REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE WORKSHOP OF THE ESCAMBIA COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

MARCH 6, 2025

Present: Commissioner Michael S. Kohler, Chair, District 2
Commissioner Ashlee M. Hofberger, Vice Chair, District 4
Commissioner Steven L. Barry, District 5
Commissioner Lumon J. May, District 3
Commissioner Steven R. Stroberger, District 1
Honorable Pam Childers, Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller
Codey Leigh, General Counsel, Clerk and Comptroller's Office
Wesley J. Moreno, County Administrator
Alison Rogers, County Attorney
DeLana Allen-Busbee, Operations Supervisor, Clerk and Comptroller's Office
Jose Gochez, Program Manager, County Administrator's Office

Location: Ernie Lee Magaha Government Building, Board Chambers, First Floor
221 Palafox Place, Pensacola, Florida

Report prepared by: DeLana Allen-Busbee

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Call to Order

   Commissioner Kohler, Chair, called the Committee of the Whole (C/W) Workshop to order at 9:06 a.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

   Commissioner Hofberger led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

3. Was the Meeting Properly Advertised?

   The Board was advised by DeLana Allen-Busbee, Operations Supervisor, Clerk and Comptroller's Office, that the meeting was advertised in the *Pensacola News Journal* on February 27, 2025, in the Board's weekly meeting schedule.

AGENDA ITEMS – Continued

4. Board Items

I. Discussion Concerning the Pensacola Bay Center Upgrades/Renovations

A. Michael Capps, General Manager of the Pensacola Bay Center, reviewed a PowerPoint presentation, which was also attached as agenda backup, titled *Pensacola Bay Center – A Public Private Partnership for the Future* and:

- Advised that of the $10 million in anticipated improvements to the Bay Center, approximately $6 million will be completed by the end of September.

- As part of a recap on the improved performance of the Bay Center, advised that all KPIs have been met or exceeded, the per event net income has improved, food and beverage sales have increased nearly 50% since 2022, and ASM has a best-in-class ticketing deal with Ticketmaster.

B. Doug Thornton, Executive Vice President of ASM Global, reviewed the history and iterations of the company, its growth in size and resources, improvements in company-wide performance, and its experience in construction, renovation, and expansion projects;

C. Mr. Thornton also advised that ASM would provide support in every aspect of the renovation process and reviewed 4 concepts, including an arena renovation option and a concept with additions of an event center and a potential additional ice sheet; ASM provided two options for their continued partnership, with the second including ASM funding the cost of a study and market analysis;

D. Upon inquiry from Commissioner Barry and input from Finance Director Stephan Hall, Mr. Thornton agreed that the language could be simplified to have ASM provide the studies rather than a cost certain amount of the studies;

E. The Board discussed a potential second ice sheet, whether it would have a return on the investment, and the impact an additional event space would have on the use and demand of the current facility;

F. Upon inquiry from Commissioner Hofberger, the Board heard comments from Mr. Capps and Director Hall regarding the maintenance costs and the recommendation of potentially increasing those from $200,000 per year to $500,000 per year; the Board also briefly discussed the current $1.3 million subsidy;

(Continued on Page 3)

AGENDA ITEMS – Continued

4. Continued…

   I. Continued…

      G. Commissioner May advised that this project impacts the whole community and that partners such as the School Board and City should be involved in the discussion and in contributing financially to the capital outlay, and that he envisions a mixture of funding sources for the project;

      H. The Board, Mr. Thornton, and Mr. Capps discussed how the proposed study would help determine the structure and feasibility of a potential event and convention space and whether the space being flexible would impact its quality and use;

      I. The Board discussed naming rights and rebranding of the Bay Center and Mr. Thornton advised that the County would delegate the authority to ASM to market the facility but that the deal would come to the Board for approval;

      J. Commissioner Stroberger advised that he would like to see them build something with lasting value and that the goal is not to spend as little as possible;

      K. The Board heard comments of support for moving forward with the project from Ray Palmer, Pensacola Sports; Greg Harris, owner of the Pensacola Ice Flyers; and Darien Schaefer, Visit Pensacola; and

      L. Commissioner Kohler thanked all participants for the discussion and Director Hall advised that staff would work with ASM on an addendum to the Agreement being brought to the BCC for approval.

5. Adjourn

   Commissioner Kohler, Chair, declared the C/W Workshop adjourned at 10:23 a.m.