



NCDC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Meeting Minutes August 25, 2022

Via Zoom and at Foundry 66

MINUTES

1. **Call to Order:** Chairwoman Rebecca Alberts called the meeting to order at 8:05 am. A quorum could not be established. A public sector member was asked to abstain from voting in order to approve the minutes of the July 28, 2022 meeting and from any additional voting that may occur. John Salomone offered to abstain from voting.

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

2. Chairwoman Rebecca Alberts asked the members to review the minutes from the July 28, 2022 meeting. She then asked for a motion to approve the minutes.

MOTION #1: JP Mereen made a motion to accept the minutes of the July 28, 2022 meeting. Stacy Gould seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

3. **President's Report:** Kevin Brown gave a brief update on the NRP expenditures to date saying that 50% of the monies has been allocated and about 10% has been spent to date. Mr. Brown also noted that 8 projects were awarded in June and 5 applicants have signed the NRP contract with NCDC.

Other projects that NCDC is currently engaged in include the Hale Mill, 77-91 Main Street, the Reid & Hughes Building and Solar Seal.

The NRP Business Board will be meeting soon to start reviewing applications to award the Round 2 of NRP funding. NCDC was recently told that they cannot bill for the admin fee for the Round 2 NRP funding until the first round of funding is spent.

Mr. Brown gave an update on the Business Park North Project. He noted that the EDA grant applicants will be awarded no later than September 30. NCDC partnered with seCTer and submitted a grant requesting \$17Million. Currently Mark Block and Henry Resnikoff are working on the required documents; the wetlands permitting is complete. They expect the zoning requirements to be completed by late October or early November.

Mr. Brown reported that the Social Equity Council has approved 12 new cannabis licenses and 3 equity joint ventures. Sweet Spot Farms is definitely coming to Norwich. A second cultivator is closing on a site in Norwich. A third cultivator is locking in on a site in Norwich. He noted that NCDC and the City need to make a plan to promote social and corporate responsibility.

Mr. Singh asked about next steps and conversations on the social responsibility and Ms. Alberts asked about the disposal of the by-product that will be produced by the growers. Mr. LaRose noted that there will need to be talks with Public Works about biowaste. Mr. Brown reported that the Hartford Business Journal is sponsoring a cannabis conference in Plantsville on September 14. NCDC and NPU will be attending and will have an exhibitor booth during the event. There is also another event coming up at the CT Science Center later in September.

Included in his Priorities of Work, Mr. Brown announced that the closing on the Reid & Hughes Building is imminent by Heritage Properties and the CIF grant for brownfield remediation at the Reid & Hughes Building is pending. Mr. Block noted that he is still waiting for the closing paperwork for the 77-91 Main Street development. Danbury Savings Bank is still waiting on the closing date but Norwich Luxury Apartment sent a check to NCDC for \$15,000 as part of the fee negotiated by NCDC.

Mr. Brown stated that the Connecticut Investment Fund (CIF) Grant is set up for two rounds each year for the next 4 years. In the interim, he is currently engaged with several development partners on several properties. Mr. Brown said that he is hosting bi-weekly meetings on Fridays to discuss what the focus should be on the CIF grant applications – the list currently includes the Capehart Mill, Heritage Trail Expansion, the Marina, the Chestnut Street Mill, Utility Upgrades on Shipping Street, a Wastewater Treatment Plant, Schools (soft costs), a Community Center, a Land Bank, new Police Station, the Reid & Hughes Building, Lower Broadway, a Revolving Loan Program, Capital Infrastructure, Small Business Assistance, a Restructure of the Downtown Bond Program, Redesign of Rose Alley, etc.

4. **Foundry 66 Report:** Mary Riley gave a quick update on Foundry 66. She reported that there are 3 new members and 2 new mail members. She noted that there has been an increase in temporary memberships and has had 7 new customer sign-ups. Additionally, she reported that there have recently been exterior improvements to Foundry 66 including the parklet located between Cream and Epicure which seemed to kick off pride in the building's owner, and he is now agreeing to improvements and improving the member experience. Ms. Riley also noted that the membership agreements are now all electronic and she has several events planned for the Fall.

Mr. Brown told the Board that if every desk and flex space were filled at Foundry 66 the gross revenue would be about \$10,025 per month. Currently, Foundry 66 is grossing about 70% of the potential revenue for the space. Ms. Riley stated that there are plans for a mural to be done on the side of the Sunlight Building facing Bath Street in the next couple of weeks. Mr. Staley asked about Congressman Courtney's campaign staff using the old gym next door and whether it would be feasible to get another fitness company to occupy that space after the November elections. Ms. Riley said that she has spoken to a couple of potential businesses but none of them are financially capable at the moment. Mr. Singh asked about turning the gym into additional co-workspace but Mr. Brown said it would require major renovations.

5. **Global City Norwich Report:** Suki Lagrito provided an update on Global City Norwich. She reported that LEAD had a ribbon cutting ceremony in July. Their new office is located inside Foundry 66 on the second floor. She reported that the Peruvian Festival was held recently during the heat wave and the last festival will be the One World Festival, scheduled for Sunday, September 4. Additionally, she reported on an upcoming Block Party in Greenville. Ms. Lagrito gave a financial update on GCN expenditures to date for all the festivals, including donations, overhead costs and the upcoming Faces/Places/Spaces and Working Lab.

6. **Treasurer's Report:** Mr. Devin Schleidt gave the Treasurer's Report in Chris Jewell's absence. He reviewed the current budget and reported that he is working on separating out the expenses from NCDC's operating budget with NRP expenses. Currently, NCDC's budget is looking very healthy with help from the admin fees from the NRP. NCDC is looking at a stable position for the next 2 years and the CIF grants will help with future projects to keep NCDC moving forward.

Mr. Brown asked if anyone had any questions. Ms. Alberts asked if NCDC will be paying any of the costs for the grant writer being hired by the City. She noted that the grant writer will be fielding many requests – there is a nationwide scramble at the moment for grant writers. Ms. Alberts said she would like NCDC to have more staff to help write more grants for NCDC – a dedicated “Clerk of the Works” at NCDC.

Mr. Brown asked to delay the Executive Session until the September Board meeting.

Chairwoman Rebecca Alberts asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION #2: Chris LaRose made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Bob Staley seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously at 9:10 am.

Respectfully submitted:

Lee Ann D'Ambrosio
Executive Assistant