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Scooter Braun, Charlie Walk, Rosie Perez and Nick Cannon Among Those Named to Barclays Center's New Advisory Board



Barclays Center in Brooklyn, New York.

Stephen Lovekin/Getty Images

Barclays Center's Brooklyn Sports & Entertainment Advisory Board, made up of a group of nearly 30 top sports, entertainment, and media executives, will hold its first meeting tomorrow (Dec. 4), Billboard has learned.

Created by **Brett Yormark**, CEO of Barclays Center, and **Charlie Walk**, executive vice president of Republic Records at Universal Music Group, the Advisory Board will contribute to the programming strategy and direction for the arena, as well as its ownership group's Nassau Coliseum project on Long Island, and vaguely referenced "future venues."

Among those participating in the advisory board are **Keith Bloomfield**, president, Forbes Family Trust; **Scott Borchetta**, president/CEO, Big Machine Label Group; **Scooter Braun**, founder, SB Projects; **Nick Cannon**, actor and Host of NBC's *America's Got Talent*; radio personality **Craig Carton**, WFAN Radio; **Jonathan Cohen**, booker for *The Tonight Show*; **Stephen Espinoza**, evp/gm Showtime Sports; **Jason Flom**, CEO, Lava Records; television producer **Desiree Gruber**, Full Picture; **Rich Graziano**, president & general manager, WPIX-TV; **Ken Levitan**, founder/co-president, Vector Management; **David Levy**, president, Turner Broadcasting System; **Monte**

Lipman, chairman/CEO, Republic Records; **Bob McLynn**, co-founder, Crush Management; **Sean McManus**, chairman, CBS Sports; **Chris Oliviero**, evp Programming, CBS Radio; actress **Rosie Perez**, host of ABC's *The View*; sports business executive **George Pyne**; **Ryan Schinman**, CEO, Platinum Rye Entertainment; and fashion designer **John Varvatos**.

The Advisory Board members will be involved in the planning for such upcoming Barclays Center events as the 2015 NBA All-Star Game, the ACC Men's Basketball Tournament, the 2016 NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament, and other events to be announced soon.

"About a year ago I had a conversation with Charlie Walk about any introductions he could make with respect to industry leaders and how I could tap into them and their resources in order to help Barclays Center grow," Yormark tells Billboard. "On the heels of that, the conversation turned to 'wouldn't it be great to take your resources and my resources to create an advisory board of some of the best sports and entertainment professionals in the business and get them, on behalf of Barclays Center, to guide us, open up new doors, and tap into some of their resources.'"

Over the next several months, Yormark and Walk set about putting together a list of names of top sports and entertainment execs, "most, if not all of whom accepted," says Yormark. "It's a pretty great list, and we're thrilled to have been able to put together such an astute group. We really feel, with their help, we'll continue to grow this thing in a big time way. This will be a working advisory board, all with the goal of trying to drive value for our customers, to create bigger and better moments at Barclays, and we're very excited about it."

While the Board will meet "two or three times a year," participation means members will be "active at Barclays Center," Yormark says. "They're already coming to Nets games, concerts, there's active communication. We want Barclays Center to be their home away from home. We want them to be able to pick up the phone or send an email regarding a 'what if' idea. We're also asking that once, twice a year each of the members gives us at least a 30-minute meeting where we can talk about targeted ideas and issues we have, and how they can help. The lines of communication and transparency created around this advisory board will be unprecedented, and very much ongoing."

Asked why membership on this board is appealing to these busy executives, Yormark responds, "All of them have been to Barclays Center, they like the direction we're taking the business, they like our culture, many of them we have personal relationships with, and there is a common theme of sports and entertainment business that aligns all of us. To a much lesser degree, being able to call Barclays Center their home is appealing, but certainly not the driver. The driver is to help us build something very special that starts in Brooklyn and goes to Nassau and beyond."

The \$1 billion, 19,000-capacity Barclays Center opened in September of 2012 as the home of the NBA's Brooklyn Nets, and by the end of 2013 was the third highest-grossing arena in the world for concerts and events, reporting \$83.5 million to Billboard Boxscore. Post-honeymoon period, Barclays Center is still among the busiest arenas in the world, reporting \$60 million in concerts and events for the same period this year. **Bruce Ratner** is majority owner of Barclays Center and executive chairman of Forest City Ratner Companies, one of the partners that won the bid to redevelop the Nassau Coliseum, a \$250 million project that will begin when the NHL's Islanders leave Nassau for Brooklyn. "Our goal is to open up the recreated Coliseum for holidays 2016," says Yormark.

Yormark declined to comment on news that all or part of Forest City's 55% ownership stake in arena was on the block. It is believed that the company is looking to sell at least some of its stake in the building, but talk that Ratner would vacate control of the arena after spending years trying to move the Nets and get the building open seems highly unlikely.

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