

MLB Places Provisions Around Braves Sale

Written by Maury Brown
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As [reported yesterday](#), the sale of the **Atlanta Braves** from **Time Warner** to **Liberty Media** will be approved at the first day of the Owners Meetings set to begin at 5pm tonight (ET) at MLB Headquarters in New York. The deal sends the Braves, a group of craft publications and about \$1 billion in cash from Time Warner to Liberty Media in return for a very large block of Time Warner stock held by Liberty for nearly 20 years.

The deal comes with MLB placing provisions around the approval. As [reported by Tim Tucker of the Atlanta Journal Constitution](#), they are:

MLB lawyers have negotiated with Liberty several provisions to the deal — including, [Braves President **Terry McGuirk**] said, an assurance that the Braves' player payroll would remain at least as high as in the past three seasons (about \$80 million) and a commitment that McGuirk would remain in control of the team for the new owner.

The provisions are in keeping with baseball **Commissioner Bud Selig's** stated goal of preserving the stability and effectiveness of Braves management, which he holds in high esteem.

If the deal is approved, McGuirk said Braves General Manager **John Schuerholz** and manager **Bobby Cox** "go on running their operations as if nothing has happened."

The Braves' long-term operating agreement for Turner Field would continue under new ownership. In addition, "the name of the stadium will not change," McGuirk said.

As [mentioned prior](#), the sale has little to do with Liberty having an interest in owning the

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Braves—or for that matter an MLB club, at all. The deal has the Braves as a cog in a larger deal with approx. \$770 million in taxes that will be avoided by taking advantage of the Tax Increase Prevention and Reconciliation Act of 2005.

Changes to the tax code take place at 12am tonight, and with that, the tax-free element would expire.

3/4 of the 30 owners need to approve the deal at tonight's meeting, and are expected to do so quickly.

Below is an listing of articles covering the sale from [The Biz of Baseball](#) and [Baseball Prospectus](#)

- [Braves Sale to Be Finalized Tommorrow](#)
- [Liberty Media to Own Braves by May 17th](#)
- [No Sale of the Braves by Opening Day. By May 17th](#)
- [McQuirk: Expect No Changes with Braves Sale](#)
- [Liberty/Time Warner Deal for Braves Finalized](#)



[The Ledger Domain: Risky Business](#)



[The Ledger Domain: Sale of the Braves is a Tax\(less\) Situation](#)