

## **Barcelona members approve referendum on future of Nou Camp**

*Matt Cutler*

FC Barcelona's members have voted to approve the staging of a referendum to decide the future of its Nou Camp home, with the club stating this process will be staged in either the 2014-15 or 2015-16 season.

The future of Barcelona's iconic stadium has been the cause of much debate in recent months. Speaking at his end-of-year address in June, Barcelona president Sandro Rosell announced that planned renovations at the Nou Camp had been put on hold despite the revelation of record financial results. Rosell insisted that a revamp of the Nou Camp would not be able to happen until the club's debt is further reduced. Last September, Barcelona announced plans to add 10,000 seats and install new VIP boxes at the Nou Camp, which currently has a capacity of 90,000, and also remodel the area surrounding the stadium (Espai Barca) and build a new arena (Palau Blaugrana) for the club's basketball team.

At a meeting on Saturday, 73.38% of Barcelona's delegate members voted in favour of holding a referendum on the subject, with vice-president of the economic and strategic area of the club, Javier Faus, noting that there are two options available. Faus stated that the redevelopment of the Nou Camp would cost Eur300 million, while the construction of a new stadium would not exceed Eur600 million. He stressed that any new stadium would not be built outside the city limits, but noted that "nothing will be done until the club's debt is reduced from its current levels."

Barcelona in July signed off on record profits of Eur48.8 million for the 2011-12 season, following losses of Eur9.3 million and Eur83 million in the previous two seasons. Barcelona's total debt, which once stood at Eur420 million two years ago, was reduced to Eur335 million with Faus stating that the club "needs to be cautious" if it wants to take on "ambitious future projects".

Stadium development would clearly fall under this bracket and Faus on Saturday stated that either of the two stadium options would mean the club would have to go into debt, adding that therefore "the debt must be reduced to extremely low levels."

**Fonte: SportBusiness International. Disponível em:**

**<<http://www.sportbusiness.com/news/186359/barcelona-members-approve-referendum-on-future-of-nou-camp>>. Acesso em: 24 Sept. 2012.**