

**Lorain Port and Finance Authority**  
**Board of Directors**  
**Special Meeting**  
**Tuesday, July 20, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.**

**Board of Directors:** Ms. Kiraly and Bonilla; Mrs. Silva Arredondo; Messrs. Mullins, Nielsen, Veard and Zgonc (8)

**Staff:** Tom Brown, Executive Director  
Yvonne Smith, Accountant  
Kelsey Leyva-Smith, Office Manager

**Guests:** Stacy Caddey, Fundraising Consultant  
Jack Bialosky, Bialosky Cleveland  
Stephen Angus, Bialosky Cleveland  
Robert Maschke, Robert Maschke Architects  
Brad Berkowitz, Whiting-Turner  
Eric Betz, Whiting-Turner

**I. Roll Call**

**A.** The meeting was called to order at 5:02 p.m. by Chairman Brad Mullins with roll call indicating a quorum present.

**II. Report of Officers**

**A. Work Session with Stacy Caddey:** Mr. Brown said this is for two purposes. Ms. Stacy Caddey is the fundraising consultant. We envision tonight sharing names for potential donors. She'll explain the path forward. Schematic design is well underway. Mr. Brown and Ms. McClelland met with architect group earlier this week. Ms. Caddey thanked those who have forwarded names. We have about 25. A few of them were offered by more than one person. Before the feasibility study, we're looking for names of people who we think should know about the project and are inclined to support it. This is to get information to test the market. Ms. Caddey realizes we're focused on phase one, but she thinks this will be a valuable exercise. Next week she will send out the list through Mr. Brown and Ms. McClelland to everyone. Next piece of that is working with staff to create a two-page mini case for support, which goes to all feasibility candidates. It explains why this is happening and the impacts it's going to have. Mr. Brown said

she's going to make some introductions in the private sector. He has a meeting with Nathan Manning next week. He'll have dialogue with him Monday. He's also talking with county commissioners about a tax incentive to fund the project. This is going to take a wide variety of funding. Given the market and the complexity of this project, prices are higher than expected. The board has to determine what we're comfortable with. Ms. Caddey is only one piece of the financial puzzle. Mr. Mullins asked how people would be approached? Ms. Caddey said that would be on the other side of the feasibility study. We need to know the favorability first. We'll have the best case for support with information on why people should consider donating. Mr. Scott said he would like to know how it will be presented because that will determine who is on his list. He is a financial advisor by trade and he doesn't want his clients to feel pressured because he knows their finances. Ms. Caddey said they will not be asked for money at this time. We want their feedback and opinion on the favorability of the project. Are they philanthropically minded? Do you think a project like this would resonate with them? We're asking for their reaction to the information we provide. Then we'll send a gift list and ask what category they felt they would fall in. Ms. Caddey suggested asking their potential contacts if they'd be interested in participating in a feasibility study for a great new project. Mr. Scott thanked her for the explanation.

- B. Work Session with Architect Group:** Mr. Jack Bialosky said they have been busy working on the schematic design. It's basically done. We'll look at budget, timeline and possible approaches. First phase is the stage, canopy and the green room. They're looking at the whole property. This will be a fluid presentation. They had previously talked about BRL and downtown being disconnected. They have a vision of connectivity. Mr. Bialosky said when people come here, we want it to feel like they have arrived. The site is primarily for concerts and is underutilized. Red areas on the map are where they're not touching. Although, Mr. Bialosky said they do have ideas for the rental building. Proposed improvements: Phase 1A is the stage, canopy, amphitheater lawn and front of house. It can be built and not interrupt the season. Phase 1B would relocate the

stage. Phase 1AB would be at the same time. They think this option would save us money. We'd skip a season and then be ready for the following year. Green room would be versatile for bands and events during the week. Under the wedge is a lot of storage. It's like a concrete bunker. Stage is a big open oval, with three rigs of lighting. The band would be protected. Mr. Zgonc asked for dimensions. It will be just over 2,000 square feet, 40 feet x 70 feet. Mr. Maschke said once the stage, canopy and green room are established, it starts to set the groundwork for a bigger vision. It could allow for more unique experiences, greater connectivity, etc. Mr. Bialosky said Toledo is a good comparison. Mr. Brown talked about wanting the Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area (DORA) to extend here. That would mean changing parking and reorganizing the park. With the proposed design, there are view corridors. Mr. Bialosky said people like to have different experiences. They want to create undulation or rolling hills around the plateau and introduce low maintenance, indigenous plants. Mr. Mullins asked how many people phase 1AB could fit? They think 7-8,000. What is being proposed is bigger than the current area. One of the reasons they picked the location for the stage is the topography. Mr. Nielsen asked how many people would fit total? Mr. Maschke said he thinks we could double 7-8,000 easily. There are about 110-115 spaces now. With tightening everything, we can get 150 spaces of controlled parking. They are trying to always feature a nice view. Mr. Brown said if we got a liquor permit, we wouldn't be able to have people driving past the Train Station. The proposed changes would solve the issue with parking lots. Mr. Eric Betz with Whiting-Turner started to talk about cost. He said they looked it this in two phases. If we do 1A and 1B together, we have to start at the end of the season. Then open for the next season. To put them both together is a little cheaper than doing it separately. They could be done in any time of year, it just depends on timing. Phase 1A is \$7.4 million and 1B is \$2.5 million for a total of \$9.9 million. Mr. Bialosky said other issues around the timing relate to where we are in our fundraising. When would we have to start making drawings to build this and open for next season? Right now, they think the earliest this could be delivered, even if they start in August would be September of next year. They think the best

approach is to continue to develop. It's a crazy construction market environment right now. If this continues to be developed and if at some point in the fall or spring we start to procure items, then all of the pieces can be purchased so the time to build could be reduced. This prompts a lot of discussion for the board internally. It is an extraordinary opportunity for Lorain. It can be transformative. Mr. Brown said after he and Ms. McClelland saw the numbers they had a big discussion. In 2003, we invested \$8 million in BRL. That was just the festival area and the turnaround. Just imagine what that would cost today? They are big numbers, but this is a world class opportunity. Staff will get to work. Mentor stage was \$2.5 million. Mr. Scott said connecting BRL to Broadway excites him. The issue is the space they proposed. What if it's not available? Mr. Maschke said they have talked about it. There are a series of alleys that could work. The proposed parking lot was just the natural connection they saw or the logical place to make the connection. That isn't this year's problem. Mr. Brown said Northwest Bank is not going to budge. We have expressed ways to trade parking. Sixth Street alley could potentially work. We can achieve it one way or the other. Mr. Mullins confirmed that the old stage would be completely removed. Mr. Brown doesn't want a temporary stage. Mr. Mullins said Rover went to the other end and built a temporary stage. He doesn't want to lose a season. Mr. Brown wants time to get more money, then open in 2025. It took 14 months for people to open places on Broadway due to construction and supply chain delays. Mr. Brown doesn't want to rush. Ms. Caddey said she knows once construction starts, it's harder to get money. For government funding, there is very specific time periods to spend it in. She's relieved the construction may be delayed. Donors love to be in on it from ground level up. We have an opportunity to perhaps offer naming rights. That's something that takes time to make those connections. Mr. Scott said there's an elephant in the room: we have \$2 million. Mr. Mullins said we're spending some money to build the momentum. We have to keep pushing to get it done. Mr. Scott said if we turn around, put max effort together, and we only have \$6 million, what then? Mr. Bialosky said we would have to pare the vision way back. Mr. Veard asked about the schematic design. Mr. Bialosky said the canopy

itself is a big project. Everyone is busy. Worst case would be Amish carpenters. Mr. Zgonc asked about the stage height? Mr. Maschke said about 5 feet. Gradual grade. Mr. Brad Berkowitz said union labor is factored into the schematic design. That is the most expensive labor. Mr. Veard said he'd feel better if he saw drawings. Mr. Mullins said it's a good contingency plan, but he would hate to scale it back to \$6 million. We want to focus on the prize and keep momentum going. We'll need federal and state funding. A lot of families who made a lot of money in Lorain have left. Maybe they'll be interested, but we don't know. Mr. Brown said the hotel was \$10 million and we had 12 funding sources. There are going to be ways to make it happen. We have to keep chasing those dollars. He suggested we shoot for May 2025. In our 2024 season, we could condense it a bit, and start construction in September. Mr. Scott said he's excited. He wants to see something that takes us from where we are to where we want to be, but he wants there to be a plan A and a plan B. He wants plan A, but he worries if there is no alternative. Mr. Nielsen said we have \$2-3 million in the bank. He wants to break down the number. He doesn't want to compromise or settle for second best. Mr. Maschke said they're happy to present to potential donors. Ms. Caddey wants some of the slides for language to use. She said she doesn't think the architects can be involved yet. Ms. Bonilla suggested making a donor wall. Mr. Bialosky said it will be pieces at a time. Ms. Caddey said having a range would be helpful for the total cost of all phases. Mr. Brown said video was asked about. The screen would come up from a hydraulic lift. Mr. Nielsen said a growing problem is not enough bathrooms. How do we expand that? Mr. Bialosky said the plan is to expand in the Train Station. They've been discussing that. They think it should be done this off season. Mr. Nielsen said we have a big mountain to climb, but maybe we start with bathrooms. It's low hanging fruit and shows progress. Mr. Veard said the proposal is a lot of money. Ms. Bonilla said it's beautiful. Mr. Nielsen said we don't want to settle for second best. Mr. Brown said we have a lot of work to do and it starts with Nathan Manning on Monday, then the County Commissioners, etc. Mr. Mullins said the scope has to be wider. This is going to benefit communities around us. The other thing that scares him is

the number is even bigger to do the whole project. They need our approval to get the designs made. Ms. Kiraly asked if the meeting with Nathan is a pitch or requesting funds? Mr. Brown said there is a super fund for next year that would suit our community. He's going to ask big. Mr. Zgonc said ask for \$7.4 million to get phase 1AB done. He was very encouraged by the dialogue he had with the staff. Mrs. Silva Arredondo said they would likely expect us to make some sort of contribution. Mr. Bob Blough was invited to see what we do and they were interested. We're trying to find billion dollar corporations. When we talk about connecting to Broadway, maybe we go to NOACA. Mr. Nielsen asked if the round parking area would affect safety forces, like firefighters. Mr. Brown said no. Ms. Bonilla asked about the Steinbrenner family. Mr. Mullins said he could talk to the family attorney. Mr. Zgonc said he's against Amish workers coming to our site. Mr. Mullins said he's two years in and from what we started with and where we're at now it's totally different. Everything is more expensive. Time is on our side. We all want to do it the right way. Mr. Nielsen said the other idea is to spend the money to get to a shovel ready point. The builder will have a different price. They're giving us target numbers, which are padded. Funding could come from future phases. Mr. Scott said Erie Steak and Seafood deck looks terrible.


### III. Adjournment

- A. There being no further business to come before the board, Mr. Scott moved to adjourn. Ms. Kiraly seconded. The meeting adjourned at 6:46 p.m.



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Brad Mullins, Chairman



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Tom Brown, Executive Director