



CITY OF CORPUS CHRISTI

PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

TO: Peter Zanoni, City Manager
FROM: Dan McGinn, Director, Interim Assistant City Manager *DM*
COPY: Mayor and City Council
SUBJECT: **Astros update on sale to Diamond Baseball Holdings of the Corpus Christi Hooks**
DATE: December 12, 2025

On December 9, 2025 at the Winter Meetings in Orlando, Florida, the Astros announced they will sell three affiliates to Diamond Baseball Holdings (DBH). The three teams are the Woodpeckers in Fayetteville, Space Cowboys in Sugar Land, and Hooks in Corpus Christi. The City received formal notice that DBH will assume ownership of the Corpus Christi Baseball Club, LP (Houston Astros) effective January 5, 2026. The City's Legal Department has reviewed the notice, and the assignment is an approved action within the lease terms. In addition to the formal notice required by the lease agreement, the tenant is pending to submit sale transaction documentation, purchaser's financial capability, and written approval from the sanctioning baseball association confirming the sale.

Below is link to the Astros' announcement.

[Houston Astros Announce Sale of Three Minor League Affiliates to Diamond Baseball Holdings](#)

The transition will not affect current baseball operations, the existing local leadership, staff retention or the club's branding. The Corpus Christi Hooks will remain a Houston Astros affiliate and the operations and stadium management will transition to DBH. Whataburger Field will continue to serve residents and visitors as a professional sports and community destination.

Whataburger Field opened in 2005 as a City-owned professional baseball stadium following voter approval of bonds authorizing its construction. That same year, the Corpus Christi Hooks began playing at the new ballpark under the ownership of Reid Ryan and Nolan Ryan's Ryan Sanders Baseball. In 2013, Ryan Sanders Baseball sold the interest to the Houston Astros.

Since then, the Hooks have established Whataburger Field as a signature regional venue that supports tourism, community events, and the development of Major League Baseball talent in the Coastal Bend.

The Hooks have operated continuously at Whataburger Field as a Double-A affiliate of the Houston Astros, competing in the Texas League. Over the past two decades, the partnership between the City and the Club has successfully maintained the stadium as a modern facility aligned with Major League Baseball (MLB) standards, supported by strategic capital investments from both Type A funding and tenant contributions.

Diamond Baseball Holdings (DBH) is a national operator of Minor League Baseball clubs established in 2021 by sports-entertainment company Endeavor. In 2022, ownership

transitioned to private equity group Silver Lake Partners to support long-term investment in Minor League infrastructure and operations. Silver Lake Partners is a deeply rooted and experienced sports investor that also owns stakes in TKO (WWE & UFC), Endeavor, Fanatics, City Football Group and more.

DBH has grown rapidly, now owning and operating 48 affiliated MiLB teams throughout the United States, the largest consolidated ownership group in Minor League Baseball.

DBH is committed to elevating experiences for its fans, creating centers of energy in local communities, fostering dynamic opportunities for brands to connect with consumers, and championing the evolution of Minor League Baseball. Its business model focuses on strengthening each club's community ties and preserving its unique identity, while bringing national-level expertise to ballparks by:

- leveraging shared back-office operations, technologies, strategies and tactics to maintain MiLB's affordable, family-friendly, value proposition
- enhancing the fan experience through upgraded amenities and integrating cutting-edge digital technologies into club operations
- providing new value-generating opportunities – including in sponsorship and merchandising – in partnership with MiLB
- increasing special event programming beyond baseball games that include seasonal tourism events, food festivals, concerts, non-profit events, high school and collegiate events and holiday
- Establishing focused community impact programs to give back to local communities

DBH has expressed interest in maintaining continuity in Corpus Christi while exploring opportunities to enhance stadium activation and community programming at Whataburger Field. Brady Ballard will remain in his current role as the Hooks General Manager and DBH will manage the club with a hyper-local focus through Brady's leadership.

The DBH leadership team will be traveling to Corpus Christi to meet with stadium employees as part of the transition plan followed by meeting with City leadership. On December 16, Brady Ballard will be providing a briefing to City Council.

Attachment:

Assignment of Stadium Lease Letter dated November 21, 2025

Teams owned by Diamond Baseball Holdings



Double-A Affiliate of the Houston Astros

November 21, 2025

City of Corpus Christi **via FedEx and Email**
P.O. Box 9277
Corpus Christi, Texas 78469-9277
Attn: City Manager, Peter Zanoni
peterz@cctexas.com

City of Corpus Christi **via FedEx and Email**
P.O. Box 9277
Corpus Christi, Texas 78469-9277
Attn: City Attorney
milesr@cctexas.com

Re: Assignment of Stadium Lease

City of Corpus Christi:

Reference is made to the certain Second Amended and Restated Stadium Lease Agreement, dated January 28, 2020 (the "**Agreement**"), between City of Corpus Christi, Texas ("City" or "you") and the Corpus Christi Hooks Baseball Club ("**Club**" "**we**" or "**our**").

Section 10.1 (C) permits Club, without City's consent, to assign its interest in the Agreement in connection with "a sale of the Team or a sale by Lessee of all or substantially all of its assets, in a single transaction..." if notice is given thirty (30) days' notice.

This assignment has been reviewed and approved by the Professional Development League ("PDL").

Accordingly, this letter provides you with formal notice that the Club intends to make such assignment via a sale of the Club to Diamond Baseball Holdings effective January 5, 2026.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Giles Kibbe".

Giles Kibbe
General Counsel

cc: Sony Peronel, Assistant City Manager, sonyp@cctexas.com
Asst. Dir., Office of Economic Development, elsyb@cctexas.com

Teams owned by Diamond Baseball Holdings

Team	Location	League	Class	Affiliate	Acquired
Albuquerque Isotopes ^[24]	Albuquerque, New Mexico	Pacific Coast League	Triple-A	Colorado Rockies	2023
Altoona Curve ^[25]	Altoona, Pennsylvania	Eastern League	Double-A	Pittsburgh Pirates	2023
Arkansas Travelers ^[26]	North Little Rock, Arkansas	Texas League	Double-A	Seattle Mariners	2024
Augusta GreenJackets ^[27]	North Augusta, South Carolina	Carolina League	Single-A	Atlanta Braves	2021
Binghamton Rumble Ponies ^[28]	Binghamton, New York	Eastern League	Double-A	New York Mets	2024
Birmingham Barons ^[29]	Birmingham, Alabama	Southern League	Double-A	Chicago White Sox	2023
Brooklyn Cyclones ^[30]	Brooklyn, New York	South Atlantic League	High-A	New York Mets	2024
Charlotte Knights ^[31]	Charlotte, North Carolina	International League	Triple-A	Chicago White Sox	2024
Columbus Clingstones ^[27]	Columbus, Georgia	Southern League	Double-A	Atlanta Braves	2021
Dayton Dragons ^[32]	Dayton, Ohio	Midwest League	High-A	Cincinnati Reds	2025
Fredericksburg Nationals ^[33]	Fredericksburg, Virginia	Carolina League	Single-A	Washington Nationals	2025
Fresno Grizzlies ^[34]	Fresno, California	California League	Single-A	Colorado Rockies	2023

Teams owned by Diamond Baseball Holdings

Team	Location	League	Class	Affiliate	Acquired
Gwinnett Stripers ^[27]	Lawrenceville, Georgia	International League	Triple-A	Atlanta Braves	2021
Harrisburg Senators ^[35]	Harrisburg, Pennsylvania	Eastern League	Double-A	Washington Nationals	2024
Hickory Crawdads ^[9]	Hickory, North Carolina	Carolina League	Single-A	Texas Rangers	2023
Hudson Valley Renegades ^[27]	Fishkill, New York	South Atlantic League	High-A	New York Yankees	2021
Hub City Spartanburgers ^[9]	Spartanburg, South Carolina	South Atlantic League	High-A	Texas Rangers	2023
Inland Empire 66ers ^[36]	San Bernardino, California	California League	Single-A	Los Angeles Angels	2024
Iowa Cubs ^[27]	Des Moines, Iowa	International League	Triple-A	Chicago Cubs	2021
Lansing Lugnuts ^[37]	Lansing, Michigan	Midwest League	High-A	Athletics	2023
Louisville Bats ^[38]	Louisville, Kentucky	International League	Triple-A	Cincinnati Reds	2023
Memphis Redbirds ^[27]	Memphis, Tennessee	International League	Triple-A	St. Louis Cardinals	2021
Midland RockHounds ^[39]	Midland, Texas	Texas League	Double-A	Athletics	2022

Teams owned by Diamond Baseball Holdings

Team	Location	League	Class	Affiliate	Acquired
New Hampshire Fisher Cats ^[41]	Manchester, New Hampshire	Eastern League	Double-A	Toronto Blue Jays	2023
Norfolk Tides ^[42]	Norfolk, Virginia	International League	Triple-A	Baltimore Orioles	2023
Oklahoma City Comets ^[27]	Oklahoma City, Oklahoma	Pacific Coast League	Triple-A	Los Angeles Dodgers	2021
Omaha Storm Chasers ^[43]	Papillion, Nebraska	International League	Triple-A	Kansas City Royals	2024
Ontario Tower Buzzers	Ontario, California	California League	Single-A	Los Angeles Dodgers	2024
Portland Sea Dogs ^[39]	Portland, Maine	Eastern League	Double-A	Boston Red Sox	2022
Reading Fightin Phils ^[22]	Reading, Pennsylvania	Eastern League	Double-A	Philadelphia Phillies	2025
Rancho Cucamonga Quakes ^[44]	Rancho Cucamonga, California	California League	Single-A	Los Angeles Dodgers	2024
Rome Emperors ^[27]	Rome, Georgia	South Atlantic League	High-A	Atlanta Braves	2021
Salem RidgeYaks ^[45]	Salem, Virginia	Carolina League	Single-A	Boston Red Sox	2023
San Jose Giants ^[27]	San Jose, California	California League	Single-A	San Francisco Giants	2021

Teams owned by Diamond Baseball Holdings

Team	Location	League	Class	Affiliate	Acquired
Scranton/Wilkes-Barre RailRiders ^[27]	Moosic, Pennsylvania	International League	Triple-A	New York Yankees	2021
Springfield Cardinals ^[46]	Springfield, Missouri	Texas League	Double-A	St. Louis Cardinals	2023
St. Paul Saints ^[47]	Saint Paul, Minnesota	International League	Triple-A	Minnesota Twins	2023
Syracuse Mets ^[48]	Syracuse, New York	International League	Triple-A	New York Mets	2024
Tri-City Dust Devils ^[49]	Pasco, Washington	Northwest League	High-A	Los Angeles Angels	2024
Tulsa Drillers ^[50]	Tulsa, Oklahoma	Texas League	Double-A	Los Angeles Dodgers	2023
Vancouver Canadians ^[51]	Vancouver, British Columbia	Northwest League	High-A	Toronto Blue Jays	2023
Wichita Wind Surge ^[39]	Wichita, Kansas	Texas League	Double-A	Minnesota Twins	2022
Winston-Salem Dash ^[52]	Winston-Salem, North Carolina	South Atlantic League	High-A	Chicago White Sox	2024
Wisconsin Timber Rattlers ^[53]	Grand Chute, Wisconsin	Midwest League	High-A	Milwaukee Brewers	2025
Worcester Red Sox ^[54]	Worcester, Massachusetts	International League	Triple-A	Boston Red Sox	2023