



**DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
TIGERS TICKET DONATION PROGRAM COMMITTEE MEETING  
THURSDAY, MARCH 30, 2023 – 12:00 P.M.**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:** Ehrlich Crain  
Melvin Hollowell  
Richard Hosey (Joined at 12:24 p.m.)  
Steve Ogden, Chair

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Kevin Brown (Tigers)  
Cora Capler (DEGC/DDA)  
Gay Hilger (DEGC/DDA)  
Malinda Jensen (DEGC/DDA)  
Kevin Johnson (DEGC/DDA)  
Paul Kako (DEGC/DDA)  
Jason Mecure (Tigers)  
Jennifer Kanalos (DEGC/DDA)  
Glen Long (DEGC/DDA)  
Monika McKay-Polly (DEGC/DDA)  
Mike McLauchlan (IHI)  
Tim Sullivan (Tigers)  
Rebecca Navin (DEGC/DDA)  
Jonathon Perry (Tigers)



**MINUTES OF THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
TIGERS TICKET DONATION PROGRAM COMMITTEE MEETING  
THURSDAY, MARCH 30, 2023  
DETROIT ECONOMIC GROWTH CORPORATION  
500 GRISWOLD STREET, SUITE 2200 – 12:00 P.M.**

**GENERAL**

**Call to Order**

Chair Ogden called the meeting of the Downtown Development Authority Tigers Ticket Donation Program Committee to order at 12:01 p.m. A roll call was conducted, and a quorum was established.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Ogden called for a motion to approve the minutes of the March 6, 2023 Committee meeting.

On a motion by Mr. Hollowell, seconded by Mr. Crain, the minutes of the March 6, 2023, Committee meeting were unanimously approved.

**PROJECTS**

**Detroit Tigers Ticket Donation Program - 2023 Program Discussion**

Mr. Ogden stated that the previous sub-committee meeting focused on the distribution of tickets from 2018-2022. Mr. Ogden advised that the current meeting would focus on the plan for 2023. Mr. Ogden asked committee members who attended the previous meeting if his summary was reflective of the actual events that took place.

Mr. Brown agreed that Mr. Ogden's summary was accurate. Mr. Brown thanked the committee for the insight provided at the previous meeting. Mr. Brown confirmed that the committee received an email in which questions posed at the previous meeting were answered. Mr. Brown stated that he hoped the expedited response time would be indicative of the efforts to improve response time, which had been discussed as an issue at the previous meeting.

Mr. Ogden thanked Mr. Brown and affirmed that the committee did receive this email.



Mr. Brown explained how 50,000 tickets were distributed in 2022 and that the materials provided to committee members reflected a breakdown of those tickets in relation to DPSCD. Mr. Brown calls for any questions.

Mr. Ogden asked Mr. Brown to clarify that 32% of those tickets were allocated to DPSCD. Mr. Brown positively affirmed that statistic. Mr. Brown stated that there are continual efforts to build a better relationship with DPSCD.

Mr. Ogden asked how many of the 2022 recipients were new allocatees. Mr. Perry stated that it would be speculation to state how many of the allocatees were new.

Mr. Ogden asked what the plans were to hold organizations accountable in the allocation of the 2023 ticket program.

Mr. Crain asked if the 50,000 tickets were an exact number or if it was 50,002.

Mr. Crain stated that he noted that there were months that reflected no ticket allocation.

Mr. Brown explained that this is an approach to ensure tickets are available throughout the season and that 50,00 is the exact figure.

Mr. Ogden called for further questions on this matter. Hearing none, the floor was given back to Mr. Brown.

Mr. Brown noted that the next question received via email surrounded program efficacy and utilization rates and compared the Tigers ticket allocation program to other major league teams. Mr. Brown stated that the existing program targets low to moderate-income children in Detroit, while the Commissioners Community Initiative (CCI) provides tickets to organizations in other parts of the market, such as Birmingham which may still have a need, but access to transportation, among other things, can be less of a problem.

Mr. Perry stated that he had received responses from other baseball clubs and that they were able to determine that the current program is unique. Mr. Perry stated that the Minnesota Twins Community Fund and the Los Angeles Dodgers Foundation. The Twins Community Fund has a program where season ticket holders can purchase additional tickets and donate them to the Community Fund who then acts as a season ticket holder to receive and then, at their discretion, identify community partners in order to donate the tickets. Mr. Perry noted that a fundamental difference is while the Community Fund prioritizes youth-serving organizations in the direct county where Minneapolis is located, there is no requirement that the tickets have to stay there.

Mr. Perry added that the Los Angeles Dodgers goes beyond just providing tickets but also removing additional barriers for the youth, but that there is no standard so the tickets can beyond their market. Mr. Perry added that an additional fundamental difference is that if



organizations don't reach a certain utilization rate, then they will be responsible for additional costs such as transportation and food and that is something that the Tigers doesn't want to offer as part of its program.

Mr. Perry also stated that Boston Red Sox has a similar program which includes a digital platform that allows a ticket holders to donate tickets to their foundation which are then expeditiously turned around by Red Sox staff, typically in pairs of 2 or 4. He also noted that the ticket donations are less than 11,000 a year and that it's a different program than the Tigers intend to run.

Mr. Brown shared that Mr. Perry's feedback has been an inspiration to its programming, and expressed how digital programming serves as a benchmark for Game Day for Kids.

Mr. Ogden thanked Mr. Perry and Mr. Brown. Mr. Ogden provided remarks on the other major league programs. He stated that he is not suggesting that the existing Tigers program be tossed out but noted that he wants to compare it to other programs to make sure that it's relevant in order to hit the mark specifically around Detroit based organizations and Detroit schools.

Mr. Hollowell stated he would like to revisit the terms of the original agreement and that they needed to approve a plan for ticket allocation. Mr. Hollowell explained that in his review there were modifications made to the existing program and would like for the modification to be considered in the development of the ticket allocation program.

Mr. Hollowell noted that it appears that the language veers away from the original intent expressed in the original contract and gave this as support for the modification of this part of the proposed agreement. Mr. Hollowell expressed that the language should state that the focus will be on the children located in Wayne County and the City of Detroit. Mr. Hollowell stated that there should be more focus on the distribution of the tickets as opposed to the utilization of the tickets and that the proposed agreement is well on its way to expressing the program's original intent.

Mr. Ogden noted that Committee member Hosey joined the meeting. Mr. Ogden then expressed agreement with Mr. Hollowell that the focus should be on ticket distribution but that language regarding the utilization of the tickets should still be retained in the agreement.

Mr. McLauchlan stated that this was an issue for the Ilitch Companies as well in that the Tigers want to make sure that the tickets are getting out, and that are being used. Mr. McLachlan expressed that the Ilitch Companies and Tigers are striving for high utilization rates.



Mr. Ogden stated that he wanted to make sure that they were aware that he himself and Mr. Hollowell were not inferring that utilization is unimportant, but that it is important to keep the focus on distribution due to past experiences.

Mr. McLauchlan stated that he has no objections to the direction that the agreement is going in and added that the obligation of utilization is important.

Mr. Hosey added that he was happy to see the Tigers following up on utilization because understanding barriers provides answers for distributing the tickets to the children. Mr. Hosey stressed the importance of figuring out how to get more kids there such as ensuring that there is a fleet of buses, if it is necessary to ask for a certain number of tickets, and how is the decision made once the program is in place.

Mr. Crain commented that the issues have been sort of moving target that how do we best get the tickets out to the kids and then understand the impediments to the utilization of the tickets. Mr. Crain then asked the Tigers to clarify how the approval of ticket requests.

Mr. Perry stated that a handful of ways that organizations come to them and there is an electronic form used to collect baseline information which is the primary method to submit requests such as the number of tickets going to youth and chaperones.

Mr. Perry stated that are internal measures in place that ask that the applicant disclose any relations to employees. Mr. Perry disclosed that the final piece applies to larger organizations and its approach is associated with an existing program where tickets are utilized as an incentive, or reward, or team building.

Mr. Perry explained that this approach has been proposed to DPSCD, all the principals have received the information and can apply themselves, and that they are working with the central office to determine whether this approach can be used in count-day efforts. Mr. Perry mentioned that he is having dialogue with high-level decision-makers who can act on behalf of DPSCD superintendents.

Mr. Perry stated that the Tigers and the subcommittee for Tigers Tickets are partners in this initiative and that they want to be active and communicative. Mr. Perry acknowledged that a big concern for the committee is that there was no plan in place. Mr. Perry presented framework elements that they had been actively working on over the past couple of weeks.

Mr. Brown stated there are six areas of the framework with the first focus being the distribution of tickets. Mr. Brown pointed out that 80% of the annual tickets will be distributed in the City of Detroit. Mr. Brown stated that up to 20% of the remaining tickets



would be distributed to organizations that are in Wayne County. Mr. Hollowell noted that there were two organizations listed that are located in Southfield. Mr. Brown clarified that it may be that those organizations have indicated that they serve kids located in Detroit or Wayne County.

Mr. Crain stated that he liked the distribution plan and that it was more important to him that 50,000 tickets are distributed within Detroit and Wayne County. Mr. Crain stated that if enough requests are not generated in Wayne County and hopes this leaves the flexibility of at least 80%.

Mr. Brown pointed out that in making the shift from the last two seasons, there is demand in Wayne County and Detroit.

Mr. Ogden asked Mr. Crain if it was being suggested that distribution efforts exceeded 90-95% in Detroit and less in Wayne County, that they would be in violation of the plan. Mr. Crain responded by saying no, and that he had misread the language because they have given themselves the flexibility with Wayne County, and to add more in Detroit. Mr. Crain said that he did not want the held to a mandate of 20% of the tickets going to Wayne County.

Mr. Brown asked if there were further questions.

Mr. Brown stated that the second point focuses on benchmarking and that it ensures that the data is taken from other major league baseball clubs, and organizations that participate in ticket distribution programs, and integrating that into their planning. Mr. Brown pointed out that moving forward that the goal around the second area is to present the results of that annual benchmarking to the committee in January each year.

Mr. Brown said that the third area is about utilization and tracking.

Mr. Brown made himself available to speak with Mr. Hollowell after the discussion in order to compare notes to ensure that everything that Mr. Hollowell indicated had been included in the agreement.

Mr. Brown stated that what they are attempting to point out includes when the program launches, what they are thinking about regarding utilization, how to achieve it, and lastly, low utilization and its factors. Mr. Brown noted that factors may be associated with "rain outs", and this is outside of their control. Mr. Brown explained other factors could be that the allocatee may feel that they did not receive the ticket far enough in advance, or that something in the process did not work.

Mr. Brown asked if there were any questions.



Mr. Brown said the fourth point is that their barrier-reducing opportunities, and the program called *Game Day for Kids* are returning this year. This would be the first non-opening day experience at the park for a school, of schools, as a field trip type opportunity.

Mr. Brown said throughout the season that there are 20 of these opportunities and that it would add up to 4,000 barrier-free experiences at the ballpark. Mr. Brown added that this is above and beyond the 50,000 tickets commitment and is important to the committee and organization.

Mr. Hosey stated that he would expect super high utilization for the barrier-free events, and to know exactly how much that costs to get the utilization up in order to expand the program. Mr. Hosey recalled how City Council would call and ask if they wanted to donate 1,000 masks and 200 gallons of hand sanitizer. He also said that this becomes an opportunity for everyone.

Mr. Hosey advised that this would be a way of putting corporate arms together. Mr. Brown agreed.

Mr. Ogden recalled the past barriers that had been faced like issues around transportation, chaperones, and food. Mr. Ogden stated that what they have come back with is above and beyond their program, and that is very much appreciated. Mr. Ogden stated that his question of accounting for chaperones remains.

Mr. Hollowell stated that the legal verbiage does include the word families which can apply to chaperones, and not families directly but that the Board could revise the language when it approves the resolution.

Mr. Crain questioned Mr. Brown stating that he thought that in the last meeting, that accommodation was included in the ticket distribution for 4,000 tickets, with chaperones.

Mr. Ogden responded that he thought that they were referring to this “over the top” program, and that is a “pilot” for them. Mr. Brown stated that with the online application, they ask the question of the number of children and chaperones.

Mr. Brown stated that they are looking through the lens of how a non-profit has to function, and its rules, and how it has to function as an organization when bringing children to an event.

Mr. Hollowell suggested adding language to the resolution that covers the issue of adults attending the game, and that this was the board’s intent.



Mr. Hosey added that otherwise that's a cost would incur with the free tickets, and adults paying.

Ms. Navin said that as she recalled the issue of adults attending games, and the language that didn't allow that was not raised by the board, but an issue raised as a concern by a member of the public. Ms. Navin stated that once there is an approved final plan that consideration should be given to amending that section of the CMA that specifies "low-income" children, to be more expansive. Ms. Navin said that it needs to be clear that the 50,000 tickets will be going to youth-serving organizations in order to enable children, and an appropriate number of adult chaperones to attend these games is appropriate.

Mr. Ogden agreed, and that this could be remedied in the plan itself.

Mr. Brown stated that he would like to work with organizations on a case-by-case basis to identify the number of chaperones needed. He also stated that this is a mentorship program and that it makes sense for there to be one-to-one, versus two, or three chaperones.

Mr. Hollowell said that getting them to the game is underneath this effort in that African American kids are not playing baseball and the intentionality behind this program.

Mr. Hosey said that there is a rational explanation and that as they continue to build the reputation of "good actors" there will be this wonderful thing in the community.

Mr. Brown stated that this leads to their fifth plan going back to communication throughout the season, and proposed monthly updates that would contain high-level information. Mr. Brown added that Mr. Perry could share outreach detail information on a monthly basis.

Mr. Ogden agreed with the proposition.

Mr. Brown states the second piece of information would come from mid-season and post-season numbers that will focus on utilization and the number of tickets associated with the program.

Mr. Brown introduced provision six of the framework that offers the opportunity to adjust the plan if they feel it is necessary, every five years. Mr. Brown assured the board that if they were not comfortable with this language they would remove it from the agreement, and that it has nothing to do with the ultimate obligation.

Mr. McLaughlan reiterated that provision six has nothing to do with their obligation under the CMA to distribute 50,000 tickets but to provide an occasion for a formal review of the plan.





Mr. Hollowell stated that provision six is a bit duplicative of provision five because they are giving monthly updates, and mid and post-season reports and that they would receive feedback.

Mr. Crain added that there needs to be an opportunity for annual review, and not the plan that gets adjusted. Mr. Crain suggested that they meet similarly like it was done with physical improvements at Comerica Park, and that he would like the opportunity to meet annually and take advantage of the opportunity of making adjustments in order to benefit the kids.

Mr. Hosey stated that it is not just low-income, but low and moderate-income residents who could benefit from this program. He advised that as this program gains strength we may want to change this to low-income receiving “barrier-free”, and moderate-income receiving free tickets. Mr. Hosey said that it is not easy for a family household of \$70,000 with four kids to go to the ballpark, and that these changes would make this happen.

Mr. Ogden interpreted that as leaving provision six, as-is does not pose harm, and to take a deep dive every five-years.

Mr. Brown asked if the framework could be revisited every five-years.

Mr. McLauchlan responded that he has had conversations with Ms. Navin in that the board needs to have something approved and added that Mr. Brown and Mr. Perry thought that every five years would be the time to look over the framework of the plan.

Mr. Crain asked if transportation would be established at least once a year.

Mr. Ogden asked, if provision five was addressing the issue of transportation.

Ms. Navin suggested adding to provision five that the post-season report would serve as an annual report, in lieu of the committee meeting between the months of March – September to review updates and make it a post-season report

Mr. Ogden gave the overview that there were no objections, and that a meeting needs to be scheduled to put finalize the place.

Mr. Hollowell summarized that there was excellent direction. Mr. Hollowell asked them to submit a plan and asked for common language for what is taking place. Mr. Hollowell stated that there should be press for this event, and perhaps a big-time star, along with a kick-off.

Mr. McLauchlan stated that maybe this could be done on social media, or maybe a “quick video from a key player on the DDA’s website or on social media.



Ms. Navin proposed that caution should be exercised when it comes to advertising.

Mr. McLauchlan suggested that marketing and advertising be used to advance, and not to market programs.

Mr. Ogden stated that everyone would be emailed the final draft, and a date proposing the next meeting.

Ms. Navin asked for clarification on the next steps.

Mr. Hollowell stated that there needs to be one more meeting where they have a uniform agreement across the table and that this would be recommended to the board. Mr. Hollowell stated that he would take his notes and send them to the group for review.

Ms. Navin stated that the month of May would be the target for the next DDA meeting.

Mr. Brown stated that they have commenced the ticket distribution process.

### **OTHER MATTERS**

Ms. Kanalos informed the board of the retirement of Malinda Jensen, and Gay Hilger from the DEGC, and thanked them for the contribution that they have made since becoming employees, adding that they would be sorely missed.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Crain made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Mr. Hollowell. Mr. Ogden adjourned the meeting at 1:20 p.m.