

Minutes: Buildings and Facilities Committee

(former Civic Center Committee)

Wednesday, September 11, 2024

Alumni Hall, Second Floor Conference Room

- Attendees: Charlie Atwood; Burnie Allen; Art Dessureau; Rick Dente; Paula Dolan; Jon Valsangiacomo; Sue Higby
- Not in Attendance: Matt Flaherty; Brent Gagne
- Others in Attendance: Jim McWilliam

Minutes for the September 11, 2024, meeting prepared by Sue Higby. Co-chair

The meeting was called to order by Chair Charlie Atwood at 8:04AM.

1. Minutes for the August 14, 2024 meeting were reviewed. The minutes were approved, with a motion by Burnie Allen, seconded by Art Dessureau and affirmed by the Committee.
2. Visitors and Communications – None
3. Civic Center Financial Review
 - Dawn M provided a BOR Fund Summary. The Civic Center Operating Revenue and Expense Summary was last updated in March.
 - Committee members discussed staff overburdening and lack of management oversight. They raised the question of: “Who is minding the store? Who is taking calls?”
 - Charlie and Sue will schedule a meeting with the City Manager to learn more about the transition(s) taking place with director positions (Bldgs and Rec) that are associated with Civic Center performance and results.
 - A specific short-term, pressing issue discussed was how to handle turf storage with the ice schedule coming.
 - The Committee discussed the importance of re-opening discussions about cell tower siting at the AUD.
4. Congressional grant funds
 - Communications have been unclear and lacking.
 - This is considered the Committee’s highest priority.
 - The Committee discussed the need to have a seasoned Project Manager to run the AUD project.
 - The NU Senior Project provides insights into certain AUD updates.
5. Marketing Report – Jim
 - Jim suggested that a least 4 meetings each year include a “walking tour” component so that repairs and issues associated with managing the Civic Center Complex could be seen and discussed.
 - He discussed a series of basketball events, including open practice; college hoops with Norwich; the Winter Solstice Event (in January) involving HS players; the State Wrestling Championship tournaments at the AUD for the first year; and

various sponsorship-oriented activities, including NSB chairs for the Basketball season and banner issues.

6. Staff Report

The Committee learned by email shortly before this scheduled Sept. 11 meeting that the interim director of the Civic Center Complex, Rikk Taft, had left his position and a new person had been hired. The Committee was informed by the City Manager that the new hire is Tom Baker, scheduled to start on Sept. 16, 2024.

Praise for Rikk Taft:

The Committee wanted the minutes of this meeting to reflect the group's highest regard for the fine work completed by Rikk Taft over the one-half year he worked as the interim director for the Civic Center Complex. The Committee was exceptionally impressed with his interest in the Civic Center Complex and his readiness to identify and respond to problems quickly and effectively. He will be missed, and the Committee wishes him well in his next pursuit. Thank you.

The Committee meeting was adjourned at 9:30AM.