



Bismarck Event Center Authority Board

MEETING March 4, 2026

Tom Baker Meeting Room	City/County Office Building 221 N 5th Street	11:00 AM
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Purpose: The purpose of the Bismarck Event Center Authority Board is to give the Board of City Commissioners and the Bismarck Event Center management ongoing governance and oversight over the third-party operator, community-based guidance, recommendations regarding operations and policies, ensure community representation, input regarding long-term planning, fiduciary oversight, develop and implement capital improvement plans to the facilities, and a method for public accountability.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. [Public Comment](#)
3. Consider Approval of Minutes
4. Enter into Executive Session under North Dakota Century Code Section 44-04-19.2 regarding contract negotiation/negotiation strategy under NDCC Section 44-04-19.1(9)
5. Mission Statement Development Discussion
6. Term Assignment Discussion
7. Policy Discussion
8. Survey Discussion
9. Other Business

ADJOURN



MEETING OF THE BISMARCK EVENT CENTER AUTHORITY BOARD

2/4/2026 - MINUTES

AGENDA

1. Call to Order

The Bismarck Event Center Authority Board met in the Tom Baker meeting room on February 4, 2026, at 11:00 AM. Members present included Sheri Grossman, Joel Kostelecky, Jason Tomanek, Chad Wachter, and Mayor Schmitz. Members Mike Gardner and Jennifer Wilson attended the meeting via Teams.

2. [Public Comment](#)

No public comment was received.

3. Approval of Minutes

Member Wachter moved to approve the minutes as presented and member Grossman seconded. Upon a roll call vote, all voted aye. M/C.

4. Capital Improvement Plan Update

Jeff Ubl with Ubl Design Group, presented an overview of the Event Center's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), which was developed from decades of prior studies and a comprehensive review of existing conditions, staff input, and City leadership discussions. The plan takes a global, phased approach and focuses first on deferred maintenance, then modernization, before any future expansion, with decision-making being guided by visitor experience, operations, revenue impact, and financial feasibility. Mr. Ubl explained that the CIP prioritizes stabilizing the facility by addressing urgent needs, particularly major arena infrastructure. These priorities include a long-overdue HVAC replacement, while ultimately directing long-term financial resources towards the Exhibit Hall. The plan includes a five-year near-term implementation within a 10-year outlook, annual reviews aligned with the City budget, and preservation of emergency and reserve funds. Near-term projects include arena HVAC modernization, facility-wide wayfinding and signage improvements, accessibility-driven restroom upgrades, arena roof replacement, parking lot repairs, and Exhibit Hall lighting and controls upgrades. Longer term plans include Exhibit Hall modernization and potential expansion planning. Mr. Ubl noted that additional recommendations include ongoing plan updates, better tracking and escalation of operational issues, digitization of building records, use of Indefinite Delivery, Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) design contracts for continuity, and a list of smaller projects that can be advanced if funding allows.

The Board also discussed the design of a new mechanical HVAC system for the Event Center that meets key project goals: high energy efficiency, low operating and life-cycle costs, and ease of operation and maintenance. Decisions will need to be made as to who will operate and maintain the system, whether it be the City, the third-party management company, or a hybrid approach. The building hosts varying types of events which make advanced controls essential to efficiently manage temperature, ventilation, and air quality before and after events. The City does not currently have a dedicated HVAC staff member, which increases uncertainty around operations. The group agreed that more clarity is needed for operations and control responsibilities, with the preference being for the City to retain significant control while coordinating with the third party.

A. Overview of the CIP

B. 2026 CIP Projects

C. Building Controls and Operations Discussion

5. Oak View Group Contract and Negotiation Update

Mayor Schmitz requested that the item be restricted to an update and that a contract negotiation special meeting be scheduled to get both the Event Center Authority Board and representatives of Oak View Group (OVG) together to finalize contract negotiations. Mitch Anzivino, a representative of Jones Lang and Lasalle (JLL) addressed the board and noted that he understood the need to expedite the contract finalization process with the intended February 28, 2026, deadline. He will work with City staff and OVG to coordinate a meeting.

6. Event Center Operations Update

Amanda Yellow, Acting Event Center Director, provided an update of the events that took place in January and also upcoming events for February and March.

7. Third Party Survey Discussion

Jason Tomanek, City Administrator, addressed the board with the idea of having a third party help develop surveys to improve the quality and usefulness of customer feedback. JLL has drafted a detailed survey, but there is concern that the length may be too long for respondents to complete thoughtfully. The intent of the surveys would be to gather meaningful insights beyond basic ratings, such as whether staff exceeded expectations. Administrator Tomanek said he will share the draft survey for the board to review for discussion at a later date.

8. Other Business

A. **Western North Dakota Honor Flight Request**

Diane Martin, a board member of the Western North Dakota Honor Flight, presented a request to use the Event Center for their pre-flight meetings. The Honor Flight organizes trips for veterans from Bismarck to Washington, D.C., providing a two-day experience to visit memorials, with full support including transportation, meals, medical staff, and goodie

bags. They serve over 32 counties, have a waiting list of over 400, and operate entirely through volunteers and fundraising. The pre-flight meetings are essential to prepare veterans, guardians, and staff for travel, verify registrations, distribute clothing and goodie bags, and cover TSA and travel instructions. Meetings typically involve up to 200 people and take place from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Ms. Martin requested the board recommendation to the City Commission for free use of the Event Center and a food exemption which would allow for the organization to bring in refreshments for the attendees.

Member Wachter moved to approve use of the Event Center twice per year free of charge for 2026 and 2027, and allow an outside food exemption, and Member Grossman seconded.

- Upon discussion, member Gardner noted concerns about setting a precedent for other organizations to request use of the Event Center free of charge.
- Administrator Tomanek noted that there is one other instance when the rent has been waived for use of the Event Center, which is the Capital City Christmas Breakfast with Santa event.
- The group discussed developing a policy or guidelines for how to address requests like this in the future.

Upon a roll call vote, all voted aye. M/C.

B. Member Terms

Administrator Tomanek started discussion on member terms for the board. He explained that certain positions are tied to specific roles, such as the Mayor, while others are regular board members. The board will need to establish term lengths and stagger start dates so that not all members rotate out at the same time. Term lengths are typically three to five years. The group will decide term lengths and rotation order at the next meeting.

C. Code of Conduct

Administrator Tomanek explained that the City Commission approved a Code of Conduct in 2024. The code was written primarily for the Board of City Commissioners, but it is shared with the various boards and committees to ensure that all members are aware of expected conduct at meetings.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 12:07 PM.



MEETING OF THE BISMARCK EVENT CENTER AUTHORITY BOARD

2/18/2026 - MINUTES

AGENDA

1. Call to Order

The Bismarck Event Center Authority Board met at 12:30 PM on February 18, 2026. Members present included Sheri Grossman, Joel Kostecky, Jason Tomanek, and Mayor Mike Schmitz. Members Jennifer Wilson and Chad Wachter attended the meeting via Teams. Member Mike Gardner was absent.

2. [Public Comment](#)

No public comment was received.

3. Enter into Executive Session under North Dakota Century Code Section 44-04-19.2 regarding contract negotiation/negotiation strategy under NDCC Section 44-04-19.1(9)

Member Grossman moved to enter into Executive Session under North Dakota Century Code Section 44-04-19.2 regarding contract negotiation/negotiation strategy at 12:32 PM, and Member Kostecky seconded. Upon a roll call vote, all voted aye. M/C.

The board reconvened at 1:28 PM with all members present.

Member Grossman moved to direct staff to move forward with the negotiation strategy agreed upon during the executive session, and Member Kostecky seconded. Upon a roll call vote, all voted aye. M/C.

4. Discussion of Western North Dakota Honor Flight Request

Member Wachter moved to rescind the approval of the rental donation for the North Dakota Honor Flight as he volunteered to personally cover the cost and did not want to set a precedent for future requests, and Member Grossman seconded. Upon a roll call vote, all voted aye.

The board members requested that the topic of donations/reduced fees for non-profit organizations be added to the March meeting's agenda for discussion.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 1:35 PM.

SALES MANAGER SECTION

1. Sales Manager Name:
2. Did you feel the Sales Manager was an "expert" (e.g. offered enhancements, asked questions, anticipated needs)?
3. Did you feel the Sales Manager offer an "Enhancement Package" by proactively solving a problem or by providing relevant solutions or recommendations that had a positive effect on your event?
4. You answered 'No' to the previous question. Please let us know why below:
5. Did the Sales Manager respond promptly to all questions or correspondence?
6. Did the Sales Manager provide a quote that correctly reflected all services discussed?
7. Did the Sales Manager effectively manage the transition of your event to your event manager (e.g. the event manager was knowledgeable of all relevant event details, had new ideas on how to support your priorities and did not ask repeat questions in the process)?
8. Based on the services and advice received during the sales process, rate our Sales Manager performance from 1% to 100%.
9. Based on your experience with the Sales Manager, how likely are you to recommend [VENUE NAME] to friends or family? With '0' being not at all likely and '10' being extremely likely.

EVENT MANAGER SECTION

10. Event Manager Name:
11. When you came to the facility for a walk-through with your Event Manager, did you feel the event manager had anticipated and understood your needs and was ready to consult on opportunities for you?
12. Did you feel that the Event Manager demonstrated real skill and authority, meaning you felt that they made quick decisions/responses, provided results, and that they really helped you to the point of being consultative?
13. Did you feel that the Event Manager was your go-to person and the primary contact, with authority, for all aspects of your event including onsite or offsite vendors?
14. If you worked with onsite audio-visual or technical services, did you feel that your Event Manager stayed involved and helped confirm all relevant details?

15. Did the Event Manager anticipate and handle all or most of your offsite needs (e.g. transportation, registration, etc)?
16. When dealing with all vendors (onsite or offsite), did it feel like the Event Manager acted in your best interest and stayed involved?
17. Did your event run smoothly/seamlessly without any problems?
18. Did your Event Manager add value by bringing new approaches to your event?
19. You answered 'No' to the previous question. Please let us know why below:

EVENT STAFF SECTION

20. Did you interact with an event staff team member during your event?
21. Did the event staff team members smile, make eye contact and ask how else they could assist you?
22. Did the event staff team members exhibit a strong willingness to help?
23. Did your experience with the event staff team members make you feel encouraged to approach other event staff team members throughout your event?

AUDIO/VISUAL SECTION

24. Did you utilize Audio/Video?
25. Did the AV team set up a pre-meeting with you on the day of the event to walk you through, test your AV setup and answer all your questions?
26. Did the AV team ask specific questions and offer suggestions relative to your needs to ensure you received the exact equipment necessary to run a successful event?
27. Did the quality of AV equipment exceed you and your guests' quality expectations?
28. Did all experiences with AV run seamlessly with no hiccups?

FOOD AND BEVERAGE SECTION

29. Did you utilize the Food and Beverage services?
30. Which aspects of the food and beverage service did you experience at your event?
31. How would you rate the overall quality of the food provided?

32. If a meal service was a part of your event, did you feel that the service delivered an elevated and unique experience for you and your attendees?
33. Were your interactions with the front-of-the-house food and beverage team members engaging?
34. Did front-of-the-house food and beverage team members make you feel valued and anticipate your needs?
35. Were all food and beverage areas kept in pristine condition (e.g., serving areas were free of empty plates and cups, napkins were cleared, garbage cans were not overflowing, etc.)?
36. Did you feel that we provided an elevated and/or innovative food and beverage experience that was unique?
37. Did you utilize the concessions?
38. Considering all components of Food and Beverage Services and/or Restaurant and Cafe Services received, rate your overall satisfaction on a scale of 1% - 100%.

HOUSEKEEPING AND CLEANING SECTION

39. Did you visit the restroom during your event?
40. What was your initial impression when visiting one of the restrooms?
41. Based on your overall experience, did you feel that the cleanliness standards met or exceeded your expectations?
42. Did you utilize a breakout room during your event?

SAFETY AND SECURITY SECTION

43. Did you feel safe during your event?
44. Did your event require you to move in and move out?

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SECTION

45. Did you use the FREE available broadband/Wi-Fi during your event?
46. Did you purchase any additional IT services from [VENUE NAME]?
47. The available bandwidth at your event...
48. Did our Event Manager consult with you and offer suggestions based on your attendees' needs?

49. You answered 'No' to the previous question. Please let us know why below:

50. Did our Event Manager provide recommendations on how to deliver the highest quality event regarding bandwidth and functionality?

51. You answered 'No' to the previous question. Please let us know why below:

52. Did your exhibitors have a seamless IT experience at your event?

OVERALL EXPERIENCE SECTION

53. Based on ALL services received for your event at [VENUE NAME], please provide an overall rating score from 1% to 100%.

54. First and Last Name:

55. Name of your event:

56. Date of your event:

57. Estimated number of attendees:

58. Would you like someone to follow-up with you regarding your feedback?

SCORING REFERENCE:

- 90% - 100% - Distinctive, Outstanding
- 85% - 89% - Excellent, Great
- 80% - 84% - Good, Satisfactory
- 70% - 79% - Just Average
- Below 70% - Below Average