Commissioner Stellato followed by all in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 10:43 a.m.

I certify that on information and belief this is a true and accurate transcript of the Minutes of the Regular Session of the New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority Board Meeting held on April 23, 2026.



**Christine Sanz
Secretary**

April 23, 2026

Commissioner	Roll Call	2026-14	2026-15	2026-16	2026-17	2026-18	2026-19	2026-20
Ballantyne, Chairman	P	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Buckelew, Vice Chair	P	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Hirsch	P	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Dowd	P	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Duthie	P	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Fontoura	P	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Gonnelli	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Gordon	P	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Gumble	P	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Knopf - via phone	P	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Mullahey	P	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Parker	P	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Pennington	P	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Schaffer	P	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Stellato	P	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Treasury Rep Griffin - via phone	P	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

P = Present A = Abstain -- Absent R = Recuse Y = Affirmative N = Negative