



FITCHBURG REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
renewing • revitalizing • rebuilding

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MEETING MINUTES

June 16, 2020

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

This meeting was conducted over Zoom.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tom Donnelly, Chairman
Jay Roy, Vice President
Charles Caron, Treasurer
Laura Bayless, PhD, Member

OTHERS PRESENT: Tom Skwierawski, Executive Director, City of Fitchburg
Community Development and Planning
Mary Jo Bohart, Director, City of Fitchburg Economic
Development
Meagen Donoghue, Executive Director, FRA
Tony Amico, Facilities Director, FRA
Jennifer Zumwalt, FRA Consultant

ABSENT: Bud Leonhardt, Member

1. **MEETING CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Donnelly called meeting to order 7:35 a.m.

2. **READING AND APPROVAL OF MAY 26, 2020 MEETING MINUTES**

Mr. Caron motioned to accept the Meeting Minutes from May 26, 2020 and enter them into the FRA's minute's book. Seconded by Mr. Donnelly. The motion carried by 3-0 vote, 1 abstention.

3. **BUDGET & FINANCE**

(1) **Bills to Pay**

Ms. Zumwalt informed the Board that all bills for this month are normal course. She asked if the Board would approve paying bills electronically and others in person. Mr. Amico spoke on the repair costs for one of the building's chillers.

Mr. Caron motioned to approve payment of the attached list of bills both electronically and in person. Seconded by Dr. Bayless. Motion carried 4-0.

4. GENERAL BUSINESS

A. Summer Meeting Schedule

(1) Ms. Donoghue reviewed the summer meeting schedule which included meeting in July but not in August. The Board agreed to keep as is.

B. Funding Request

(1) Growing Places

Ms. Donoghue discussed the funding request of \$7,125 from Growing Places to assist with the Fitchburg Farmers' Market. The Board indicated they wanted to assist, but not at the full amount. Mr. Skwierawski noted Growing Places would also be receiving Community Development Block Grant funding. The Board agreed to allocate \$3,500 to Growing Places.

Mr. Donnelly motioned to allocate \$3,500 to Growing Places to be used for the Fitchburg Farmers' Market. Seconded by Mr. Roy. Motion carried 4-0.

C. 2-Way Boulder Drive

(1) Mr. Skwierawski asked the Board for comments or concerns regarding the design of the 2-way Boulder Drive project. He noted designs were anticipated to be complete by August 2020, with construction starting in the spring of 2021. He added that the discussion was based on the 2001 2-way designs which focused on running Boulder Drive along the Nashua River. The Board reviewed the plans online, shared through Zoom. Mr. Roy asked if there were any themes from other meetings. Ms. Bohart said themes included having a bike lane, walkability as well as Main Street businesses were looking for designating loading areas. Mr. Caron asked about the land swap as proposed in the 2001 plans. Mr. Skwierawski indicated that would be part of a phase 2 and the conversation will be on-going.

D. 285 Main Street

(1) Mr. Skwierawski proposed the Board consider purchasing a condominium available at 285 Main Street. He noted there is new

energy in the building with Blossom Spa coming in and RMI as the majority holder, but there has been a lack of engagement by the current owner of the unit. By purchasing the unit, the owner will have a 17.5% of the ownership, which could allow for a shift. Mr. Skwierawski believed it was a good opportunity to “right the ship” and being that the property has been on the market at \$115,000 for awhile, it could potentially be a good opportunity. Condo fees would be \$200 per month. The Board expressed interest, but requested to table to the next meeting.

E. FRA Reopening Grant

- (1) Ms. Donoghue recommended the Board doing another round of grants for Fitchburg businesses affected by the pandemic. The Board asked to incorporate in the application what are the intentions of the businesses as they move into a reopening phase. The Board discussed allocating \$100,000 in total, for forty \$2,500 grants.

Mr. Donnelly motioned to allocate \$100,000 in total for forty \$2,500 grants to Fitchburg businesses affected by the pandemic. Seconded by Mr. Roy. Motion carried 4-0.

5. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

A. River Styx

- (1) Ms. Donoghue shared she received a request Monday from River Styx Brewing asking to keep their outdoor dining set up by utilizing the parking lot throughout the week after experiencing set-up and take-down the previous weekend. The owners said it took too long and was very labor intensive to do it every weekend. Ms. Donoghue explained that the area they are requesting to use is utilized throughout the week by other tenants and patrons alike. She reminded the Board that businesses are only at 25% and are anticipated to return sooner than later; thus using more of the parking lot.

Mr. Roy motioned to allow them to use the parking lot throughout the week for their outdoor seating set up. Seconded by Dr. Bayless. Motion failed 4-0.

6. EXECUTIVE SESSION/ADJOURNMENT

A. 520 Main Street/Johnsonia Lot

- (1) To consider the purchase, exchange, or value of real property at 520 Main Street/Johnsonia Lot.

Mr. Caron motioned close the regular meeting and enter to go into executive session and not to return. Seconded by Mr. Roy. Motion carried 4-0.

NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED: July 21, 2020

Respectfully submitted,

Meagen P. Donoghue
Executive Director