REGULAR SESSION
BOARD MEETING MINUTES

DATE: July 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
Anthony Abrantes, Member (via phone)
John Duthie, Member
Armando Fontoura, Member
Daniel Gumble, Member
Michael Griffin, Member (via phone)
Woody Knopf, Member (via phone)
Tom Mullahey, Member
Sam Parker, Member
Marguerite Schaffer, Esq., Member
Louis J. Stellato, Member

Absent:
Gail B. Gordon, Esq., Member
Eric Pennington, Esq., 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, Senior Vice President of Legal Affairs & Strategic Council
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.

IV. **PRESIDENT'S REMARKS**

President Hirsch commended NJSEA staff for their outstanding efforts in successfully hosting eight FIFA World Cup matches. She recognized the collective contributions of employees across all departments, noting their professionalism, teamwork, flexibility, and dedication in working long hours and addressing challenges throughout the event. President Hirsch stated that the successful execution of the matches showcased the very best of the NJSEA and thanked all employees for their exceptional work in making the event a historic success.

V. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

Chairman Ballantyne recognized Tony Vagueiro, Officer in Charge of Medical Services, for 45 years of service to the Authority and acknowledged his upcoming retirement on August 1. He stated that Tony began his emergency medical services career in 1979 with the Pinkerton Medical Team and joined the NJSEA as a full-time EMT in 1981. He said that over his distinguished 45-year career, Mr. Vagueiro advanced through the ranks to Officer in Charge, demonstrating exceptional leadership, unwavering dedication, and a steadfast commitment to providing life-saving care to Sports Complex patrons. He noted that Mr. Vagueiro was also a tireless supporter of community service, leading blood drives and charitable fundraising efforts, and was recognized with numerous honors, including two Team Spirit Awards and the Chairman's Award for Outstanding Performance. Chairman Ballantyne extended sincere gratitude to Mr. Vagueiro on behalf of the Authority for his outstanding service and wished him a happy and well-deserved retirement.

Chairman Ballantyne reported that the Authority's Meadowlands Research and Restoration Institute would be hosting the City of Water Day at River Barge Park in Carlstadt on Saturday, July 25. He also noted that Butterfly Day would be held on Sunday, July 26 at DeKorte Park.

VI. SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Resolution 2026-26 Consideration of a Resolution Honoring Frances Guthrie, R.N. for 49 Years of Exceptional Public Service to the New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority and the People of the State of New Jersey.

Chairman Ballantyne recognized France Guthrie, R.N., Chief of Medical Services, on her upcoming retirement after an extraordinary 49-year career with the NJSEA. He stated that Ms. Guthrie began her career with the NJSEA as a part-time nurse on October 6, 1977, and over the course of her remarkable 49-year career served in numerous leadership roles. He highlighted that throughout her tenure, Ms. Guthrie provided exceptional leadership in emergency medical services, played a vital role in safeguarding employees and the public during the COVID-19 pandemic, and successfully led medical operations for major events, including the 2026 FIFA World Cup at MetLife Stadium. He described Ms. Guthrie as a respected mentor and compassionate leader and stated that her unwavering dedication, professionalism, and commitment to public service had left a lasting legacy at the Authority. Chairman Ballantyne extended sincere congratulations and gratitude to Ms. Guthrie on behalf of the Board.

Chairman Ballantyne presented Resolution 2026-26. Upon motion by Commissioner Duthie and seconded by Commissioner Fontoura, Resolution 2026-26 was approved by a vote of 13-0.

Ms. Guthrie expressed her gratitude for the recognition, stating that she was honored to accept the resolution and was appreciative of the support she received from the Authority throughout her career. She reflected on her years of service, emphasizing that caring for people and ensuring their safety was the most rewarding part of her work. She credited the success of the Medical Services team to the dedication, compassion, and professionalism of her colleagues,

who consistently provided exceptional care during emergencies at the Sports Complex. Ms. Guthrie concluded by expressing her confidence in Sean Scott's leadership and encouraged everyone to support him as he carries on the legacy of the department.

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

Chairman Ballantyne presented the minutes from the June 24, 2026 Regular Session Board meeting.

Upon motion made by Commissioner Fontoura and seconded by Commissioner Stellato, the minutes of the Regular Session Board Meeting held on June 24, 2026, were approved by a vote of 13-0.

Chairman Ballantyne presented the report of cash disbursements over $100,000 for the month of June, 2026.

Upon motion by Commissioner Duthie and seconded by Commissioner Mullahey the cash disbursements over $100,000 for the month of June, 2026 were approved by a vote of 13-0.

VIII. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON RESOLUTIONS** – none.

IX. **APPROVALS**

Resolution 2026-27 — Consideration of a Resolution on the Petition of Kingsland Development Urban Renewal, LLC to Amend the Kingsland Redevelopment Plan for the Former Avon Landfill Property at Block 233, Lot 14, in the Township of Lyndhurst (File No. SP-806).

Ms. Sundell reported that the Authority received a petition submitted by Christopher H. Minks, Esq., on behalf of the property owner, Kingsland Development Urban Renewal, LLC. She stated that the Petitioner was requesting to reclassify a 25-acre portion of the former Avon Landfill (Avon West) from the Sustainable Energy Park to the Lyndhurst Commerce Center, permitting a trailer parking facility with up to 648 trailer spaces, 187 container spaces, and a bridge connecting the site to the adjacent warehouse development. She noted that a public hearing was held on April 14, 2026. She stated that the petition was evaluated by staff in accordance with NJSEA regulations and the results of the staff's evaluation were compiled in a recommendation report dated July 2026. She explained that based on the property's role as an environmental buffer, its ecological significance, concerns regarding impacts to the capped landfill, nearby water infrastructure, and wetlands, the availability of alternative trailer parking sites within the existing Lyndhurst Commerce Center, and the site's continued suitability for renewable energy uses, staff recommended that the Board deny the requested redevelopment plan amendments.

Chairman Ballantyne presented Resolution 2026-27. Upon motion by Commissioner Mullahey and seconded by Vice Chairman Buckelew, Resolution 2026-27 was approved by a vote of 13-0.

Resolution 2026-28 — Consideration of a Resolution Issuing a Decision on the Variance Application Submitted as part of File No. 23-291 5903 Westside Ave. LLC - Site Improvement (Variances), Block 453.02, Lot 3.0761, in the Township of North Bergen.

Ms. Sundell reported that two bulk variances were received from Neil Cohen of Western Carriers, Inc. for its property located on West Side Avenue in North Bergen to permit accessory trailer parking in the front yard of the property and an 8-foot-high screening fence. She described the

property as irregularly shaped, having multiple easements, and overhead PSE&G transmission lines and associated equipment located across the site's frontage. She explained that the applicant was proposing parking up to 52 trailers in an existing front-yard automobile parking lot, constructing the screening fence, and land-banking up to 245 automobile parking spaces in the trailer parking area should they be needed in the future. She stated that the staff recommended the conditional approval of the accessory trailer parking subject to four conditions that are contained within the recommendation report and the approval of the bulk variance for the location of the screening fence for the reasons stated in detail in the recommendation report.

Chairman Ballantyne presented Resolution 2026-28. Upon motion by Commissioner Fontoura and seconded by Commissioner Schaffer, Resolution 2026-28 was approved by a vote of 13-0.

X. CONTRACT / AWARDS

Resolution 2026-29 — Consideration of a Resolution Authorizing the Issuance of a Change Order to Creamer-Sanzari, A Joint Venture, for Additional Work under the Design-Build Services Contract for the Construction of a New Pedestrian Bridge in Preparation for FIFA World Cup 2026 at the Meadowlands Sport Complex.

Mr. Duffy explained that the resolution authorizes a change order to close out the North Pedestrian Bridge construction project. He noted that the project was completed on an accelerated schedule and successfully accommodated tournament crowds, with more than 50,000 fans using the bridge safely and efficiently during each match, including over 61,000 pedestrians during the final. He explained that the Board awarded the original $33,507,000.00 construction contract to Creamer-Sanzari, a Joint Venture, in December 2024. During construction, unforeseen site conditions, adverse weather, and evolving project and regulatory requirements necessitated additional work. He said that following negotiations with the contractor, staff reviewed and validated the additional work and recommended approval of a change order in the amount of $2,453,878.34, bringing the total contract value to $35,960,878.34.

Chairman Ballantyne presented Resolution 2026-29. Upon motion by Commissioner Stellato and seconded by Commissioner Duthie, Resolution 2026-29 was approved by a vote of 12-0, with Vice Chairman Buckelew recusing.

XI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Donald Smith, Gloversville, New York

- Mr. Smith thanked the Chairman and staff for their contributions to the 2026 FIFA World Cup that showcased the United States.
- Mr. Smith commented on the landscaped lawns located along the Russo property on Valley Brook Avenue in Lyndhurst, saying that the manicured lawns create a feeding habitat for Canada geese. and that the FAA frowns upon this. He suggested that the Authority create rules and regulations for what can and cannot be tolerated as far as landscaping in the District.
- Mr. Smith commented on the Meadowlands Interagency Mitigation Advisory Committee (MIMAC) which reviews wetlands mitigation proposals within the Meadowlands District and that the NJSEA is part of the advisory committee. He complained that MIMAC does not have a public participation session, and he hoped that the Authority could influence MIMAC to include one at their meetings.

Paulette DeKorte Ramsay, Franklin Lakes, New Jersey

- Mrs. Ramsay complimented the Authority on its work in supporting the 2026 FIFA World Cup. She reflected on the history of the Meadowlands, noting that the area was once

associated with garbage and traffic. She said it was fascinating to see the world come to the Meadowlands for the event and referenced former Governor Thomas Kean's quote, "New Jersey and You, Perfect Together."

XII. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

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

XIII. **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business, motion was made to adjourn by Commissioner Fontoura and seconded by Vice Chairman Buckelew followed by all in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 10:42 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 July 23, 2026.

Christine Sanz
Secretary

July 23, 2026

Commissioner	Roll Call	2026-26	2026-27	2026-28	2026-29
Ballantyne, Chairman	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Buckelew, Vice Chair	P	Y	Y	Y	R
Hirsch	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Abrantes – via phone	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Duthie	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Fontoura	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Gordon	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -
Gumble	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Knopf – via phone	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Mullahey	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Parker	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Pennington	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -
Schaffer	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Stellato	P	Y	Y	Y	Y
Treasury Rep Griffin – via phone	P	Y	Y	Y	Y

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