

First Energy Stadium Commission

James Schlegel - Chairman
Gary Yeager, Jr. - Vice Chairman/Secretary
Rick Denunzio - Member
Rick Mountz - Member
Michael Schorn - Member
Carlos Torres - DPW Liaison
Donna Reed - City Council Liaison
Strat Marmarou - Commissioner Emeritus

To: Members of City Council
Re: 2024 Stadium Commission Annual Report
From: James Schlegel, Chairperson, 2024
Date: January 31, 2025

As Chairman of the Stadium Commission, it is with pleasure that I submit the following annual report.

Over the course of 2024, the Stadium Commission met six times, in accordance with procedures. The Commission is composed of five voting members: James Schlegel – Chairman, Gary Yeager, Jr. – Vice Chairman/Secretary and members, Rick Denunzio, Rick Mountz and Michael Schorn. Non-voting members include Donna Reed, Liaison from City Council and Carlos Torres, Liaison from DPW. Strat Marmarou serves as Commissioner Emeritus. Throughout the year, members of the Commission completed more than 263 hours of volunteer work at the stadium. This included attendance at games, interacting with fans, and attending community events. This was in addition to our regular meeting schedule.

In January, Scott Hunsicker, Fightin Phils General Manager presented a request for the Annual Appropriation of \$5,000 from the city for improvements to First Energy Stadium. The work included replacement of wood decking in the left field area and the pool area. The Commission authorized the proposal and upon receipt of invoices, the payment was authorized.

As you are well aware, the highlight of the 2024 season was the opening of the Redner's Event Center. As opening day approached, construction was at full steam ahead as it was imperative that the team facilities be ready following spring training. The home team facilities were completed on time however, the visiting team's area would not be available for the 2024 season. By June 1, 2024 the first group was able to rent the facility and would eventually lead to many more groups making reservations. As we closed out 2024, the Event Center continues to be booked for many and various events and continues to gain momentum.

As we take pride in our new event space, we also recognize the great strides that our baseball franchise has made over the past year. Here are a few of the outstanding accomplishments of the Reading Fightin Phils:

- The Reading Fightin Phils welcomed 414,262 fans to First Energy Stadium in 2024.
- Reading's attendance ranked 2nd best of all double A teams (total of 30 teams).
- Out of 120 minor league teams across the country, Reading ranked 16th in total attendance.
- Reading's 2024 attendance of 414,262 was the highest attendance since 2016.

- Reading welcomed an average of 6,277 fans to games this year which was the highest attendance since the 2013 season.
- Reading finished the 2024 season with the second highest total and average attendances in the Eastern League, trailing only the Richmond Flying Squirrels.
- Reading also drew 28,784 more fans to the ballpark in 2024 than last season.
- Since the cancellation of the 2020 season due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Fightin Phils have posted steady increases in season long attendance each season. 2024 marked the fourth straight season with an increase in total attendance. Surpassing the 400,000 fans in 2024 brings the Fightin Phils back to pre-COVID numbers.
- Nine out of the 66 home games saw attendance of over 8,000 fans. Twenty-eight games saw over 7,000 fans.

The Stadium Commission remains committed to our purpose and mission and look forward to following this tradition into 2025. We are committed to working on behalf of the City of Reading and our citizens of Reading to ensure that our stadium remains a vital part of our city. It is with pride that we continue the tradition of being America's Classic Ballpark and forever being known as Baseballtown.