NCDC Bi-Monthly Board of Directors Meeting

Meeting Date: September 24, 2026, 08:00 am

General Summary

- **Brownfield Grant Ratified:** Board approved $3.1M grant for new contamination cleanup, adding to prior $4.5M loan and $5.12M total remediation budget.
- **Occum Project Funding:** No CIF round 9 funds; round 10 application due December, with December "golden shovel" and March soccer game milestones.
- **Dodd Stadium CIF Win:** $8.1M awarded for critical repairs, pending bond commission approval, shifting focus from synthetic turf to infrastructure.
- **Project Foundation Audit:** Near completion, delayed by $23K reconciling issues; lease extension and fallback plans under discussion to avoid disruption.
- **Thermos Green Energy:** Heizomat biomass boiler (currently under LOI for Lot 12 at OIC) possibly a replacement for solar, with local contractors engaged and state support for sustainable wood chip supply.
- **Financial Health:** $6,500 income surplus and $18,000 expense underrun reported; board accepted treasurer's report with confidence in fiscal management.

Notes

Brownfield Grant and Environmental Remediation

- The board ratified a resolution to support the $3.1 million Brownfield grant application for Ponemah Mills, which addresses newly discovered environmental issues rather than past mistakes.
- **Ratification of Brownfield grant resolution for Ponemah Mills** was approved, linking it to a prior **$4.5 million loan awarded** and a total remediation budget of **$5.12 million**
    - The grant targets remediation of newly found contamination hotspots missed by the initial Licensed Environmental Professional assessment
    - The DECD emphasized the grant is not a bailout but funding for unforeseen cleanup needs
    - Discussions with Senator Osten confirmed partial on-site retention of contaminated materials, with some removal required

    - Executive Committee acted on behalf of the full board to pass resolution authorizing grant application due to bimonthly meeting schedules, and full board ratified the action

- **Clarity on remediation scope and grant rationale** was provided by the chair to prevent misconceptions about financial support being a bailout
    - The remediation addresses "dirty dirt" movement and additional hotspots discovered during site investigations
    - Ongoing biweekly meetings with Cathy Osten insured continuous oversight and alignment with stakeholders heading into these grant decisions
    - Emphasis on transparency to maintain community trust and regulatory compliance

Occum Industrial Center and Amazon Deal Progress

- Significant progress and challenges remain on the Occum Industrial Center project tied to the Amazon deal, with road approvals, funding uncertainties, and construction timelines outlined.
- **No CIF round nine funding for Occum Industrial Center, but round 10 application planned for December submission** with decisions expected by March
    - Road approvals are mostly complete, with final hydrology, drainage, and right-turn lane queue length issues to resolve within two weeks to meet RFP timing
    - Completion of architectural and engineering diagrams targeted for mid-October to position for construction start pending bond commission approval
- **CIF Round 8 Dodd Stadium Award for $8.1mm**

        Potential use of sole source contracting with DECD is being pursued to accelerate procurement and construction start before the end of the year
    - A "golden shovel" ceremony is planned for December 15 with a soccer team home game deadline of March 15 as a critical milestone
    - Vendors may be asked to work at risk until **$8.1 million CIF funds** are released
    - Andre Swanson and city officials committed to advancing the project with internal funds or vendor cooperation on delayed invoicing
    - Procurement rules limit issuing purchase orders before funding is secured, posing risk to lead times and project schedule
    - Continuous coordination with state agencies and vendors is critical to avoid delays in meeting MLS Next Pro soccer season start
- **Municipal approval processes for related land development are advancing, with cautious optimism on Inland Wetlands hearing scheduled for October 1**
    - Blue Water Property Group is managing Lot 10 Amazon development with active collaboration among engineers, wetlands scientists, and city officials

    - Third-party wetlands review may require last-minute adjustments, but prior public meetings have been positively received
    - Contingency plans and expert resources are in place to address potential environmental objections or conditions

Dodd Stadium and CIF Funding Wins

- Dodd Stadium received a major funding boost with an $8.1 million CIF award, shifting focus from synthetic turf installation to critical infrastructure repairs.
- **Award of $8.1 million CIF funding for Dodd Stadium infrastructure repairs** was confirmed, covering HVAC, roof, suites, and overall stadium improvements
    - The CIF committee prioritized protecting and preserving the municipal asset over synthetic turf for professional sports usage
    - Funding release is contingent on bond commission approval expected in early December, delaying immediate spending capability
    - City officials and Connecticut Sports Group committed to beginning work using internal funds or vendor flexibility to avoid project stall
- **The CIF program has delivered over $60 million in funding to Norwich across multiple rounds, with 12% of total $66 million awarded in round nine**
    - Norwich has been highly successful, receiving roughly four times the average funding compared to other state communities over eight rounds
    - This funding has supported a diverse portfolio of projects, reinforcing Norwich's position among Connecticut's most supported municipalities
    - Recognition was given to Senator Osten and state delegation for their advocacy and support in securing these funds
- **Audit for Project Foundation nearing completion but delayed by minor reconciliations totaling around $23,000** with no major issues reported
    - The board was cautioned about potential consequences if audit is not completed by November 19
    - Lease renegotiation discussions underway with building owner Tim, aiming for a one-year extension to reduce current pressures
    - Executive Committee considering fallback plans to maintain operational continuity without disruption
- **Lower Broadway project involves multiple stakeholders and funding recipients, requiring complex coordination for public-private development**
    - Four funding recipients include Norwich Arts Center, TT Investments, City of Norwich, and Trinicap Properties with grants totaling about $310,000
    - Delays relate to land transfer from Trinicap and finalizing subrecipient agreements with city legal and DECD approvals

    - Owner meetings scheduled to explore capital stack options and move forward with project financing
- **Revolving loan fund for Whisk Together Catering finalized with $150,000 loan and $200,000 landlord build-out commitment**
    - Lease agreement is signed by business board and pending tenant signature, with contractor Jim Fuery engaged for build-out work
    - Federal ARP funds require payment completion by end of grant category, driving accelerated construction activity through March

Thermos Green Energy Initiative

- A $2.2 million deal was reached with a German biomass boiler manufacturer to substitute solar energy in the Thermos grant project, introducing an innovative green energy approach.
- **Handshake deal secured for $2.2 million biomass-fed boiler system from German manufacturer for Lot 12 development, LOI to follow during next trip to US in November**
    - The system produces green energy by processing surplus wood chips, offering a cost-effective alternative to solar arrays
    - DECD approved the concept for grant compliance, enabling reimbursement once implemented
    - The German company plans initial market testing with a 20-25 person workforce, with manufacturing expansion possible in 3-5 years
- **Local contractors engaged to build the facility, with supply chain considerations for consistent wood chip sourcing**
    - Collaboration with DEEP and state forestry agencies may secure sustainable biomass supplies
    - Interest from local firms in the biomass approach indicates community and economic development potential
    - The project aligns with broader state efforts to promote innovative clean energy technologies and reduce oil dependency

Membership, Economic Development, and Community Engagement

- Membership is stable and resource meetings are increasing as retail occupancy improves and community cultural events expand.
- **Membership remains high at Foundry 66, with a recent brief period of full capacity**
    - Mary reported **44 resource meetings** in a recent period, marking a two-month high in business support activities
    - Retail openings include a new grocery store on Broadway and Willow Tree Massage Therapy, which had a rapid tenant turnover

    - Business placement and B2B introductions are increasing, reflecting growing local economic vitality
- **Global City Norwich continues active community cultural engagement with flag raisings and event scheduling**
    - German, Italian, and Philippine flag raisings planned, along with participation in Celebrate Cultural Diversity events
    - Project Piece Year Two impact fund awards finalized and new Anchorage program launched to support organizations
    - Community engagement coordinator Marcus expressed enthusiasm and confidence in team capabilities
- **Downtown signage and beautification efforts underway, with new business signage installations and sign replacements planned**
    - Window cleaning and sign insert updates scheduled for multiple downtown businesses to maintain vibrant streetscape
    - Coordination with property owners ensures timely signage authorization and support for new tenants
    - Seasonal sign pick-ups planned after holiday parade to balance visibility and maintenance needs

Financial Health and Treasurer's Report

- The organization is in solid financial shape heading into the fiscal year's first quarter close, with positive income and expense management.
- **Slight income surplus of approximately $6,500 and expense underrun of about $18,000 through first two months of fiscal year**
    - Project Peace payments are delayed, affecting expected administrative fees and overall budget projections
    - Cash position across accounts is sufficient to meet obligations and maintain operations
    - Treasurer emphasized positive financial management and timing factors contributing to current surplus
- **Board unanimously accepted the treasurer's report with no objections**, signaling confidence in current fiscal stewardship
    - Financial condition statement reflects healthy liquidity and ability to cover upcoming expenses
    - Monitoring of receivables and reimbursements from state and project partners remains ongoing to sustain cash flow