

BEMIDJI SANFORD CENTER ADVISORY BOARD MEETING AGENDA

Wednesday, April 23, 2025

**City Hall - Conference Room
317 4th Street NW
7:00 AM**



- 1) CALL MEETING TO ORDER**
- 2) APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
- 3) APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - a) February 26, 2025 Meeting Minutes
- 4) MONTHLY FINANCIALS**
 - b) January 2025 Financials
- 5) SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**
- 6) GENERAL MANAGER REPORT**
 - c) Written Update in Lieu of Verbal Update
- 7) MEETING LOCATION**
- 8) ADJOURN**

Sanford Center Advisory Board

Meeting Minutes

Date: Feb 26, 2025

Time: 7:00 AM

Location: Sanford Center

1. Call to Order

- Meeting called to order at 7:00 AM by Mayor Jorge Prince.

2. Approval of Agenda

- **Motion by:** Audrey
- **Seconded by:** Britt
- **Decision:** Motion carried

3. Approval of Minutes

- **Date of Previous Meeting:** January 22, 2024
- **Motion by:** Britt
- **Seconded by:** Steve
- **Decision:** Motion carried

4. December Financial Statements

- **Presenter:** General Manager
- Financial statements were reviewed and discussed.

5. Officer Elections

- **Elected Positions:**
 - Chair: Jorge Prince

- Vice Chair: Audra Vaughn
- Secretary: Tracy Pogue
- **Motion by:** Brady
- **Seconded by:** Britt
- **Decision:** Motion carried

6. Subcommittee Updates

Finance

- Search for a Director of Finance is ongoing (salary range: \$80K–\$90K annually).
- Finance operations are stable during the transition.

Operations

- Ice Team is making significant progress and having a strong season.
- BYHA outreach efforts are positive, with smooth coordination.
- Boiler replacement needed; estimated cost: \$100K+.

Marketing

- Bridal Show was successful for wedding venue opportunities.
- Women’s Expo is upcoming.
- Burnout event is ongoing.
- Cocomelon (children’s show) scheduled for October 18.

7. General Manager Report

- **Presenter:** Bobbie Anderson
- **Key Updates:**
 - Transition from hockey to flat floor setup in March.
 - Facility will be active with events on both sides.
 - **Upcoming Events:**
 - *Kings of Panfish* Ice Fishing Event in Bemidji – 140 participants.
 - Employee appreciation event with Sanford Health in May 2025 – 4,500 attendees.
 - Engaging with promoters to secure profitable events.

- Offering creative incentive packages (e.g., golf outings, guided fishing trips, vacation packages) to attract larger acts.
- Increased event participation from City staff.
- Rising food costs noted as a challenge.

8. Open Discussion

- Exploring possibilities for community underwriting to bring in larger artists.
- Growth opportunities in conferences and trade shows; consideration of a community task force.

9. Adjournment

- **Time:** 8:03 AM
- **Motion by:** Britt
- **Seconded by:** Kayla
- **Decision:** Motion carried

General Manager Report

4.16.25

- We had a busy month with great events from the Noon Rotary, Charps Annual Training week, Ice Rentals, Paradigm Meeting, multiple BSU Team Meals, Wedding Tours, Northwest Indian Community Development Center, Kings of Panfish Rules Meeting, Shamrock Shuffle, Minnesota Director Association Meetings, Driven Roadshow, Rubies Pantry, Bemidji Speedway Banquet, Safety and Loss Control Conference, Bemidji Outdoor Sports and Home Show, and the Spring Sipper. Unfortunately, BSU did not host home playoffs.
- To kick off trade show season we had the Bemidji Outdoor Sport and Home Show 28th-30th went very well and saw 4000+ attendees throughout the weekend. It was very well attended and enjoyed by everyone who came. Great feedback from a lot of people about this being a free event to attend. We were able to start a great relationship with Bemidji Speedway and host their annual banquet and help them grow it to the largest one they have ever hosted with 241 people in attendance.
 - Direct Quote from The Bemidji speedway Facebook page post about the event.

“We are very excited and happy to have a bigger event venue to host the banquet this year, we are excited for the next two years of banquets as they will be held at The Sanford Center. Thank you to the Sanford Center for working with us on our event – Bobby, Heidi, Malaak, and Janine, the chef and food and beverage staff for providing a great meal, the bartenders, and the security staff!”
 - Another Quote from Tonja Stranger owner of Bemidji Speedway via Text to me after the Banquet.

“It was absolutely Amazing!!! Everything was perfect for us! There was no comparison in any aspect to the past banquets we’ve had! The food was out of this world. The roast beef melt in your mouth 😊 We are too excited to be partners with you guys too. We will stay in touch”
 - This is marketing that we cannot buy or pay for! Word of mouth has been such a crucial piece of the puzzle in bringing Bemidji back into our building. We have worked so hard to partner with local organizations to get them access to the facility and create true partnerships. It has been going great and this is just one example of that!
- We are excited to be hosting the Bemidji Chorale Concert as we continue to support our local arts programs. We are helping them grow their concerts and provide new

experience to their loyal following. This will give them an amazing opportunity for growth! They are excited for this new chapter of the Bemidji Chorale. Come out and support them on April 27th!

- On the concert side of things, we are working with promoters to continue to build back relationships and show them we are their partners and want them to have successful events in the facility. As we all know the history has been very tough on promoters who have used the facility in the past with loses. We do have one concert secured for October and a plethora of other holds for Q3 and Q4 of 2025 as well as Q1 and Q2 of 2026.
- On the committee side of things, we have heard back from committee members on whether they were still on board for the marketing committee or not. Lexi is working with the group to set up a regular meeting for them.
- We continue to push forward in the Convention Center space as we work with Visit Bemidji on RFP's as they are the 18 month and out focused group, and we focus on the 18 months and in. This is the normal relationship with convention centers and CVB's. We have a regularly scheduled meeting to collaborate and make sure we are on the same page when it comes to conventions and conferences and to keep an open line of communication between the two teams.