



NCDC Board of Directors Meeting

Meeting Date: October 23, 2025, 08:00 am

In Attendance: Chris Jewell, Bob Staley, Peter Nystrom, John Salomone, Swarnjit Singh, Jeff Brining, Lynn Perry, Angelina Gardiner, Brian Hayes, DeVol Joyner

Absent: John Mancini, Sheila Hayes, Rev. Benjamin Green, Cathy Special, John Harris

Others in Attendance: Kevin Brown, Ted Phillips, Mary Riley, Lucas Kaiser, Bobbie Braboy, Scott Lessard

Bylaw and Governance Updates

- The board agreed to launch a **bylaw review** to address underperforming subcommittees and update governance rules last revised in **2019**.
- The review will focus on retaining necessary subcommittees, including the executive, finance, nominating, global city, bylaws, and personnel committees.
- A small bylaw committee will be formed including **Bob Staley**, Kevin, and at least one non-executive board member, aiming to complete the work over **two to three meetings**.
- The **nominating committee** also needs members to oversee board participation and recruitment, with a goal of adding **one to two new members per year** and ensuring proper vetting and confidentiality.
- The board must resolve the ambiguous **term status of Chris**, who filled a prior directors term, by November to decide on his continuation as chairman, with a bylaw rewrite planned to clarify such cases.
- Attendance enforcement will be emphasized, reminding members that missing **three consecutive meetings or four total in a calendar year** could lead to removal, encouraging proactive communication about availability.
- The board is considering shifting to **bimonthly meetings** to reduce staff burden, supported by a pre-submitted calendar and allowed electronic voting processes for urgent matters.

ARP Projects and Economic Development

- The team is nearing the **90% ARP fund spend target** with **86.5% spent** and another **3.5% pending payment by Halloween**, leaving approximately **\$442,500** to be disbursed.
- Key projects include One Wisconsin, which will house **two tenants occupying 40,000 sq ft** by year-end, creating around **30 jobs**, although the utility infrastructure is overbuilt anticipating higher demand that didn't materialize.
- The **Sunlight building vertical platform** and **Clark and Company (MDNL LLC)** projects are close to completion, with payments pending legal review.
- The **Hotel Callista project** is expected to pay out in the next few weeks, marking progress on long-running efforts.

- The **Eyes on Main project** faces permitting delays with unresolved technical issues and a looming **November 1 contractor start deadline**; with rumors the building owner may sell, the board is leaning toward de-obligating funds if progress stalls to reallocate resources before the **end of 2026 ARP deadline**.
- Smaller grants remain active, including for a barbershop (\$18,000 remaining), Whisk Together Catering (design completion expected by next week for a \$75,000 grant), and Ice & Fire, with ongoing landlord-tenant communication challenges delaying progress.
- Scott and Kevin highlighted the importance of steady project handholding to ensure final payouts and successful closures.

Business Park and Infrastructure Development

- The **subdivision approval in August** was delayed by a legal appeal, pushing the **Project Wildcat site plan submission from December to early January**, causing a **60-day schedule slip**.
- Negotiations with plaintiffs are ongoing to find a compromise and end the appeal, with hearings scheduled for **November 4 and 8** for wetlands and city plan commissions.
- The city remains actively courting a **German manufacturing company** for a 2026 build on Lot 12, representing a significant potential tenant at the Occam Industrial Center.
- The long-standing **DOT OSTA roundabout issue** was resolved thanks to advocacy from **Matt Pugliese**, allowing the use of **\$11.4 million state funds** for construction without costly land purchases, resetting the construction RFP timeline to **February**.
- Industrial tenants remain committed despite delays, showing confidence in the projects eventual success.

Waterfront and Marina Projects

- The **Marina** has completed Phase 1 and 2 environmental assessments, with a **\$50,000 budget** to begin base proceeding environmental work immediately.
- The **Marina Towers site (74-78 Main)** requires a Phase 1 environmental study, scheduled for completion through GZA under an existing city contract, with a \$5,000 budget allocated.
- Phase 2 assessments will depend on Phase 1 findings, recognizing triggers such as prior oil company activity.
- Fuel pump testing is underway but delayed, with final delivery expected soon to enable operational readiness.
- Demolition of a stranded boat at the marina is imminent, clearing the site for ongoing development.
- The **Howard T. Brown Park design** is progressing with SLR completing refined plans, including a splash pad and potential boat ramp relocation, pending regulatory approvals expected by **late 2027** for new ramp construction.
- Additional engineering funds are being sought to complete design work without impacting the overall project budget.

Downtown and Community Engagement Initiatives

- **Foundry on Ferry** secured its first tenant, a prominent local law firm, beating out New London, showcasing competitive attraction to Norwich's amenities and community support.

- Mail systems installation and key access upgrades are underway, aiming for **65% completion** with continued tenant interest from recent events and ribbon cuttings.
- The organization hosted multiple events including HR workshops, pitch competitions awarding **\$7,500**, and ongoing collaborations with seCTer and Connecticut Main Street Center to support small business growth.
- seCTer is considering providing stipends to graduates of the Working Lab program, highlighting successful partnerships fostering local talent.
- Upcoming events include a business after-hours gathering with the Chamber on **October 30** and a holiday party planned for **December 18**.
- The Global City committee is expanding cultural engagement with flag-raising ceremonies, including a new Filipino event scheduled for **next Thursday at 2 PM** at City Hall, and finalizing projects like Project Peace funding and Working Lab for **2026**.
- Lucas reported ongoing downtown improvements with a mural completion before Halloween, repaired and painted picnic tables, bus shelter planning in progress with potential student involvement, and advancing citywide music licensing discussions with ASCAP.

Financial and Strategic Funding Outlook

- The fiscal year is on track after two months, with no surprises reported and financials to be updated next month.
- The city received **\$2.5 million** in CIF funds for an **\$11 million project** involving public-private partnerships totaling **\$3.5 million** in matching funds, aiming to revitalize Fair Haven and Jubilee Park areas.
- Discussions with Deputy Commissioner are planned to clarify funding allocations, noting the tight budget won't cover all planned projects fully.
- Private investments from property owners and potential additional grants may help close funding gaps.
- The newly formed **Municipal Development Authority (MDA)** includes Norwich in a coalition accessing **\$90 million** for downtown transit-oriented development, signaling new financing opportunities beyond CIF.
- CIF Round 8 priorities include gap funding for Occum Way infrastructure, addressing shortfalls in the Broadway project, and potentially funding the Flatiron building rehabilitation with a modest grant under **\$1 million**.
- The Integrated Day Charter School faces a funding gap exceeding **\$500,000 to \$1 million** for remediation and structural repairs, requiring city approval before pursuing CIF grants.
- The glass factory demolition contract has been approved and sent for state approval, with solar field development progressing on site.

Risk Management and Site Security

- The state hospital property continues to face security and insurance challenges following a nearby fire, prompting efforts to install **approximately 800 feet of partial fencing** and signage to limit liability.
- Insurance quotes currently stand at around **\$20,000**, with ongoing searches for more cost-effective options that do not require fencing the entire 50-acre site.

- The team is exploring persistent surveillance measures like strategically placed cameras to monitor the perimeter and detect unauthorized activity, aiming to minimize risk and insurance exposure.
- Concrete barriers are being installed to block unauthorized vehicular access, balancing cost and effectiveness given the site's large perimeter and limited budget.
- These measures are critical to reduce the likelihood of repeated fires and vandalism as the site remains vulnerable during colder months.