



NCDC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Meeting Minutes Regular and Annual Meeting

February 1, 2024

Held at the Hotel Callista
352 Main Street
Norwich, Connecticut

MINUTES

1. **Call to Order:** Chairwoman Rebecca Alberts called the meeting to order at 8:15 am and a quorum was established.

Present: Rebecca Alberts, Bob Staley, Chris Jewell, JP Mereen, Shiela Hayes, Chris LaRose, John Mancini, John Salomone, Mayor Nystrom, Angy Gardner and Swarnjit Singh.

Absent: Rev. Benjamin Green, John Harris, Bryan Hayes and Lynn Perry. **Other Attendees:** Kevin Brown, Mary Riley, Devin Schleidt, Lee Ann D'Ambrosio, Bobbie Braboy, Lucas Kaiser and Mark Block. **Guests:** Scott Lessard, Claire Bessette, staff from Congressman Courtney's Office and the Office of Senator Chris Murphy and many friends and supporters.

2. Chairwoman Becka Alberts thanked the Hotel Callista for hosting the NCDC Board and Annual Meeting. She then asked the members to review the minutes from the November 30, 2023 meeting. Ms. Alberts asked for a motion to approve the minutes.

MOTION #1: John Salomone made a motion to approve the minutes. John Mancini seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

3. NCDC President Kevin Brown asked for a motion to ratify the slate of officers previously approved by the Executive Committee.

MOTION #2: JP Mereen made a motion to ratify the slate of officers to the NCDC Board of Directors. John Salomone seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

4. Mr. Brown asked for a motion to approve NCDC Board Alternate, Lynn Perry as a permanent voting member of the NCDC Board of Directors.

MOTION #3: Swarnjit Singh made a motion to approve Lynn Perry as a permanent voting member of the NCDC Board of Directors. Christ Jewell seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

5. Mayor Nystrom welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked everyone for their continued support of the City and by extension NCDC.

6. City Manager John Salomone thanked everyone for coming and for their continued support. Mr. Salomone also gave a brief update on the City successes in 2023.

7. **President's Report:** Before he began his annual report, Mr. Brown unveiled a new Norwich promotional video produced by Barnberry Productions.

Mr. Brown gave a brief review of NCDC as an organization and its mission. He thanked the members of the Board of Directors for their time and commitment. Mr. Brown publicly thanked NCDC's former bookkeeper, Patricia McManus for her 15 years of service to NCDC. Mrs. McManus resigned as bookkeeper at the end of December 2023. Additionally, he thanked Whisk Together Catering for providing the breakfast buffet. He acknowledged the support that NCDC receives from the City and Norwich Public Utilities

Mr. Brown gave a brief summary of NCDC's BREAD program – Business, Retention, Expansion, Attraction and Development. Mr. Brown discussed the origin of his Priorities List with the list he first introduced in 2021. He noted that he has continued his Priorities List and reviewed the changes that have taken place in the last two years. Mr. Brown reported that the past two years have been very active. He stated that post pandemic, Norwich placed number one in the State with the highest record of growth – 40%, more than any other town or city in the State. And on the State's list of the 20 most impacted towns affected by the pandemic, Norwich placed number two.

Mr. Brown introduced his 2023 Priorities List – American Rescue Plan, Business Park North and Cannabis. He briefly discussed the State's Community Investment Fund Grant program - \$875 million over 5 years. He reviewed the CIF grants submitted by NCDC on behalf of the City, with the most recent one focusing on the Waterfront and Marina. He noted that the Capehart Mill and Shipping Street will be the focus of future CIF grant applications.

Mr. Brown reviewed the Norwich Revitalization Program, which began almost two years ago. He then discussed the development of Business Park North, now called Occum Industrial Center. He noted that once the business park has been developed in 3-5 years, it could generate \$2.5 million in tax revenue for the City. Lastly, he thanked the Mayor and the City for their early support for the cannabis industry back in November 2021 and provided an update on the cannabis industry in Norwich since that time.

8. **Foundry 66 Report:** Mr. Brown gave an update on Foundry 66. He reported that Foundry 66 had the highest membership rate in four years. He reported on the continued outreach on small business engagement including the partnership with seCTer.

9. **Global City Norwich Report:** Mr. Brown reviewed the achievements of the Global City Norwich program in the past year. He discussed the CT Main Street Accelerator Program Project that GCN was participating in with the goal of changing the public's perception of Norwich.

Additionally, he briefed the attendees on the investments currently taking place in downtown Norwich – the Water Street Lofts at 77-91 Main Street, the Reid & Hughes Building, Jubilee Park, the Fairhaven Building and the renovations at the old YMCA building. Outside of downtown Norwich he discussed assisting the Thermos on the Thames Condominium Association, Ponemah Mill and the small business micro grants in conjunction with DECD and seCTer to those businesses recently affected by the flooding of the Yantic River.

10. Concluding his annual report, Mr. Brown presented the 2023 BREAD Awards:

The First **BREAD Award was given to Mini Melts** – Retention, Commitment, Loyalty and Dedication – for making the decision to stay in Norwich and expand their business in the community.

The Second **BREAD Award was given to So Delicious Food Truck** – Retention, Commitment, Loyalty and Dedication – for starting their business in Norwich and their commitment to the Norwich community.

The Third **BREAD Award was given to Assured Quality HomeCare** – Expansion, Growth, Courage and Impact – they began their business in Foundry 66 and eventually grew out of their space and moved into a larger space further down Franklin Street, staying in Norwich and continuing their commitment to the community.

The Fourth **BREAD Award was presented to Barks and Recreation** – Expansion, Growth, Courage and Impact – for establishing and growing their business in Norwich as well as their commitment to the community.

The Fifth **BREAD Award was given to Craftsman Cliff Roasters** – Expansion, Growth, Courage and Impact – the business was established in Norwich and has continued to grow moving to a larger location on Main Street in Norwich; they believe in commitment to the community and have a passion for Norwich.

The Sixth **BREAD Award was presented to the Norwich Camera Company** – Attraction, Faith, Forward Looking and Opportunity – the business was established in Norwich and has continued to grow. The business is committed to staying and serving the community of Norwich.

The Seventh **BREAD Award** was given to the **Three Sisters Beauty Bar & Boutique** – Attraction, Faith, Forward Looking and Opportunity – the three sisters for whom the business is named were all born and raised in Norwich. They opened their business in Norwich and are committed to the community.

The Eighth **BREAD Award** was presented to **Juices on Broadway** – Attraction, Faith, Forward Looking and Opportunity – the business started in Norwich and has continued to grow and expand; they are committed to the Norwich community.

The Ninth **BREAD Award** was presented to **Mattern Construction Company** – Development, Vision, Inclusivity and Community – the company was established in Bozrah and they have continued to grow and succeed; the company was so energized by the progress in Norwich that they made the decision to relocate their headquarters to Norwich. The company is currently renovating the old YMCA Building for their offices and first floor retail.

The Tenth **BREAD Award** was given to **The Hotel Callista** – Development, Vision, Inclusivity and Community – the owners purchased the old historic Slater House and later Elks Club and Theater on Main Street and renovated the building into the Hotel Callista; they are committed to the Norwich community.

The Eleventh **BREAD Award** was presented to **The Marina at American Wharf** – Development, Vision, Inclusivity and Community – the Marina property was purchased by Patrick and Brittney Dwyer because they believed in the Norwich community and are committed to renovating and developing the Norwich Marina into a destination for the community.

11. Mr. Brown concluded the NCDC Annual meeting by thanking everyone for coming and supporting NCDC.

The meeting adjourned at 9:42 am.

Respectfully submitted:

Lee Ann D'Ambrosio
Executive Assistant