



FITCHBURG REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
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MEETING MINUTES

April 18, 2023

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
Maribel Cruz, Treasurer

OTHERS PRESENT: Robert Bird, LSP for GFI
Bob LaRochelle, GFI
Hayley Palazola, GFI
Jacqueline Martin, GFI
Artie Testa, Patriot Promotional Products
Liz Murphy, Director of Housing and Development, City of Fitchburg
Meagen Donoghue, Executive Director, FRA
Sarah Stebulis, Business Administrator, FRA

1. MEETING CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Caron called meeting to order at 7:35 a.m.

2. READING AND APPROVAL OF REGULAR MEETING MINUTES FROM MARCH 21, 2023.

Ms. Cruz motioned to accept the regular meeting minutes from March 21, 2023 and enter them into the FRA's minute's book. Seconded by Mr. Roy. Dr. Bayless abstained. The motion carried by 2-0 vote.

3. BUDGET AND FINANCE

A. Summary Report

Ms. Stebulis stated all bills were on normal course. Included with the list of bills was an addendum that includes TK Elevator Corporation for \$1985.22 and JS Protective Services for \$1360.00

Dr. Bayless motioned to approve the payment of the attached list of bills. Seconded by Ms. Cruz. Motion carried by 3-0 vote.

4. GENERAL BUSINESS

A. Update on 0 Airport Road

1. Presentation from GFI Partners

GFI Partners updated the Board on the status of the project at 0 Airport Road. They have secured all local municipal entitlements. GFI remains interested in the site and property in light of the finding of unexpected chemicals on site and they are seeking to move forward with finding a solution with the City and FRA. Because the property abuts the South Nashua River, it is considered an aquifer and is bound by different regulations. The site is also composed of an abundance of sand and was long accepted as a dump site for paper mill waste. Mass DEP wants the FRA to submit a revised form so they are able to find a solution. Mr. Roy asked if they are looking for the Board to authorize a notice to the EPA so they can talk freely and move forward. GFI confirmed. Mr. Roy asked how the process of using charcoal on the site will work and GFI explained the process and that this would also mean there will be no further import or export of soil necessary at the site. Mr. Roy asked if removing the soil was an option. Mr. Bird stated that it was, but it is very expensive and fill to import is also very expensive. Mr. Roy asked if it is likely that the DEP will accept GFI's proposal to deal with the contamination. Mr. Bird stated that is unknown. Dr. Bayless asked if the FRA can be provided with a copy of the chemicals found on site, and Mr. Bird confirmed that the FRA will be provided with this information and once done, it starts a 120-day process to act on those results. Ms. Palazola asked if the Purchase & Sale can be extended by an additional 90 days, so they are able to work with the DEP.

Mr. Roy motioned to extend the Purchase and Sale agreement dates on 0 Airport Road with GFI Partners by 90-days. Seconded by Dr. Bayless. Motion carried by a 3-0 vote.

Mr. Roy motioned to move forward with providing a revised release to GFI so they are able to engage with Mass DEP. Seconded by Ms. Cruz. Motion carried by a 3-0 vote.

Robert Bird, Bob LaRochelle, Hayley Palazola, and Jacqueline Martin left the meeting at 8:05 a.m.

B. Proposal to Lease Suite 102

1. Artie Testa to present

Mr. Testa is currently located in Parkhill Plaza and is interested in potentially moving his business to Putnam Place, Suite 102. He would be considering subletting a portion of the space to offset costs. Mr. Testa asked the Board for information regarding square footage cost. The Board agreed to have a special meeting with the rest of the Board members present to discuss possible lease details.

Artie Testa left the meeting at 8:18 a.m.

C. Fitchburg Public Library

1. Present Architectural Plans

Ms. Donoghue stated that the Library will be bringing plans to discuss at the next Board meeting.

Mr. Roy motioned to continue Fitchburg Public Library discussion to the next meeting. Seconded by Ms. Cruz. Motion carried by a 3-0 vote.

D. Funding Requests

1. Civic Days Sponsorship

Mr. Roy motioned to approve the contribution of \$5,000 as a Block Party Sponsor at Civic Days. Seconded by Dr. Bayless. Motion carried by 3-0 vote.

2. Fitchburg Public Library Owl Capital Campaign
Dr. Bayless said she was interested in continuing the conversation with the Board members absent so a larger gift could be considered, as it would be an important community investment on our part.

3. Mayssa Sports Management Sponsorship

Mr. Roy motioned to approve the contribution of \$250 Silver Sponsorship to Mayssa Sports Management. Seconded by Dr. Bayless. Motion carried by 3-0 vote.

4. Fitchburg Cultural Council Virtual Arts Scholarship
Mr. Roy would like details of who was awarded the scholarship once complete.

Mr. Roy motioned to approve the contribution of \$500 for a Visual Arts Scholarship by the Fitchburg Cultural Council. Seconded by Ms. Cruz. Motion carried by 3-0 vote.

5. Advertisement in the Fitchburg Abolition Park Commemorative Magazine

Mr. Roy motioned to approve the contribution of \$350 for a quarter-page full color advertisement in the Fitchburg Abolition Park Magazine. Seconded by Ms. Cruz. Motion carried by 3-0 vote.

5. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

A. Business Administrator's Update

Ms. Stebulis stated that she has spent a lot of time this month working on creating a new, comprehensive Employee Manual which blends our old documents with up-to-date laws and explanations of employment details and conduct. Ms. Donoghue is currently reviewing it and it will be available for the Board to vote on next month.

B. Executive Director's Update

Ms. Donoghue stated that the MEPA paperwork has been submitted and that we are now in a 90-day waiting period. On May 20th Putnam Place will host the Fitchburg Food Truck Festival. She stated that the advertising period for the Facilities Manager position has closed, and we received 13 applications. Mr. Caron will be meeting with her next week to discuss who to offer interviews to.

Ms. Donoghue stated that the FRA's 60th Anniversary is in 2024 and she would like to start brainstorming some special things to do to commemorate it.

6. PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Liz Murphy updated the Board that True Storage has purchased the complex with the cinema on John Fitch Highway and wants to add self-storage facilities, but that it is not zoned for the use, as well as being in a flood zone. They are currently going before the planning board and zoning board on these issues. The city will be holding their Earth Day celebration on the Johnsonia lot on Saturday, April 22nd.

Liz Murphy left the meeting at 8:52 a.m.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Roy motioned to adjourn the Regular Board meeting at 9:15 a.m. Seconded by Dr. Bayless. Motion carried 3-0.

NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED: May 16, 2023

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah U. Stebulis
Business Administrator