



NCDC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Meeting Minutes May 26, 2022

Via Zoom and at Foundry 66

MINUTES

1. **Call to Order:** Chairwoman Rebecca Alberts called the meeting to order at 8:08 am. A quorum was established.

Present: Rebecca Alberts, Chris LaRose, JP Mereen, Stacy Gould, Jason Jones, Mayor Peter Nystrom, John Salomone, Lynn Perry, and Bryan Hayes. **Absent:** Chris Jewell, Bob Staley, Angy Gardner, Rev. Benjamin Green, John Mancini, Swarnjit Singh and John Harris. **Other Attendees:** Kevin Brown, Devin Schleidt, Mary Riley, and Mark Block. **Guests:** Melinda Wilson, Scott Lessard and Bill Kenny.

2. Chairwoman Rebecca Alberts asked the members to review the minutes from the April 28, 2022 Board meeting. If there were no changes, she asked for a motion to approve the minutes as presented.

MOTION #1: Mayor Peter Nystrom made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 28, 2022 Board Meeting as presented. JP Mereen seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

3. **President's Report:** Kevin Brown gave an update on the main Priorities of Work for May and June. He said that the 2020-2021 990 tax return was done and had been filed. He gave an update on the NRP and the work being done with Leading Edge. All the applications were in the process of being reviewed. Currently 8 applications were in front of the Business Review Board and another 11 in various stages of the process.

Mr. Brown announced that he would be giving a report on the NRP at the State of the City Address/Meeting currently scheduled for June 23rd at 7:30 am at the City Hall. He noted that if NCDC was to do everything in the current NRP pipeline it would come to about \$6 million. Of the total applications received for the NRP, only 6 have been denied.

Mr. Brown gave a brief update on the Business Park North project. NCDC worked with seCTer on the EDA grant and seCTer was currently in Washington, DC. They had been invited

as one of the finalists in the grant competition. They were asked what businesses would be in BPN; one of the examples given was a South Korean lithium battery company. The Mayor had recently met with representatives from the wind industry in New London and promoted BPN.

Mr. Brown briefly discussed the current cannabis lottery in Connecticut for growers, micro-growers, and retail operations. The deadline for submitting an application for a license with the CT Social Equity Council had closed. Currently there is no date as to when the winners of the lottery will be announced but it will most likely be sometime this summer. One building in Norwich was currently under contract by a licensed cannabis grower. A second location is in the works and a potential third location is active.

Now that the State has lifted the cap on the number of cannabis retail locations in individual municipalities, the City Council will now have to decide how many to allow in Norwich. Currently there is an MOI on two potential locations. The Mayor stated that the discussions will be coming soon with the City Council, City Manager, Chief of Police to define the parameters. Mr. Brown noted that in the years to come Norwich alone can expect \$10-\$15 million in cannabis sales.

Mr. Brown summarized the other top priorities currently being worked on including, NCDC's budget for fiscal year 2022-2023 which will be presented at the Executive Committee meeting in June; the Reid & Hughes Building; the 77-91 Main Street Development; Solar Seal – currently trying to help them close a financial gap once in production anticipate \$19 million in annual sales. They are working closely with NPU to get their power going and once in production will be NPU's largest customer.

Mr. Brown reported on a new initiative to bring parklets to Norwich to provide outdoor dining for restaurants in Norwich that currently have no space to offer outdoor dining. The RFP is in the works for a manufacturer and the City has agreed to purchase 10 parklets using ARP funds.

Mr. Brown gave a quick update on the lease amendment on the Bulletin Building. It is still not done but almost to the point of agreement and being signed. Mark Block is working the building owner's attorney to finalize the amendment. Lastly, Heritage Properties expects to close on the Reid & Hughes building sometime in mid-June. The plan calls for retail space on the first floor and 14-17 market rate apartments on the upper floors.

4. **Foundry 66 Report:** Mary Riley was absent, and Kevin Brown gave a brief update on Foundry 66. He said that the Sunlight Building is now at 100% occupancy. Foundry 66 reached 100% occupancy briefly before a few changes in membership. Mary has an agreement with the mural artist Faith Satterfield to hang some of her paintings in Foundry 66 and freshen up the space.

Mr. Brown also reported that Lifetime movie was recently filmed in Norwich and in Foundry 66 during April and part of May. The movie is to be called "How to Live Your Best Death." We currently do not have an air date on the Lifetime channel. He also announced that talks have been taking place with the building's owner, Tim Owens to place a mural on the side

of the Sunlight Building facing Bath Street and LEAD “Latinos for Educational Advocacy and Diversity have opened an office on the second floor of Foundry 66. They are headquartered in Danbury, and this is their first office in southeastern Connecticut.

5. **Global City Norwich Report:** Kevin Brown gave a quick update on the Global City Norwich program. Suki is busy helping with last minute preparations for the Cape Verdean festival this weekend. The Working Lab project is under way helping multicultural entrepreneurs with assistance from a professor from Three Rivers Community College.

6. **Treasurer’s Report:** In Chris Jewell’s absence, Devin Schleidt gave the Treasurer’s Report. He reported that NCDC expects to get the fee for the Ponemah Mill Phase II DECD grant sometime in June or July. He reported that the State of Connecticut recently announced the Community Investment Fund grant program. Part of the grant program is to help small businesses, especially those in distressed communities such as Norwich. The total amount of the grant is \$875 million over 5 years. Separately there is \$50 million coming to economic development agencies in Connecticut.

Mr. Brown proposed to the Board that the Mayor or City Manager become a member of NCDC’s Executive Committee. A resolution was discussed, and Chairwoman Rebecca Alberts welcomed the suggestion. Attorney Mark Block said that the Board can elect to have either the Mayor or the City Manager be included on the Executive Committee annually. He suggested a change to NCDC’s bylaws with an amendment.

Resolution 01-22: Kevin Brown, President of Norwich Community Development Corporation (NCDC) has requested that the Mayor of Norwich or the City Manager for the City of Norwich become a regular member of the Executive Committee of NCDC.

Chairwoman Rebecca Alberts asked for a motion to accept Resolution 01-22.

MOTION #2: JP Mereen made a motion to approve Resolution 01-22 and add the Mayor or City Manager to the Executive Committee of Norwich Community Development Corporation. Jason Jones seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

7. Kevin Brown suggested delaying the Executive Session until the next Board meeting. There was no real need to go into Executive Session.

8. Ms. Alberts asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION #3: JP Mereen made a motion to adjourn the meeting. John Salomone seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously at 9:00 am.

Respectfully submitted:

Lee Ann D’Ambrosio
Executive Assistant