



**DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
TIGERS TICKET DONATION PROGRAM COMMITTEE MEETING
MONDAY, MARCH 6, 2023 – 11:00 A.M.**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Ehrlich Crain
Melvin Hollowell
Richard Hosey
Steve Ogden, Chair

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: None

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



**MINUTES OF THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
TIGERS TICKET DONATION PROGRAM COMMITTEE MEETING
MONDAY, MARCH 6, 2023
DETROIT ECONOMIC GROWTH CORPORATION
500 GRISWOLD STREET, SUITE 2200 – 11:00 A.M.**

GENERAL

Call to Order

Chair Ogden called the meeting of the Downtown Development Authority Tigers Ticket Donation Program Committee to order at 11:04 a.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 April 30, 2019, Committee meeting.

On a motion by Mr. Hollowell, seconded by Mr. Crain, the minutes of the April 30, 2019, Committee meeting were unanimously approved.

PROJECTS

Detroit Tigers Ticket Donation Program - Review of 2019 – 2022 Seasons

Ms. Jensen advised that they had met with representatives from the Tigers organization and Olympia Development to discuss historically what had happened since our last meeting. We had a series of meetings in 2017, 2018 and 2019, and then there was the pandemic. We talked about the best way to present what has happened since 2019. The Tigers will discuss what they did last year, and then will go into the 2023 season. Ms. Jensen turned the meeting over to Mr. Kevin Brown.

Mr. Ogden informed the Committee that Committee Member Hosey just joined the meeting.

Mr. Brown introduced himself as the Director of Community Impact for Ilitch Sports and Entertainment, the Detroit Red Wings as well as the Detroit Tigers, and explained that he has served in this role for the Red Wings, but that the combining of the two teams' Community Impact took place in 2020.



Mr. Brown introduced Mr. Jonathon Perry, Community Impact Manager, and as part of his function, he oversees the ticket program and a variety of other initiatives for the Tigers organization. Mr. Brown advised that first they are going to look back at 2019 and review the exciting connections that were made for the ticket program, as well as the difficult circumstances that were presented because of the Covid 19 pandemic.

Mr. Brown reviewed the ticket donation summary contained in the attached slide presentation.

Mr. Ogden thanked Mr. Brown for his presentation and stated that he would like to pause here and talk more about the past before proceeding to 2023.

Mr. Crain thanked the Tigers organization for their shift to focus on underprivileged kids and the schools in Detroit and Wayne County receiving tickets. Mr. Crain asked for information on the 2022 ticket distribution and if they had the number of tickets that went to DPSCD.

Mr. Brown advised that the exact numbers are at the back end of this presentation, and Mr. Perry will be covering that information in detail. They are developing a relationship with Alicia Meriweather's office at DPSCD and the Office of Career Readiness and Grown Detroit's Young Talent, and organizations we know would be strong in bringing kids to the games.

Mr. Ogden expressed that the Committee has a built-up frustration with how this program has been handled and apologized for the "unleashing" of that frustration. Mr. Ogden informed that in the past, when the Committee requested information about the distribution of tickets, they would get an answer that the information was not available, and they would provide that information at a later date. The information would come much later and then the momentum was lost that was developed at the meeting. It was really embarrassing because of the have deep roots the Committee members have in the community. They were never really satisfied with the distribution of the tickets.

Mr. Ogden also mentioned that the Committee had taken too much control of the process. What the Committee's role should be is to review a plan submitted by the Tigers and come back with suggestions. The Committee hopes that the Tigers organization has a comprehensive plan laid out for 2023 that will allow for deviations and recommendation but will not rely on this Committee to get tickets out.

Mr. Hollowell asked for a reminder of what the original commitment was contractually.

Mr. Hosey reminded the Committee that the contractual commitment was very nebulous, so the Committee was formed to review ways to go above and beyond the contractual commitment.



Ms. Navin stated that she would like to read the exact provision in the Concession and Management Agreement and then give a little bit of context on how it has evolved.

“The Tigers will develop a program approved by the DDA and the Authority to provide 50,000 tickets annually to children from low-income families to enable them to attend Major League baseball games.”

That is the language that is in the agreement. By way of background and to remind the Committee, as we dove deeper into this commitment and how it evolved over the years, we did find some documentation to indicate at some point early in the program in the early 2000s, the Tigers said that they wanted to be able to proceed with “well-deserving children” rather than “low-income families” because they do not have the capacity to determine low-income families. We see that documentation on the Tigers’ side, but that documentation was never formally brought to the DDA Board. However, the reports that reflected that much broader scope were received and presented to the Board from the early 2000s until mid-2000-teens when more focus on Detroit and Wayne County was requested by this Committee. So, for 15 to 20 years, the Board received reports that included a broader geography and did not necessarily focus on low-income.

Mr. Hollowell asked about the provision “to be approved by the DDA.” Ms. Navin said that is in the provision in the Concession Management Agreement. For full disclosure here, about 5 years ago, she went back through the minutes and could not find where a formal plan had ever been approved by the DDA Board, however, the practice became that the distribution report was presented on an annual basis so that kind of became the de facto program.

Mr. Hollowell clarified that there had never been a formal program approved by the Board. Ms. Navin stated that is correct.

Mr. Hollowell asked what the DDA’s contribution to the Stadium is annually. Ms. Navin replied that per the CMA, the DDA contributes annually to a repair and maintenance fund. Mr. Long can provide the dollar amount of that contribution. Mr. Long advised that he was bringing the information up on his computer because the dollar amount is adjusted every year for inflation. The Tigers contribute \$300,000 per year. The amount DDA contributed in 2000 was \$250,000 and has been adjusted for inflation every year. The DDA’s last contribution was \$388,568. The total that the DDA has contributed over the years is roughly \$7M.

The Committee asked for clarification on the money that went into building the stadium. Mr. Long advised that it was both Detroit and Wayne County dollars.

Mr. Hollowell explained to the representatives from the Tigers how the Committee had gotten “pounded” by the public, press and outsiders about tickets going outside of Detroit



and Wayne County to Oakland County and other counties in the past and how that was unacceptable.

Mr. Hollowell expressed his frustration and stated that the Committee does not need a PowerPoint presentation, they need a plan to fix this because this is incredibly important.

Mr. Hosey agreed with Mr. Hollowell and said that it should have been easy for the Tigers over the last 20 years. Detroit Housing Commission has over 40,000 residents and they are all low income, and the Tigers could have reached out to them.

Mr. Ogden expressed to the Tigers staff that what they are hearing is pent up frustration over the program over the last six or seven years, and the Committee members needed to get it out. So now they've come full circle and are giving it back to the Tigers with the opportunity to fix it, start fresh, and talk about a plan moving forward.

Mr. Ogden thanked the Tigers organization for listening and called on Ms. English-Barnhill, who serves as Vice President of Government and Community Affairs at Olympia Development of Michigan, to continue with the presentation.

Ms. English-Barnhill stated that she had joined ODM at the end of 2019 and was able to hold a round-table discussion with Ms. Meriweather at DPSCD before everything shut down in February 2020. They also were reaching out to charter schools and the faith-based community to try to figure out how to get these tickets out to more Detroit and Wayne County children. Ms. English-Barnhill stated the Committee will see a shift in this presentation, not just to the ticket distribution, but in the programming as well. What you will see in 2022 is that we are listening, we have taken the Committee's suggestions and do want an authentic partnership.

Mr. Hollowell stated he had just received a text from an individual as high up as you can go at DPS that they need the Tigers to stick with one point of contact at DPS and that has not been the case now. Ms. English-Barnhill stated that this information is received, and they will all use that one point of contact that they have been referencing.

Mr. Ogden advised that he doesn't want to make such a dramatic shift here, but they would be remiss not mentioning the ticket utilization. There have been a lot of good ideas about how to get the tickets to Detroit children, but tickets also need to go to chaperones and bus drivers.

Mr. Brown stated that they certainly were taking that into consideration in coming up with a plan. Transportation needs to be arranged, a certain number of chaperones or support staff needs to be with the children, but that they can't do this for every child. They can't do anything about what has happened in the past, but they want this to be a partnership. This is giving kids the opportunity to dream big through the power of baseball. What you



will see in 2022 is that the ticket donation was back up to 50,000 tickets, 85 percent were Detroit and 15 percent Wayne County. And when Mr. Perry goes into 2023, this is moving in a direction that we at the Tigers organization are very excited about. We are going to work hard to make this a premier relationship for a city like Detroit that deserves it.

Committee Chair Ogden proposed moving forward with a clean slate and asked if there were any other comments from the Committee members.

Mr. Hollowell proposed that we schedule a vote of a Tigers ticket plan, because according to Ms. Navin, the Board has never approved anything, and recommended that this happens by the All-Star break. Mr. Hollowell stated that he will be a “no” vote until the Tigers are above the Major League Baseball standard.

Mr. Hollowell added that he would like to identify the top 5 donation programs in Major League Baseball (MLB) and measure the Tigers Ticket Donation Program against the top 5 donation programs, month by month, in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the Tigers Tickets Donation Program.

Mr. Crain agreed with everything that Mr. Hollowell proposed and suggested that the Committee look at what the Tigers organization is proposing. Mr. Crain stated that he doesn't necessarily want to focus on Major League Baseball, but rather, focus on our community and what we are doing here. What works in San Francisco may not work for Detroit. Mr. Crain suggested that the Committee see what is being proposed and then look at how we move forward.

Mr. Hosey said that sounds fair, but he wants the full intersection. This has been a missed marketing opportunity for 20 years, but also, it has been 20 years of non-compliance. Mr. Hosey informed that he will vote yes only on something that removes all the barriers--a program where community, developers, the Mayor's office, etc. all work together—and make it an amazing program.

Mr. Ogden had one last comment and mentioned that there needs to be consideration about how the DPS kids get fed since they are on the school lunch program and are getting pulled out of school to attend the game.

Mr. Ogden advised that the Committee is ready and asked the Tigers to move forward on their presentation of the 2023 Program.

Detroit Tigers Ticket Donation Program - 2023 Program Discussion

Mr. Brown spoke about a pilot that was launched called Game Day for Kids. This pilot program launched in 2022 addresses some of the barrier concerns that the Committee has raised today. It provided a meal for every person, a ball cap for every person, and



round-trip bus transportation for every person, and great experiences in the ballpark for every person. The program is not for all 50,000 tickets, but it is moving us in the right direction as we identify ways to remove those barriers for kids and for families. It is an expensive way to do the program that is above and beyond just handing them a ticket.

This program was a pilot in 2022 and it is being brought back for 2023. It will likely stay at the 4,000-ticket level for 2023 as the Tigers organization continues the process of identifying the best way to impact and explore the program as a whole.

Mr. Brown turned the floor over to Mr. Perry who reviewed the remainder of the slide presentation and, in the interest of time, briefly covered the relationships they are building including the City, Wayne County, Detroit Parks and Recreation, Grow Detroit's Young Talent, and DPSCD.

Mr. Hollowell apologized that he needed to leave and said that it looks like the Tigers are heading in the right direction, but there is one piece that is missing—what the other teams are doing and how the Tigers measure against the best practices in Major League Baseball. He needs to see that.

Mr. Perry advised that the final piece here is that they are offering the tickets to gain dates across the full season. We were hampered and missed prime time last year at the end of the school year which is historically when most of these tickets have gone out based on past numbers. We were happy to be able to reach our numbers though. Mr. Perry advised that he is happy that they are distributing across the whole breadth of the season and are hopeful that things like utilization will rise.

Mr. Crain asked if what is meant by utilization is where tickets were taken and were not used. Mr. Perry answered yes, but there is a whole long, long laundry list of reasons why people don't do things, notwithstanding things like there is an outbreak, a chaperone issue, or changing of a school schedule.

Mr. Perry advised that he wanted to mention here that there is a whole myriad of things that just exist in this place as we talk about matching ourselves against other Major League teams. The information we have is only for that separate ticket program and doesn't focus just on the city or county where that stadium resides, so they are going across their entire states and their entire market. It is thought that is direct correlation as to why they see higher utilization rates. Comparing the programs is like comparing apples to oranges—they are definitely in the same space but there are some differences.

Mr. Ogden said that every Major League team has a low income ticket distribution program. Mr. Hosey said he completely agrees and once the differences are explained, the differences can be solved.



Mr. Hosey disclosed that he is the Board President of the Detroit Housing Commission (DHC), and he can come up with a million ways of why it would be a good idea for the Commission to work to increase your utilization as incentive for income certification and all those types of things that make it very worthwhile for DHC to provide buses and hot dogs for our residents to get to the game. It is an incentive to get their information.

Mr. Hosey added that while we have a low income population, we have a lot of institutions supporting that low income population that can be called upon to help remove the barriers discussed. So be it the Housing Commission, the City of Detroit, foundations, or corporate sponsors that say they want to get their names on that market piece, they are out there. With that piece, he believes that the Tigers can actually beat the other MLB teams that are sending tickets out of the city. Our process here is that we figure it out, we beat all the barriers and make it happen.

Mr. Brown thanked Mr. Hosey for the information and said that this needs to be a collaboration, but he wants to be respectful of the Committee members' time and that this is not their job. If there are organizations out there that this is their capability and it is not a burden to them, then let's talk and do this the right way. We are moving in the right direction as you have heard from Mr. Perry and the type of folks he is talking to. Mr. Brown said that he would love to connect after this.

Mr. Ogden added a finer point to what he was saying earlier. The Committee welcomes them reaching out for recommendations or suggestions and believes he would find that they have a lot of useful affiliations in Detroit but that should not be the program.

Mr. Brown advised that he wants the Committee to know that they are looking at this commitment differently and are hoping to give the Committee a sense of ease in a way of obviously cautious optimism.

Mr. McLaughlan thanked the Committee for the opportunity to present their plan and advised that they certainly hear and understand the frustration that the Committee has expressed. Mr. McLaughlan advised that it dawned on them quickly that nothing could be worse than them giving 50,000 tickets out and no one is happy—the community, the DDA Board—so as quickly as possible, we listened. First, we were faced with Covid and then a strike. Things were impacted greatly, but Ms. Jensen knows that the Tigers stayed in contact with the DEGC through everything, and once Mr. Brown took over the program, it was very clear that he understood what was needed and pivoted as quickly as a large organization could pivot.

Mr. McLaughlan advised that he wants the Committee to know that they have heard all of the great suggestions and it is their intention to move forward in a positive way. It doesn't make sense to do it any other way. Otherwise, they are wasting tickets, they are



wasting their time and the Committee's time. He hopes that the Committee will appreciate the steps that they have made and will continue to make.

Mr. Ogden thanked Mr. McLaughlan and advised that there are two points that Committee member Hollowell brought up that he wants to loop back to before closing. One, as you are developing the program, making lots of calls, having lots of contacts, but at the end of the day, who is the point of contact from the Tigers for the Ticket Donation Program?

Mr. Brown advised that they are a joint community impact team, but from the Tigers perspective, our point of contact from a community initiatives perspective is Mr. Perry.

Mr. Ogden advised Mr. Brown that if there are issues with getting the 50,000 tickets out, he should feel free to reach out to the Committee members. The Committee doesn't want to hear about problems after the season is over.

Mr. Hosey added that there are 300,000 people in Detroit that are below the low-income line and there are only 50,000 tickets so the more we make this happen the easier it is to say no, not everyone has been served but that there is this great utilization program that can built upon.

Mr. Crain stated that he is Chair of Board of K though 8 charter schools and there are three entities—Central Michigan University, Grand Valley State University, and Detroit Public Schools—that are the charter entities for every charter school in the state and suggested that the Tigers reach out to these three entities.

Mr. Ogden asked if there were any other comments. Mr. Perry added that as he has now been identified as the person of contact for the ticket program, he wanted to let the Committee know that he would like to stay in close touch throughout the season and to continue to hear the great ideas that the Committee has discussed today.

Mr. Ogden advised that we need to set another meeting not too far off in the future before the season kicks off. The meeting is anticipated to last less than an hour and other top of the line programs throughout the league will be reviewed and at some point, the plan will have to be voted on. Mr. Ogden added that the Committee would also like to see each time it meets a "rolling" list of ticket distributions with the number of tickets after each name. Mr. Crain added that the Committee would like to see the list even if there isn't a meeting.

Mr. Brown advised that the touchpoint on percentage comparisons that Mr. Hollowell mentioned may be difficult because MLB does not provide that data. It does not request that data from other teams until mid-point or at the end of the season, but we will share where we are at. Mr. Ogden replied that the Committee will work with whatever the MLB structure is.



Mr. Ogden thanked the Tigers organization and advised that staff will be in touch to schedule the next meeting.

OTHER MATTERS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Ogden asked if there was anyone from the public that would like to make public comment and informed that they would be given two minutes. Mr. Ogden called a second and a third time for public comment. Hearing none, Mr. Ogden asked if there was a motion to adjourn.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Crain made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Mr. Hosey. Mr. Ogden adjourned the meeting at 12:18 p.m.