



NCDC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Meeting Minutes April 25, 2024

Via Zoom and at Foundry 66

MINUTES

1. **Call to Order:** Chairwoman Rebecca Alberts called the meeting to order at 8:07 am and established a quorum.

Present: Rebecca Alberts, Chris Jewell, John Harris, Chris LaRose, Bob Staley, John Salomone, JP Mereen, Rev. Benjamin Green, Swarnjit Singh, Mayor Nystrom, John Mancini, Shiela Hayes and Angy Gardner. Bryan Hayes joined the meeting at 8:27 am. **Absent:** Chris Jewell and Lynn Perry **Other Attendees:** Kevin Brown, Mary Riley, Devin Schleidt, Lee Ann D'Ambrosio, Bobbie Braboy and Lucas Kaiser. **Guests:** Mark Block

2. Chairwoman Becka Alberts asked the members to review the minutes from the March 28, 2024 meeting.

MOTION #1: Shiela Hayes pointed out a spelling error on page 4 of the March 28, 2024 minutes. Mayor Nystrom made a motion to approve the minutes with the spelling correction as noted. John Mancini seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously. Shiela Hayes abstained from voting in order to meet the required quorum and pass the motion.

3. **President's Report:** Kevin Brown gave a quick overview of his priorities list for April and May. He also noted that there were no updates for the ARP/NRP. Mr. Brown reported that the ribbon cutting ceremony at the Waterfront yesterday took place following the ribbon cutting ceremony for the Reid & Hughes Building.

Mr. Brown discussed a recent visit by a reporter for the CT Mirror Newspaper. He, Mary Riley and Scott Lessard escorted the reporter around downtown Norwich last week.

Mr. Brown stated that the OSTA Level 2 at the Occum Industrial Center was completed and turned in. He is now waiting for the results of the RAISE grant. Mayor Nystrom stated that he spoke with Governor Lamont at an event at NFA recently and asked him to reach out to the CT delegation in Washington for support with the RAISE grant and the Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg. He also asked the NCDC Board members to do the same.

Mr. Brown noted that the OIC property's subdivision plan documents were submitted to the City; NCDC was granted a first extension, which expires in July to file a final subdivision document and get it recorded in the land records. NCDC has the option for a second extension of 90 days. He also reported that the market is currently active which may result in changes to the original subdivision plan while preserving the option on the subdivision/condominiums without having to go through another approval process with a new subdivision plan.

The arterial roadway grant is imminent; currently Mr. Brown is working on a narrative for the title filing and that may be completed next week. NCDC is currently closing in on using up the UAG bridge grant. He asked the Board to approve Resolution 26:24 which Chairwoman Becka Alberts read into the record:

RESOLUTION 26:24: Be it resolved that the Norwich Community Development Corporation ("NCDC") authorizes the President, Kevin Brown, as its representative, and on its behalf, to comply with all rules, conditions and obligations as required by the State of Connecticut's Department of Economic and Community Development ("DECD"), for the financial assistance provided NCDC through the State's CIF Grant, for the purpose of providing an arterial roadway, pedestrian/bike lane, bus stop and stormwater management, as well as utility installation and upgrades to facilitate construction of sites for warehouse, manufacturing, distribution, office space, and research and development uses at the Occum Industrial Center. Pursuant to the Financial Assistance Proposal, the amount award is in the amount of \$11,391,193. The President is further authorized to execute and accept the Financial Assistance Agreement, Declaration of Restrictive Covenants, Negative Pledge, and such other documents as may be required under the terms of the Financial Assistance Agreement. The Secretary is further authorized to execute a resolution in such other form as may be required by DECD, the terms of which are consistent with this resolution.

4. Chairwoman Becka Alberts asked for a motion to approve **Resolution 26:24** for the Occum Industrial Center CIF Grant.

MOTION #2: Mayor Nystrom made a motion to approve Resolution 26:24 as read into the record by Chairwoman Becka Alberts. John Mancini seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously. Shiela Hayes abstained from voting in order to meet the required quorum and pass the motion.

Mr. Brown reported that he participated in an economic development event yesterday with DEDA. He also noted that AdvanceCT has done a great job with their website and promoting the Occum Industrial Center site.

Mr. Brown gave a brief update on the cannabis industry in Norwich. He reported that the only news to share was that the State's Social Equity Council is reviewing the DEI Map – the designated census tracks where cannabis growing facilities were approved. If the changes are approved by the legislature in the next couple of weeks, it would open up the OIC and Occum to further cannabis development. Currently, Norwich still has only the one cannabis retailer.

Mr. Brown gave an update on the Norwich Marina. NCDC and the City requested \$11.7 Million in the last CIF grant round but were only awarded \$2 Million. He has had discussions with the Marina owners as well as Melinda Wilson of the CT CIF Committee. He noted that the amount of the grant will at least cover the replacement of the fuel tanks. Everything else is up in the air. Mr. Brown mentioned that the Marina owners are working hard to make the restaurant at the Marina available for year-round use. He and Mary Riley recently met with two potential restaurant operators.

Additionally, Mr. Brown stated that the utility bills at the Marina are horrendous and that Devin Schleidt is working with NPU to schedule a utility evaluation. Mr. LaRose reported that there was a \$40,000 grant in place to upgrade the submetering at the boat slips at the Marina. NPU found that a large majority of the utility culprits are customers – boat owners using an absorbent amount of power. The current meters have not been updated in a long time. Devin Schleidt noted that he had reached out to an experienced electrical engineer to look at the Marina next week. He also noted that the electrical infrastructure at the Marina seems solid.

Mr. Brown gave a brief update on the Capehart Mill. He said that he is waiting to hear on any brownfield grants. The State's Brownfield Department came out to Norwich recently to evaluate the site. He reported that the City recently submitted a \$4 Million brownfield grant to the State; if awarded he and the City will resubmit the Capehart Mill CIF grant application to complete the demolition and revitalize the site.

Mr. Brown shared that the Water Street Lofts developer is struggling with trash issues. They have pre-leased apartments to 6 applicants. Following, Mr. Brown reported that the Ponemah Mill Phase II is currently undergoing remediation and windows are being replaced. Moreover, he reported that the new owners of 51-53 Broadway are working to open the space up for retail businesses soon. And Mr. Brown noted that Glass Enterprises purchased all the equipment from Navarra (Solar Seal) and the plant is up and running. The owners of Glass Enterprises have spoken to the Norwich Events Organization about contributing to the cost of the 4th of July fireworks show. Lastly, Mr. Brown briefly reported on the Thermos on the Thames Condominium Association site and the need for the Board's approval of Resolution 27:24 which Chairwoman Becka Alberts read into the record:

RESOLUTION 27:24: Whereas, the Board of Directors of the Norwich Community Development Corporation (the "Corporation") desires to provide assistance to the Thermos on the Thames Unit Owners Association for the abatement, cleanup and demolition of the Glass Factory Buildings at the Thermos on the Thames Condominiums to facilitate future solar installation (the "Project"); and

Whereas, in order to assist in the Project, the Corporation has applied for a grant from the Department of Economic and Community Development ("DECD") to provide funding for the abatement, cleanup and demolition of hazardous materials located at the Project site; and

Whereas, DECD has approved the Financial Assistance proposal submitted by NCDC in the amount of \$2,091,650 (the “Grant”) on a pass-through basis to the Thermos on the Thames Unit Owners Association (the “Sub Recipient”); and

Whereas, as the applicant, NCDC will be the recipient of the Grant and the Thermos on the Thames Unit Owners Association will be the subrecipient, and

Whereas, NCDC and the Sub Recipient will execute an Assistance Agreement with DECD, under which Sub Recipient will agree to indemnify and hold NCDC harmless from all liabilities under the Assistance Agreement, recognizing the Sub Recipient will be the party to perform all of the responsibilities under the Assistance Agreement.

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved, that the Board of Directors of the Corporation finds it advisable and in the best interest of the Corporation for the Corporation to assist in obtaining the Grant from DECD in order to clean up the environmental condition at the Project and to act as a recipient of the Grant subject to the indemnification obligation of the Developer; and be it further

Resolved, that the President of the Corporation or Chairman of the Board of Directors be, and he hereby is, authorized and directed, for and on behalf of the Corporation, to take or cause to be taken all such further action and to execute and deliver or cause to be executed and delivered, and if appropriate, file or record, or cause to be filed and recorded, any and all documents, as such officer deems necessary, desirable or appropriate to carry out and consummate the foregoing documents and transactions, and any and all agreements and transactions contemplated by such documents, and otherwise to carry out and consummate the intent and purposes of the foregoing resolutions and each of them; and be it further

Resolved, that any actions described in the foregoing resolutions that may have been taken by an officer of the Corporation prior to the approval of these resolutions are hereby ratified, adopted and approved in all respects.

5. President Kevin Brown asked for a motion to approve **Resolution 27:24** for the Thermos on the Thames Unit Owners Association Assistance Agreement.

MOTION #3: Mayor Nystrom made a motion to approve Resolution 27:24 as read into the record by Chairwoman Becka Alberts. John Mancini seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously. Shiela Hayes abstained from voting in order to meet the required quorum and pass the motion.

Mr. Brown continued with his reporting. He informed the Board that the Stratford Shakespeare Theatre Company was kicked out of Stratford, CT and are looking around the State for a new location. He met with several of the company’s members in Norwich.

They were excited about Norwich and looked at several towns. Right now, Norwich is their favorite location. The Shakespeare Theatre's concept is a replica of the Shakespeare's original Globe Theatre in London. Shiela Hayes noted that the Norwich Chamber is currently working with the group to hold some type of event in Brown Park. Mr. Brown reported that the Blue Wave Energy Group has submitted an RFP to store on land all the power generated by offshore wind turbines in Norwich. The City currently has an MOU with the company. This would be a battery storage site. The State has encouraged the company to look at southeastern Connecticut. Additionally, Blue Wave is very interested in supporting Global City Norwich, Jubilee Park, St. Vincent De Paul, etc.

6. **Foundry 66 Report:** Mary Riley gave an update on Foundry 66. She reported that there are currently 73 members which is a 4% increase. More glass offices are being built in the atrium area of the second floor of Foundry 66. Ms. Riley also reported that she is currently working on new signage for the front windows and updating the parking signs for the two parking lots. She also noted that the Flex Seating Membership is slowing increasing. It is the lowest membership level. Additionally, Ms. Riley noted that the Norwich Bulletin staff has moved out of the old Norwich train station and back into their original location – Foundry 66.

7. **Global City Norwich Report:** Bobbie Braboy gave an update on current activities in the Global City Norwich Program. She reported that GCN recently had a flag raising for Togo. Ms. Braboy said that the DEI Committee is looking to meet soon. Ms. Braboy also discussed working with Mary Riley on revising the Working Lab Program. Additionally, Ms. Braboy stated that she is currently working on a new grant application to the Chelsea Groton Bank Foundation. She also updated the Board on the Greeneville Neighborhood Committee rug tufting event, the upcoming Haitian Flag Raising and Heritage Day celebration, the CT Main Street Accelerator Program Plan and the Chelsea Downtown Mobility Program. Lastly, she reported that there will be an upcoming community meeting on the Chelsea Walkability Mobility Study on June 14-15.

Mr. Brown briefly discussed the arts and culture grant from the Southeastern Cultural Coalition to the Greeneville Neighborhood Committee with the Board.

8. **Treasurer's Report:** Mr. Mancini reviewed NCDC's most recent budget report and P&L. He stated that NCDC's finances currently remain the same static month over month. NCDC is on track financially year to date. Mr. Mancini noted that NCDC is currently expecting a \$40,000 from LEAD and another \$40,000 from the Reid & Hughes Project. Mr. Mancini stated that NCDC is working to complete the financials for March and April and the new bookkeeper is getting up to speed on all of NCDC's requirements. Lastly, Mr. Mancini reported that NCDC will be meeting soon with Goldblatt and Bokoff to complete the 2023 990 and get it filed.

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

MOTION #4: John Mancini made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report. Angy Gardner seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously. Shiela Hayes abstained from voting in order to meet the required quorum and pass the motion.

The Board briefly discussed the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee. Additional members are needed for the committee. Ms. Alberts asked if any of the members of the Board would be interested in serving on the DEI Committee. Mayor Nystrom and Shiela Hayes volunteered to be on the DEI Committee. Swarnjit Singh said that he was willing to continue serving on the DEI Committee. Mr. Brown suggested that at the next DEI Committee meeting, the members should discuss the tabled motion about the role and makeup of the DEI Committee. Currently, the DEI Committee members are Mayor Nystrom, Shiela Hayes, Swarnjit Singh, Rev. Benjamin Green and Angy Gardner.

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

MOTION #5: Mayor Nystrom made a motion to enter into Executive Session. John Mancini seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously at 9:21 am. Shiela Hayes abstained from voting in order to meet the required quorum and pass the motion.

10. Ms. Alberts asked for a motion to exit Executive Session and adjourn the meeting.

MOTION #6: Mayor Nystrom a motion to exit Executive Session and adjourn the meeting. John Mancini seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously at 9:40 am. Shiela Hayes abstained from voting in order to meet the required quorum and pass the motion. No votes were taken.

Respectfully submitted,

Lee Ann D'Ambrosio