



NCDC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Meeting Minutes June 22, 2023

Via Zoom and at Foundry 66

MINUTES

1. **Call to Order:** Chairwoman Rebecca Alberts called the meeting to order at 8:05 am and established a quorum.

Present: Jason Jones, John Harris, Chris LaRose, Bob Staley, Chris Jewell, John Salomone, Rev. Benjamin Green, JP Mereen, Mayor Nystrom, Lynn Perry, John Harris, Angy Gardner, Swarnjit Singh, and Bryan Hayes. **Absent:** Stacy Gould, John Mancini and Mark Block. **Other Attendees:** Kevin Brown, Mary Riley, Devin Schleidt, Lee Ann D'Ambrosio and Bobbie Braboy.

Guests: Scott Lessard, Paul Whitescarver, and Matt Grahn.

2. Chairwoman Becca Alberts asked the members to review the minutes from the May 25, 2023 Meeting. Ms. Alberts asked for a motion to approve the minutes.

MOTION #1: Chris Jewell made a motion to approve the minutes. Mayor Nystrom seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

3. **President's Report:** Kevin Brown announced that NCDC had received an Excellence Award from the Connecticut Main Street Center ("CMSC") on Tuesday evening. CMSC produced a great video about Norwich which is available on YouTube. seCTer will post it to their website. Additionally, he mentioned the Juneteenth Festival the previous weekend and the community engagement that resulted.

Mr. Brown said he was notified yesterday that NPU had hired a new marketing manager and that NPU would like to have the new marketing manager work with NCDC in a joint effort.

Mr. Brown reported that the NRP is now in the follow-up stage with all the grantees. The NRP Business Board may be in August. He gave updates on some of the properties currently being renovated under NRP.

Mr. Jewell asked how fast NRP could use up the remaining funds. Mr. Brown noted that NCDC could direct the funds quickly if necessary and could also get aggressive with other properties in Norwich.

Mr. Jones asked Mr. Brown for an update on the CIF grants. Mr. Brown noted that NCDC is evolving its strategy in the grant process.

Mr. Brown also said that the next CIF grant application deadline is June 30. The focus for this grant application will be the Norwich waterfront. He is hoping to hear within the next two weeks about a brownfield grant for the Capehart Mill site.

Mr. Brown gave an update on the BPN Project. He said that he met face to face recently with some of the neighbors around the BPN site. The meeting was pretty effective and said he was honest with them on the plans for the BPN site and that NCDC is not going to file a new master plan. A follow-up meeting is scheduled for July 19. Mr. Brown also noted that Mr. Block and Mr. Resnikoff are currently working on the condominium declaration documents for the City. He also noted that tomorrow, June 23 was the deadline for commercial real estate firms to submit an RFP to market BPN.

Mr. Jones asked about funding from the State. Mr. Brown discussed the funding for BPN through the State Urban Act Grant and the CIF Grant. Mr. Brown said that he should hear about NCDC's RAISE Grant application very soon.

Mr. Brown reported on the opening of the first cannabis retail store in Norwich by Zen Leaf on West Main Street. Zen Leaf's soft opening will be around July 11-13. The anticipated sales tax to be collected from Zen Leaf's cannabis sales were not included in the recent City budget. The City will wait until the next fiscal year to include the money collected from the municipal sales tax. He also noted that the State's Social Equity Council's next meeting is scheduled for July 6.

Mr. Brown discussed the CIF Grant Round 3 and the resolution passed by the City to authorize the round 3 CIF Grant to develop and revitalize the Norwich waterfront, which will include Brown Park, the Heritage Trail and Inner Harbor. The Board discussed other options for upcoming CIF Grants.

Mr. Brown gave an update on the agreement currently in the works with MPTN on the Mercantile Building. He said that the final details are being worked out. Mr. Brown also noted that the parking garage at 51 Water Street across from the Mercantile Building is actually owned by NCDC. He also reported that MPTN is currently working with architects to produce a design and build out for the 5th Floor of the building.

Mr. Brown provided a brief update on the Reid & Hughes building, saying that work is ongoing and the selected construction firm is working on asbestos removal. The developer renovating the 77-91 properties anticipates the apartments being ready to open sometime in September.

4. **Foundry 66 Report:** Mary Riley gave an update on Foundry 66. She reported 3 new tenants on the second floor and 2 potential new members in the pipeline for the new glass enclosed offices. Ms. Riley reported that Foundry 66 and seCTer hosted a joint event on funding for small businesses in Connecticut. They had about 50 attendees and received a lot of positive feedback. A second, smaller event is being planned for July with more Q&A.

Ms. Riley announced that she was currently assisting the developer of the 77-91 Apartments on marketing plans and packages for the studios and one-bedroom apartments.

5. **Global City Norwich Report:** Bobbie Braboy gave an update on the Global City Norwich plans. GCN hosted a Drag Show at the Norwich Arts Center in honor of Pride Month and participated in the Juneteenth Festival. Ms. Braboy gave a brief financial update on the GCN budget to date noting expenses for the Chamber Duck Race earlier in the month and several flag raisings.

The Board asked Ms. Braboy and Mr. Brown about the processes in place when a groups approach GCN for support to do a festival or other type of event. A brief discussion followed. Mr. Brown noted that the Chelsea Groton Foundation only awarded \$7,500 to Global City Norwich this year.

6. **Treasurer's Report:** Chris Jewell gave the Treasurer's Report. He reported that the way things stand at the moment, NCDC could have a small surplus by the end of the year. He also noted that NCDC's expenses are \$26,000 above last year at this time.

Ms. Alberts asked about NCDC's investment fund. Mr. Brown reported that we have not done anything about that yet and the Board briefly discussed next steps.

Mr. Jewell gave a brief overview of the Draft Budget for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 which currently projects a shortfall by next June of about \$24,000. Restricted revenues were not included in the draft budget.

Mr. Jewell asked for a motion to approve the Draft Budget for Fiscal Year 2023-2024.

MOTION #2: Jason Jones made the motion to approve the Draft Budget for Fiscal Year 2023-2024. Mayor Nystrom seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Jewell thanked Devin Schleidt for doing such a great job updating the organization's Accounting Procedures and Financial Document. He noted that it is all set and in place for the upcoming audit. NCDC will send out the RFP for an Audit Firm sometime early next month.

The Executive Committee will review the RFP before it is sent out. The audit expense was added to the budget for the next fiscal year. Mr. Brown noted it will not be a full audit but only a partial audit on the State and Federal grant money received by NCDC. Mr. Jewell noted that having a completed audit is good for grant applications.

7. Ms. Alberts asked for a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report.

MOTION #3: Mayor Nystrom made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. Jason Jones seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

8. The Board turned the discussion to the Nominating Committee. Ms. Alberts said she was the only member of the Nominating Committee besides former Board member, Frank Manfredi. She asked if anyone on the Board would be interested in serving on the Nominating Committee. Mr. Jewell suggested that the Executive Committee also serve as the Nominating Committee but if anyone wants to be on the Nominating Committee, then it will become a separate committee. Ms. Alberts reported that currently, no one is rotating off the Board at the end of the year. Mayor Nystrom suggested that the Board Alternates should be given the option of becoming a regular Board member before the Board looks to other candidates outside of NCDC. The Board members and President concurred.

9. Ms. Alberts asked for a motion to enter into Executive Session.

MOTION #4: JP Mereen made a motion to enter into Executive Session. Jason Jones seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously at 9:10 am.

10. Ms. Alberts asked for a motion to exit Executive Session.

MOTION #5: Mayor Nystrom made a motion to exit Executive Session. Jason Jones seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously at 9:40 am. No votes were taken.

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

MOTION #6: JP Mereen made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Chris Jewell seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously at 9:41 am.

Respectfully submitted:

Lee Ann D'Ambrosio
Executive Assistant