



## NCDC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### Meeting Minutes September 22, 2022

Via Zoom and at Foundry 66

#### MINUTES

1. **Call to Order:** Chairwoman Rebecca Alberts called the meeting to order at 8:04 am.

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

2. Chairwoman Rebecca Alberts asked the members to review the minutes from the August 25, 2022 meeting. She then asked for a motion to approve the minutes.

**MOTION #1:** Jason Jones made a motion to accept the minutes of the August 25, 2022 meeting. Mayor Nystrom seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

3. **President's Report:** Kevin Brown reported that the sale of the Reid & Hughes building had closed as well as the sale of 77-91 Main Street. All the permits were completed and NCDC received its fee. The developer believes they will be done in 6-8 months. Additionally, the MOU with MPTN regarding the Mercantile Building has been executed. The remaining parklets were ordered and were delivered to Public Works. Mr. Brown also noted that interviews for the City Grant Manager would take place on October 7. He will be on the interviewing panel.

Mr. Brown reviewed his Top 10 Priority List for the month of October. He reported that the Foundry 66 membership is going up and that the NCDC staff has been working with Citizen Lab on the Community Engagement Tool. It will be an online survey for residents of Norwich to fill out with what they would like to see in Norwich as well as improvements.

Currently, there are 51 projects in the que for the ARP/NRP. Mr. Brown will be interviewed on the program next week with the Connecticut Mirror Newspaper. All told approximately \$106 Million in investment in the City. Assisting NCDC with the NRP has been Scott Lessard who has been hard at work on all the projects. A new group of applicants will be reviewed by the NRP Business Board towards the end of September. About 5 projects will actually make the September 30 deadline.

Mr. Brown gave an update on the cannabis development in Norwich. There was a cannabis conference at the Aqua Turk in Plantsville on September 14. It was a great event. There are not enough places in Norwich to accommodate all the cannabis businesses interested in operating in Norwich. At the moment there will be 2-3 cannabis cultivators established in Norwich – 2 are firm and there are 5 retail operators actively looking in Norwich. Based on the Massachusetts market 4 retail locations would be the max but Norwich will probably end up with 3; 2 are currently definite. Norwich can expect about \$1 Million in utility revenue with about 10% going to the City and another 3% in a municipal sales tax.

4. Mr. Brown introduced Henry Resnikoff to provide an update on the Business Park North Project. Mr. Resnikoff reported that the wetlands permit was applied for and received and a separate report was submitted to CT SHPO. Several surveys were required including Hepatology, Botany and Archaeology. Additionally, the State COG Application was completed and submitted. He is currently working with Attorney Mark Block to complete everything else that is required by the City for the project. NCDC did not receive any funding through the EDA Grant with seCTer or the RAISE grant. NCDC will reapply for the RAISE grant (formerly the TIGER grant).

5. Becka Alberts asked for a motion to enter into Executive Session.

**MOTION #2:** Stacy Gould made a motion to enter into Executive Session. Jason Jones seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously at 8:25 am.

**MOTION #3:** Jason Jones made a motion to exit Executive Session. Chris LaRose seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously at 8:40 am. No votes were taken.

6. Mr. Brown moved on to his Top 10 Priority List. Right now, he is looking to lock in a Plan B for the Business Park North Project and lock in two cannabis cultivators for Norwich. He also noted that Eastern Connecticut State University is having a cannabis conference later in October. The CIF Working Group has moved up renovating the Marina on the list and are looking at grants to re-develop the property. The Capehart Mill is a safety hazard and the CIF Working Group is looking at a grant to demolish the property and turn the land into a green space for the Greenville neighborhood.

The City's new Deputy Comptroller has been very helpful with the ARP funds. It was agreed that the easiest method for dispersing the funds would be to give the entire approved amount to NCDC and then NCDC will issue the checks to the project awardees. The funding will result in a single State and single FED audit.

Mr. Brown gave a quick update on Global City Norwich. He discussed emptying all the equipment out of the rented POD with Suki and moving everything into a storage room at Foundry 66. The program is going into hibernation for the next 90-180 days.

Ms. Alberts reminded the Board members about the upcoming NAACP Freedom Fund Dinner. NCDC is sponsoring a table. Please let Lee Ann know if you are interested in attending.

Ms. Alberts also discussed extending the length of the Board meetings to 90 minutes. The options are 7:30 am – 9:00 am or 8:00 am to 9:30 am. Lee Ann will send out a Doodle Poll to the Board to get their feedback.

7. **Foundry 66 Report:** Mary Riley gave an update on Foundry 66. She reported that there was a 100% occupancy for offices on both floors and 100% occupancy for dedicated desks on the first floor. Additionally, she said that more people were coming into Foundry and commenting on the feel of Franklin Street and Foundry 66 as well. The number of tours has increased and larger groups are renting the conference rooms. Several people have expressed interest in the second floor of the Sunlight Building. Jason Jones commended the NCDC Team.

8. **Global City Norwich Report:** Suki Lagrito gave her final report. She noted that there had been ten events this year including the festivals, the National Night Out, the Rose City Talent Show, the Greenville Block Party and other community events. Suki said that the Global City Norwich Program had been a rewarding experience. She also highlighted the Vanilla Box Project, Faces/Places/Spaces and the Working Lab Program. There will be a GCN Celebration on October 3rd at Foundry 66 to thank Suki for all work on behalf of Global City Norwich.

9. **Treasurer's Report:** Since Chris Jewell did not receive the finance report in time for the meeting, Devin Schleidt gave the Treasurer's Report. He reported that some modifications were being made to the Profit and Loss Report by breaking out the NRP monies and keeping them separate from the general NCDC budget. NCDC currently has a positive balance and he recommended that NCDC open a second business checking account for the NRP funds. Kevin Brown said that the Board will need to vote on opening a second business checking account. He also noted that the funds that were lent out to Solar Seal (now Naverra) will be returned to the City and not NCDC.

10. Becka Alberts asked for a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report.

**MOTION #4:** Mayo Nystrom made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report. Jason Jones seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

11. The Board briefly discussed the request to open a second NCDC business checking account to distribute the ARP/NRP funds to the grant awardees. Kevin Brown also noted that the second business checking account will also be used for any ARP/NRP related expenditures in the course of managing the program. The signers on the second business checking account would be the same as the NCDC primary business checking account – Becka Alberts, Chairwoman and Chris Jewell, Treasurer. Mayor Nystrom noted that there should be a separate item on the agenda regarding the second NCDC business checking account.

12. Becka Alberts asked for a motion to amend the agenda to approve the second NCDC business checking account.

**MOTION #5:** Mayor Nystrom made a motion to amend the meeting agenda to approve the second NCDC business checking account. Chris LaRose seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

13. Becka Alberts asked for a motion to approve a second business checking account for NCDC at Chelsea Groton Bank to manage the ARP/NRP funds.

**MOTION #6:** John Salomone made a motion to approve a second business checking account for NCDC at Chelsea Groton Bank to manage the APR/NRP funds. Jason Jones seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Jason Jones asked if NCDC was collecting any data on cannabis businesses coming to Norwich so we can measure the pluses and minuses and compare to other communities that have gone through this process. Kevin Brown responded that this should be done and NCDC will track the data. Devin Schleidt said that there are two metrics currently being used – crime and drug use. Becka Alberts said that NCDC and the City need to make sure that we use the funds from the municipal sales tax to improve lives and direct them towards a new community center.

Kevin Brown said that most municipalities that have a cannabis sales tax direct that money to 6 or more spending categories. The Connecticut Governor recently issued a press release stating the need for municipalities to have an ordinance on responsible expenditures resulting from any municipal cannabis sales tax.

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

**MOTION #7:** Stacy Gould made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Chris LaRose seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously at 9:18 am.

Respectfully submitted:

Lee Ann D'Ambrosio  
Executive Assistant