



FITCHBURG REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
renewing • revitalizing • rebuilding

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# MEETING MINUTES

July 19, 2022

Fitchburg Redevelopment Authority Office  
166 Boulder Drive, Suite 104 East, Fitchburg, Massachusetts

*Meeting held in person and via Zoom*

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Charles Caron, Chair  
Jay Roy, Vice Chair  
Laura Bayless, PhD, Treasurer  
Laura O’Kane, Member

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Mary Jo Bohart, Economic Development Director, City of Fitchburg  
(arrived at 7:36 a.m.)  
Meagen Donoghue, Executive Director, FRA  
Tony Amico, Facilities Manager, FRA  
Sarah Stebulis, Business Administrator, FRA

## 1. MEETING CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Caron called meeting to order at 7:34 a.m.

## 2. READING AND APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES FROM JUNE 21, 2022

*Dr. Bayless motioned to accept the regular meeting minutes from June 21, 2022 and enter them into the FRA’s minute’s book. Seconded by Mr. Caron. The motion carried by 4-0 vote.*

## 3. BUDGET AND FINANCE

### (1) Summary Report

Ms. Donoghue stated all bills were on normal course. There is one check for \$100,000 payable to Erb & Southcotte which is the deposit for 200 Boulder Drive delivered with their signed P&S. Erb & Southcotte will hold in escrow. The Board and Staff discussed plans for creating a process to follow for all future property and lease deposits, using escrow accounts at either Enterprise Bank or Rollstone Bank to create consistency.

*Mr. Caron motioned to approve the payment of the attached list of bills. Seconded by Ms O’Kane. Motion carried by 4-0 vote.*

## 4. GENERAL BUSINESS

## **A. 520 Main Street**

### **(1) RFP Update**

Ms. Donoghue stated that Senator Cronin is actively trying to earmark funds which would be great incentives for this project's development. We are holding off on writing the RFP so those incentives can be included in the RFP and attract a greater variety of interest.

## **B. 1 Wood Place**

### **(1) Update**

We are still waiting on the second appraisal to come in for this property. Attorney Christine Tree is working with us to add this to the Urban Renewal Plan and writing a letter to the state of the FRA's interest in amending the plan to add this. Ms. Donoghue and Mr. Amico met with Monty Tech to see if they would like to partner on some of the building repair, which they did express interest in doing. Monty Tech is also writing a letter of support for the addition of this property into our Urban Renewal district.

## **C. 491 Main Street**

### **(1) City RFP**

The RFP is out for this property, and the FRA has expressed interest in this property previously. Ms. Donoghue spoke previously with Sally Cragin, who mentioned that if there were no interested parties in the RFP, perhaps the FRA could do the project. Ms. Bohart added that the city wanted to go to RFP to ensure the property gets into the hands of people who are actually able to redevelop it, and she added that they have had some interest.

## **D. Brainstorm new FRA grant programs**

Mr. Roy suggested we discuss this at our last meeting. Ms. Donoghue agreed it would be great for us to create some new incentives to help growth. She suggested grants that could cover a portion or percentage of the costs of adding elevators or sprinkler systems to bring buildings up to code. Ms. O'Kane mentioned ADA accessibility and Mr. Caron mentioned fire paneling were things that people always needed money for.

Mr. Caron stated that knowing what the code is in our district would help a lot to know what help is most needed. He also suggested perhaps a mix of grants and loans. Some ideas were grants for Central Systems and Health & Safety which would be reimbursable to the contractor, and could be up to two Annual grants for \$50,000 each, totaling \$100,000.

Another idea was a grant to cover Architect or Engineering costs, up to \$2,000. A discussion ensued about the small businesses not being aware of the type of services and they don't know what to expect. To apply for the grant, we would require a business plan and stamped architectural plans to be shared with us.

Mr. Roy asked if there are other successful grants in the city. Ms. Donoghue stated that InTown Fitchburg has a façade program and a signage program. Ms. Bohart added that there is an ADA grant through HUD. Mr. Caron asked if the information on the ADA grant could be added to the FRA website. He also suggested having press releases of success stories with grant awards.

Mr. Roy asked if we could increase the Housing Grant. Ms. Donoghue asked if he would want to increase the number of units or the amount. The Board discussed and agreed to increase the number of units applicable from 5 to 10.

Mr. Caron motioned to increase the FRA Housing Grant to be reimbursable for up to 10 units at \$5,000 per unit. Seconded by Dr. Bayless. The motion carried by 4-0 vote.

Mr. Caron motioned to create a Critical System Grant. Seconded by Ms. O’Kane. The motion carried by 4-0 vote.

Mr. Caron motioned to create a Designer Services Grant. Seconded by Ms. O’Kane. The motion carried by 4-0 vote.

## **E. Facilities Update**

Mr. Amico discussed that getting quotes has been difficult for the gutters, roof and windows near the former City Hall space. Charles mentioned that the hallway and the mezzanine need to be done as well.

Mr. Caron motioned to approve the repair of the windows and gutters in the former City Hall space. Seconded by Ms. O’Kane. The motion carried by 4-0 vote.

Mr. Amico spoke to Rita Moran about the process of getting electric car chargers at Putnam Place. He must get one quote in order to apply for the grant program, which will take 3 months.

Mr. Amico stated that HVAC issues are being addressed and he is focusing on being more proactive now, rather than reactive.

Mr. Amico discussed a recent power outage throughout our entire building. We held a meeting of all of our tenants and Unitil. The outcome is that Unitil will be more communicative and have an email chain on which updates will be done from.

Mr. Caron asked about the switch gears and Mr. Amico explained where he was in the process of writing the RFP.

## **F. Business Administrator’s Update**

Ms. Donoghue stated that Ms. Stebulis has been on vacation for two of the last four weeks and there is nothing significant to discuss.

## **5. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT**

Ms. Donoghue stated that she had nothing further to discuss.

## **6. ADJOURNMENT**

Dr. Bayless motioned to adjourn the Regular Board meeting at 8:30 a.m. Seconded by Ms. O’Kane. The motion carried 4-0.

**NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED:** August 16, 2022

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah U. Stebulis  
Business Administrator