

MINUTES

NEW HIGHMARK STADIUM COMMUNITY BENEFITS OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

November 17, 2025

Enterprise Charter School – Gymnasium
275 Oak Street, Buffalo, NY 14203
Monday, November 17, 2025

The CBOC convened for its 18th meeting on Monday, November 17, 2025, at Enterprise Charter School in Buffalo, NY. The meeting was conducted in person and public notice was posted in accordance with NY Open Meetings Law.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1 Call to Order, Roll Call and Establish Quorum

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Blue at 6:02 PM ET. Chairman Blue established that a quorum was present. Chairman Blue then invited CBOC members to provide brief introductions for the audience.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Penny Semaia, Todd Starowitz, Toni Cannady, Rhonda Frederick, Chairman Mark Blue, Maria Whyte, Franchelle Parker, Mo Sumbundu – 8

MEMBERS ABSENT: Erich Weyant – 1

Member Semaia closed Agenda Item No. 1.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2 Approval of Meeting Minutes from October 14, 2025, Public Hearing (Action Item)

Chairman Blue requested a motion to accept the meeting minutes from the committee's meeting minutes on October 14, 2025. Upon a motion by Member Sumbundu, seconded by Member Frederick, and without opposition, the CBOC approved the meeting minutes.

Member Semaia closed Agenda Item No. 2.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3 Old Business

Chairman Blue opened the floor for committee members to discuss old business.

Member Semaia closed Agenda Item No. 3.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4 Community Benefits Updates

As part of the Community Benefits Update, Member Semaia, in his capacity as Community Benefits Director on behalf of Developer, provided a community benefits update.

Member Semaia reported that stadium construction has continued to progress. Ongoing work includes advancements on interior spaces, the seating bowl, technology, and the exterior façade. Current installations include perforated metal panels, lighting, drywall, painting, masonry, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing

(MEPs), as well as site preparation. Overall, the project is approximately 75% complete, with a target completion date of June 2026.

BUSINESS PARTICIPATION AND WORKFORCE HOUR OBJECTIVE UPDATES

Member Semaia provided an interim update outlining Developer's progress regarding the MWBE/SDVOB business participation and workforce hour objectives relating to the new Highmark Stadium. ***Member Semaia reported as follows:***

- **Workforce Update:**

- As of September 30, 2025, Developer has exceeded its minority and apprentice workforce hours, reporting (i) 24.17% for minority work hours (which exceeds the 15% goal) and (ii) 17.17% for apprentice work hours (which exceeds the 10% goal). Developer also reported the following percentages with respect to women work hours: 4.36% for women work hours (which falls just below the 5% target). Outreach and engagement efforts will be made throughout March for Women in Construction month.

Category	Goal	Through 9/30/2025
Minority Work Hours	15%	24.17%
Women Work Hours	5%	4.36%
Apprentice Work Hours	10%	17.17%

- **Business Participation Update:**

- As of the Q3 2025 quarterly update from Empire State Development's Office of Contractor and Supplier Diversity, the Developer has a paid-to-date utilization of \$191,966,854 toward Minority-Owned Business Enterprises (MBEs), \$171,737,900 toward Women-Owned Business Enterprises (WBEs), and \$56,905,624 toward Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Businesses (SDVOBs), for a collective total of \$420,610,378 paid toward MWBE and SDVOB participation. This reflects utilization progress of 12.5% toward the 15% goal for MBEs, 11.2% toward the 15% goal for WBEs (which is 23.6% of the 30% total MWBE goal), and 3.7% toward the 6% goal for SDVOBs. Additionally, the demolition RFP provides additional opportunity to close remaining .1% gap for SDVOB participation.

Category	Goal		Paid-to-Date Utilization of Total Contract Q3 2025		Commitment Through Proposal Release #1-4
MBE	\$231,000,000	15%	\$191,966,854	12.5%	16.9%
WBE	\$231,000,000	15%	\$171,737,900	11.2%	16.5%
MWBE	\$462,000,000	30%	\$363,704,754	23.6%	33.4%
SDVOB	\$94,400,000	6%	\$56,905,624	3.7%	5.9%
MWBE & SDVOB Total			\$420,610,378		

- Developer has awarded a total of 363 MWBE/SDVOB contracts or OCSD-4 commitments. 221 of the awarded MWBE/SDVOB contracts or OCSD-4 commitments have been made to Regional MWBE/SDVOBs. 166 of the Regional MWBE/SDVOB contracts or OCSD-4 commitments have been made for a value less than or equal to \$1,000,000, representing results of the Developer's efforts in defining, segmenting or sizing bid packages at levels to increase the likelihood MWBE firms are reasonably able to successfully undertake such projects and to ensure MWBE contractors and/or subcontractors retained for the Project shall come from the Western New York Region.
- MWBE/SDVOB Contracts or OCSD-4 Commitments: 363
- Regional MWBE/SDVOB Contracts or OCSD-4 Commitments: 221
- Regional MWBE/SDVOB Contracts or OCSD-4 Commitments <= \$1,000,000: 166

Regional MWBE/SDVOB Contracts or OCSD-4 Commitments	
< \$24,999	48
\$25,000 – \$49,999	18
\$50,000 – \$99,999	17
\$100,000 – \$249,999	31
\$250,000 – \$499,999	26
\$500,000 – \$1,000,000	26
Total <= \$1,000,000	166

*CBA Section 1.(n) defines Region as the geographic area within the State of New York comprising a 100-mile radius from Orchard Park, New York



- Member Semaia provided the following list of prime contractors:

- PJP Installers, Inc. (MBE)
- **Mark Cerrone, Inc.**
- **Ferguson Electric / E-J Electric JV**
- **Ferguson Electric / E-J Electric JV**
- **Pinto Construction Services, Inc.**
- **Union Concrete & Construction Corp.**
- Schindler Elevator Corporation
- Source Blue
- SubAir Systems
- Baker Concrete Construction, Inc.
- **Cives Steel Company**
- R. W. Sidley, Inc.
- Crown Corr
- High Concrete Group
- **Union Concrete & Construction Corp.**
- Roger & Sons Concrete, Inc. (MBE)
- Celtic Sheet Metal, Inc. (WBE)
- Celtic Sheet Metal, Inc. (WBE)
- F. W. Sims, LLC
- **Ferguson Electric / E-J Electric JV**
- **Ferguson Electric / E-J Electric JV**
- **John W. Danforth Company**
- **D.V. Brown & Associates**
- Rael Automatic Sprinkler Co., Inc.
- George M. Raymond Co.
- William H. Lane Inc.
- Irwin Seating Group
- Island International Enterprises, LLC
- Sightline Commercial Solutions LLC
- Crystal Steel Fabricators, Inc. (MBE)
- Crystal Steel Fabricators, Inc. (MBE)
- **Thomas Johnson, Inc.**
- **SwimEx, Inc. (WBE)**
- SCG Fields, LLC
- **Jameson Roofing**
- MTN Inc.
- **Hamburg Overhead Door, Inc. (WBE)**
- Builders Hardware
- Executive Group
- Allegheny Millwork Inc.
- **Tiede Zoeller (SDVOB)**
- FCS Group (MBE)
- **R.W Painting (WBE)**
- **Superior Steel Door and Trim Co., Inc. (WBE)**
- **GP Flooring Solutions (WBE)**
- **Heritage Contract Flooring, LLC**
- Rommel Fence, LLC (WBE)
- **Billitier Electric, Inc.**
- Design Communications, Ltd.
- **Scrufari Construction Co., LLC**
- **Union Concrete & Construction Corp.**

*BOLD = Regional

For List of Awarded Contractors and Package Descriptions, please visit www.buffalobillsnewstadium.com/contracting-opportunities

- **Buffalo Bills Stadium Demolition – RFP #07**
 - Meet the Primes event hosted on November 13 at Existing Highmark Stadium to provide an opportunity for contractors to network with invited Prime/Tier-1 firms actively seeking partnerships on the demolition scope of services for the existing Highmark Stadium
 - A Contractor Information Session was held at Northland Workforce Training Center on September 24 at 6:00 PM to provide an opportunity to meet the team and learn more about the demolition project scope, schedule, MWBE/SDVOB and workforce requirements, and ways to get involved.
 - Additional information, including company names and contacts for all Prime/Tier-1 firms, and interest form is available at www.buffalobillsnewstadium.com/bills-contracting-opportunities.

POST CONSTRUCTION OPERATION

Member Semaia highlighted the Maintenance and Operations as well as Concessions goals outlined in the CBA:

- “Developer shall use commercially reasonable efforts to implement initiatives for maximizing participation in the maintenance and operation of the New Stadium, including, without limitation, aiming to achieve the following goals:
 - 30% and 6% of all retailers, vendors, and service companies used in stadium maintenance and operations to be MWBE and SDVOB firms, respectively
 - 30% and 6% of all monies paid to retailers, vendors, and service companies used in stadium maintenance and operations be paid to MWBE and SDVOB firms, respectively
 - 30% of the food products used by the concessionaire to be purchased from Erie County certified MWBE food service companies
 - Preference given to food and beverage items for sale at New Stadium produced and/or manufactured in New York State

- Require the concessionaire to administer food and beverage service mentorship programs for MWBEs”

Member Semaia provided an update on the Developer’s ongoing meetings with Legends, including continued planning and research using New York State and Erie County databases of certified firms. He reported that the Bills have met with Legends Global new General Manager and Regional Vice President.

He also noted that Legends has hired a Purchasing Director and Director of Concessions – Local Eats positions essential for the next phases of the project. Career fair planning for stadium concessions is underway, and meetings have been held with the Erie County Office of Agriculture and various local businesses. Legends is currently developing a plan for upcoming opportunities, with more details to be shared in future updates. Legends local leadership team also participated in the MWBE Certification Informational Session for WNY food growers, producers, and processors. Member Semaia encouraged those interested in submitting inquiries to Legends for concessions to reach out to BillsHospitality@legends.net.

Member Semaia shared a high-level timeframe for Legends’ concessions planning and implementation:



ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY BENEFITS UPDATES

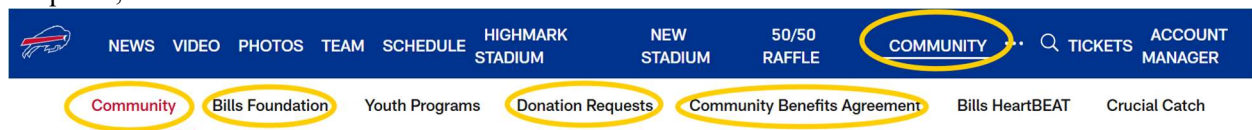
Next, Member Semaia discussed the Bills and Developer’s various initiatives over the prior month, including:

- **MWBE Certification Informational Session:** An information session for food growers, producers, and processors was held on the evening of November 5th. The event was hosted by the Buffalo Bills Foundation in partnership with the Food Policy Council of Buffalo & Erie County and Developments by JEM, with participation from Legends Global hospitality team leadership, Erie County EEO, and the Bills. A total of 27 businesses and 41 guests attended. The next information session is scheduled for December 11th at the Merriweather Library. Marketing began in early October, including distribution by the Food Policy Council to all constituents and targeted outreach to area partners and farms.
- **SUNY Erie Mentorship Program Launch – C.A.M.P. (Community Advancement Mentorship Program):** A small pilot program pairing five full-time Bills staff members with five SUNY Erie students for one-on-one mentorship was launched. The program introduces students to the sports

industry environment, professional etiquette, and career opportunities. This represents the first mentorship program with external groups, with plans to launch, assess, and expand.

- **Gilbane|Turner Construction School of Management:** A 7-week program designed to help construction business owners and professionals in related fields build skills and strategies for growth and long term success was hosted by Gilbane|Turner in partnership with the Buffalo Bills, Developments by JEM, and the Buffalo Purchasing Initiative.
- **Salvation Army Red Kettle Luncheon**
- **Free Mobile Food Markets at Buffalo Public School Saturday Academies:** offered through month of November in partnership with Buffalo Go Green and Massachusetts Avenue Project
- **Seneca Nation Flag Football Clinic and Facility Visit:** hosted in celebration of Native American Heritage month
- Public Transportation Hub Hearing
 - The Public Transportation Hub Public Hearing was held on October 27th at 6:00 p.m. in the Downtown Central Library Auditorium
 - Hosted by Developer for County residents to review the plans for the public transportation hub and conducted in accordance with NY Open Meetings Law
 - Led by the Bills' SVP of Venue & Fan Experience, VP of Stadium Development, VP of Stadium Relations, and NFTA's Manager of Service Planning
 - Reviewed and recapped efforts and achievement of CBA section 3(i) Transportation Improvements objectives
 - Citizens for Regional Transit, Empire State Passengers Association, Partnership for the Public Good, American Transit Local 1342, and residents from the Region provided feedback

Next, through a live online demonstration of buffalobills.com, Member Semaia walked through the Bills' dedicated webpage for accessing resources related to the Community Benefits Agreement, Donation Requests, and the Bills Foundation:



- The Community Benefits Agreement page serves as a central hub where community members can find a copy of the agreement, the most recent fiscal year's Annual Report, CBOC meeting information, Member Semaia's contact information, and a Community Benefits Information Submittal Form designed specifically for the community to share their community vulnerabilities and priorities with the Bills. The website is available at <https://www.buffalobills.com/new-stadium/community-benefits-agreement>.
- The Donation Requests page provides an opportunity for community members to submit a donation or sponsorship request through a dedicated form. Member Semaia noted that if a request is not tied to an event, applicants may select the "Other" dropdown. The form allows attachments and space to describe the request.
- The Bills Foundation page includes its own Grant Interest Form for requests related to the foundation's mission and focus of food insecurity.

Next, Member Semaia highlighted methods of outreach for information pertaining to the CBOC, including physical and online postings to buffalobills.com and erie.gov, as well as distribution to papers of record such as the *Buffalo Challenger*, *The Criterion*, *Grand Island Dispatch*, *East Aurora Advertiser*, and *Lancaster Bee*. Additionally, information is shared with news media outlets like WUFO, *Buffalo News*, WIVB, WKBW, WGRZ, and Spectrum News. Further community outreach by the Bills includes flyers being placed in community centers, including the Delevan Grider Community Center, Buffalo's Golden Corner Store on Jefferson Ave, Frank E. Merriweather Library, Golden Cup Coffee on Jefferson Ave, and Mandella Market on E. Ferry, by community engagement coordinator Developments by JEM. Meeting Notices, Meeting Minutes, Meeting Agendas, Meeting Materials, Annual Reports, and the CBOC Directory are all made available to the public.

Comments by committee members:

- **Member Sumbundu** thanked Member Semaia for reviewing the website for the general public. He stated, regarding post-construction operations, the CBA requires that 30% of all money paid to retailers go to MWBEs. He asked what steps are being taken to reach this goal?
 - **Member Semaia** responded that efforts include inventory and research on certified MWBEs, proactive workshops, and information sessions.
- **Member Frederick** asked about attendance numbers for the public transportation hub hearing and whether any significant changes have been made.
 - **Member Semaia** acknowledged that attendance was light and noted that transportation factors, such as bus versus rail, are outside the organization's control. He added that, under the current design, bus service could be increased to 10 buses and that an added stop improves pedestrian access near the Family Circle and team store, making it easier for both fans and daily bus riders. The NFTA was present to support these efforts.
- **Member Whyte** thanked Member Semaia for the live demonstration of the website portal and encouraged the Bills to continue improving it. She noted that the CBA supports youth apprenticeship programs, such as the Say Yes youth apprenticeship program, which aligns with community priorities but that the program does not have an event. She expressed concern that the website's current design might limit participation and urged the Bills to reconsider their approach to the portal.
 - **Member Semaia** responded that his contact information is available for direct communication for any person or organization who would like to seek support.
- **Member Sumbundu** asked what else is being done beyond events, and what else can be done based on the website created right now, to create lasting impact with funding over the next 30 years, emphasizing a desire to see tangible impact.
 - **Member Semaia** thanked Member Sumbundu for his comment.
 - **Chairman Blue** encouraged the community to contact Member Semaia directly, noting that the Bills cannot anticipate everything to include on the website.
 - **Member Semaia** shared that organizations, such as YouthBuild on Buffalo's East Side, have reached out to engage via email. He described meeting with their leadership, conducting a site visit, and establishing a tour and educational opportunity with the new stadium construction management team. He further emphasized using email for the community to connect.
- **Member Frederick** asked, since the Bills make the final decision on how funds are distributed, how the CBOC can track support beyond the annual report.

- **Member Semaia** explained that a separate Community Impact Report is issued, which complements the CBA Annual Report and provides a broader picture of funded initiatives.

Chairman Blue closed Agenda Item No. 4.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5 New Business

Member Whyte suggested that the CBOC subgroups should work expeditiously to meet and establish the upcoming year's community vulnerabilities and priorities. Member Semaia acknowledged the challenge of finding a time for subgroups to meet and asked members to be flexible so a meeting could be scheduled.

Member Sumbundu asked Member Semaia to explain how information from last year's Annual Public Hearing was used. Member Semaia stated that after the hearing, each comment was reviewed and researched by Member Parker, Member Whyte, Member Sumbundu, and himself. In addition to evaluating the public feedback, they reviewed established research in the relevant focus areas to better understand community needs. Through this process, they identified themes across the comments, with youth emerging as a primary focus area. This theme was discussed in a public meeting and presented as part of the current fiscal year's community investments aligned with that community vulnerability and priority (CVP). He reiterated the 33-year commitment and more than \$140 million in planned investments benefiting Erie County and Western New York.

Chairman Blue closed Agenda Item No. 5.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6 Public Comment

Chairman Blue opened the meeting for public comment, which is limited to three (3) minutes per commenter.

- **Neha Karambelkar, Esq., Managing Attorney, WY Law Center**, presented a request for \$250,000 to support the WNY Law Center's Small Business Legal Clinic. The clinic provides free legal assistance to small businesses at any stage, including business formation, hiring, certification, and wind-down, specifically for businesses in Erie County. Ms. Karambelkar noted that her organization is the only clinic in Western New York offering these services to small business owners and entrepreneurs. She thanked the Committee for their time and consideration.
- **Devon Patterson, Director of Community Engagement at (Open Buffalo) and co-chair of the Youth Employment Coalition (YEC)**, emphasized that he was glad to see youth at the forefront. He noted that previous efforts were not very representative and that there is room to make better efforts.
- **Dr. Maria Cannon, President of the Community Action Organization of Western New York (CAO of WNY)**, discussed her organization's work across emergency services, youth programs, afterschool initiatives, senior support, food pantries, urban programs, medication access, childcare, and workforce development, with a focus on youth and workforce programs. She indicated she would follow up via email with Penny and expressed interest in further meetings to discuss the vulnerabilities of young people. Dr. Cannon highlighted that today's youth face an increasingly automated and competitive job market, and those who are underserved and under-resourced risk being left behind. She requested \$250,000 upfront to invest in early interventions, skills training, and wraparound supports that reduce reliance on public assistance. She emphasized the need for

programs that provide skills and credentials employers urgently need, build talent pipelines for industries facing shortages, and create equitable pathways for all young people to succeed.

- **Jerell Mason, Senior Director of Buffalo Futures**, presented on the organization's Youth Workforce Development program serving 16–24-year-olds, particularly disconnected youth experiencing homelessness or lacking family support. The program provides resume building, success coaching, and wraparound resources. Using a mobile-first platform developed with input from young people, participants can browse job opportunities, “favorite” positions, and connect with a coach who guides them through their employment journey. The program also offers leadership opportunities. Launched in 2023, 326 youth have been connected to training programs, with the goal of expanding support to the 7,400 youth in need. Mr. Mason requested funding to support the program.
- **Robert Baxter, Head of Schools at Health Sciences Charter School**, thanked the Committee and congratulated them on their work. He expressed appreciation for the opportunity to learn more about the process and noted the value of understanding how community engagement works. Mr. Baxter described his role in preparing young people for careers in health sciences and mentioned his discussions with Michelle Roberts from the Bills Foundation regarding nutrition initiatives aimed at addressing food deserts. He thanked the Committee for providing clarity on the process and expressed enthusiasm for continued collaboration.
- **Erica Raepple, Senior Director of Development at Special Olympics New York**, noted she had spoken at a previous meeting and reiterated the importance of sports in connecting the Bills to the community and bridging gaps. She highlighted the organization's unique approach, serving athletes as young as two who never age out. Special Olympics provides sports and competition opportunities for individuals with and without intellectual disabilities, currently operating in 50 schools with plans to expand. Ms. Raepple noted that only about 5% of the state's 48,000 athletes are served, representing some of the most underserved populations. She emphasized the Healthy Athletes program, which addresses health needs such as obesity through screenings and promotion of healthy habits, and noted that the program trains athletes to be ambassadors, demonstrating how sports can unite communities, promote inclusion, and create opportunities for leadership. She also thanked the Bills for hiring athletes and investing in these initiatives.
- **Jade Wright, President and Co-Founder of Camp-B-U Foundation Inc.**, thanked the CBOC for the opportunity to share her newly launched nonprofit (March 2025). Camp-B-U helps youth, including those with disabilities, ages 7–17, develop skills and confidence through hands-on training in cosmetology and barbering, while nurturing creativity, leadership, and self-expression. The program teaches foundational, social, and professional skills, provides mentorship from licensed professionals, and offers pathways to future employment. Currently operating in Buffalo Public School afterschool programs across four schools with about 50 youth per session, the organization aims to expand year-round and reach 100 youth by the end of the school year. The name Camp-B-U reflects the organization's philosophy: bold, brilliant, unique, and unstoppable.

Chairman Blue closed Agenda Item No. 6.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 7 Adjournment

Chairman Blue adjourned the meeting at 7:07 PM ET.

The next CBOC meeting will be scheduled for Monday, December 8 at 11AM, with the location to be ECC South, Building 5 lecture hall.