

First Energy Stadium Commission

James Schlegel - Chairman
Rick Denunzio - Vice Chairman/Secretary
Rick Mountz - Member
Michael Schorn - Member
Gary Yeager, Jr. - Member
Strat Marmarou - City Council Liaison
Cindy Castner - DPW Liaison

To: Members of City Council
Re: 2020 Stadium Commission Annual Report
From: James Schlegel, Chairperson, 2021
Date: January 31, 2022

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

Over the course of 2021, the Stadium Commission met six times, in accordance with procedures. In January, we added one new member, Gary Yeager, Jr. and a re-appointed member Rick Denunzio. The Commission remained at its approved 5-member board throughout the entire year. Also in January, Scott Hunsicker, GM for the Fightin Phils presented an overview of what lies ahead for the team and the stadium due to the outbreak of Covid-19. At that time, he assured the Commission that there would be a baseball season; however, it would start later than planned and the schedule of games would be changed significantly.

At our March meeting, Scott Hunsicker presented to the Commission that Minor League Baseball was to be replaced by a new organization, named the Professional Development League. Along with this major change, there were new requirements for minor league teams with regards to their facilities. Mr. Hunsicker explained the upgrades that would need to be met. He further stated that if we did not find a way to make the needed improvements that Reading would lose its franchise. With all that this would encompass, Scott devised a plan to secure the funding. That plan was to ask the City of Reading, Berks County, the Fightin Phils organization, and the State of Pennsylvania to partner in this project totaling \$16.5 million dollars. The Stadium Commission immediately presented a letter to the Mayor's Office indicating our full support. Subsequent support letters followed to City Council and to the County Commissioners. By December, all funds were secured in a record 8 months' time. The efforts put forth with everyone working together is the only way that our stalwart community could see this through to fruition. City Council is to be recognized for their early support of this project recognizing the importance of have baseball in our city.

The Commission reviewed and approved a proposal from Scott Hunsicker for repairs to First Energy Stadium in the amount allocated of \$5,000. The work included replacement of worn-out wood at the Left Field Deck and at the Pool Picnic Area. All work was completed and the funds were transferred to the Fightin Phils.

It has been an objective of the Stadium Commission to provide volunteer assistance to the Fightin Phils during the baseball season. Due to a later start to the season and the last week of games being cancelled, the Commission was still able to provide 149 volunteer hours. These hours, completed by

Commissioners and Liaisons, were in addition to the meeting hours throughout the year. This is a true testament to the commitment of the Commission and to its mission.

Obviously 2021 was probably the most intense year in recent history for First Energy Stadium. We never anticipated being in the situation that we were dealt. On behalf of the Members of the Commission, I felt that we responded in a professional manner and remained laser-focused on keeping the Fightin Phils here in our city. We now look forward to the next chapter of our beloved stadium. Rest assured, the First Energy Stadium Commission will continue doing our part so that America's favorite pastime always has a home in Reading, PA; and upholding our national title as "Baseballtown".