



FITCHBURG REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
renewing • revitalizing • rebuilding

166 Boulder Drive, Suite 104 | Fitchburg, MA 01420
978.345.9602 | www.fitchburgredevelopment.com

MEETING MINUTES

August 21, 2024

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
Laura O’Kane, Member
Laura Bayless, Member

OTHERS PRESENT: Jeff Aveni, Attorney
Meagen Donoghue, Executive Director, FRA
Sarah Stebulis, Business Administrator, FRA
Bob Hasche, Facilities Manager, FRA

1. MEETING CALL TO ORDER

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

2. READING AND APPROVAL OF REGULAR MEETING MINUTES FROM JUNE 26, 2024 and JULY 17, 2024

Dr. Bayless motioned to accept the regular meeting minutes from June 26, 2024 and July 17, 2024 and enter them into the FRA’s minute book. Seconded by Ms. O’Kane. The motion carried by 3-0 vote.

READING AND APPROVAL OF EXECUTIVE SESSION MEETING MINUTES FROM JUNE 26, 2024 and JULY 17, 2024

Ms. O’Kane motioned to accept the executive meeting minutes from June 26, 2024 and July 17, 2024 and enter them into the FRA’s minute book. Seconded by Dr. Bayless. The motion carried by 3-0 vote.

RELEASE OF EXECUTIVE SESSION MEETING MINUTES FROM JUNE 26, 2024 and JULY 17, 2024

Ms. O’Kane motioned to release the executive meeting minutes from June 26, 2024 and July 17, 2024. Seconded by Dr. Bayless. The motion held by 0-3 vote.

Ms. Cruz arrived at 7:37 a.m.

3. BUDGET AND FINANCE

A. Summary Report

Ms. Stebulis stated all bills were on normal course.

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

Mr. Roy arrived at 7:38 a.m.

4. GENERAL BUSINESS

A. Phone Poles behind Putnam Place Property

1. Discussion and Vote

Attorney Aveni stated that two of the poles in the back are the FRA’s property. Rollstone Bank owns 3, and the city of Fitchburg owns 1 on the DPW property. Fitchburg Fiber has expressed that they want to purchase the poles, not lease. Attorney Aveni stated that he still needs to meet with the Rollstone Board, but that they would only lease their poles, not sell. Mr. Roy is in favor of leasing the poles to Fitchburg Fiber and said that if Attorney Aveni wanted to take that information to Rollstone Bank to help facilitate a deal, he is also okay with that. Mr. Hasche said that some tree work will need to be done near our two poles to make them accessible and the Board agreed that this could be added to a lease as Fitchburg Fiber’s responsibility.

Dr. Bayless motioned to approve leasing the 2 poles owned by the FRA to Fitchburg Fiber, details pending, if Rollstone Bank also votes to lease their 3 poles to Fitchburg Fiber. Seconded by Ms. O’Kane. Motion carried by 5-0 vote.

B. Main Street Housing Grant

1. 409 Main Street

Review of application for 4 completed housing units at \$5,000 each at 409 Main Street.

Mr. Roy motioned to approve the \$20,000 Main Street Housing Grant for 4 units at 409 Main Street. Seconded by Ms. O’Kane. Motion carried by 5-0 vote.

2. Discuss and vote to go city-wide

Ms. Donoghue opened a discussion about whether the Board would consider extending our grants to other areas of Fitchburg, such as our Urban Renewal District or the entire city. Dr. Bayless suggested using our Urban Renewal District as the

geographical template for our grant eligibility. There was a discussion by the Board about the Housing Grant and the Design Grant and expanding their reach. Ms. Donoghue also stated that she would like to look into creating a new technology grant.

Mr. Roy motioned to approve adjusting the eligibility of our Main Street Housing Grant to all properties identified in our Urban Renewal District and adjust our Design Grant eligibility to be open to the entire city of Fitchburg. Seconded by Dr. Bayless. Motion carried by 5-0 vote.

Dr. Bayless motioned to take the agenda out of order. Seconded by Mr. Roy. Motion carried by 5-0 vote.

5. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Dr. Bayless motioned to adjourn the Regular Board meeting and enter into Executive Session at 7:59 a.m. Seconded by Mr. Roy. Motion carried 5-0.

Dr. Bayless motioned to adjourn the Executive Session meeting and return to the Regular Board meeting at 8:13 a.m. Seconded by Mr. Roy. Motion carried 5-0.

C. Funding Requests

1. Friends of the Fitchburg Veterans 5K Charity Run/Walk

Ms. O’Kane motioned to approve \$250 to the Fitchburg Veterans 5K. Seconded by Ms. Cruz. Motion carried by 5-0 vote.

2. Festival Latino de Fitchburg

Dr. Bayless motioned to approve \$500 to the Latino de Fitchburg. Seconded by Mr. Roy. Motion carried by 4-0 vote. Ms. Cruz abstained.

D. Administrative Reports

1. Business Administrator’s Update

Ms. Stebulis presented the Board with two options for GASB 87/96 software that she has researched and companies that she has had extensive meetings with. Her suggestion based on cost and references was to use FinQuery and commit to the 3-year option that includes free data entry of our leases for the initial onboarding.

Ms. Cruz motioned to approve the 3-year contract with FinQuery for GASB 87 software. Seconded by Ms. O’Kane. Motion carried by 5-0 vote.

Ms. Stebulis also stated that both Enterprise and Rollstone CDs are coming to maturity and she asked the Board if they would like rates presented to them, or for her to act on

their behalf for the best renewal rates. The Board agreed she could determine best renewal rates with staggering CD periods.

2. Facility Manager Update

Mr. Hasche updated the Board that we received one response to our RFP for the engineering on the switchgear project from Powell Industries. The company came for a site visit and are planning to submit a proposal. Mr. Hasche has been working with Higgins Mechanical on the issue with our chillers and compressors. Higgins wants an industrial electrician to check the circuit before they do any work. Mr. Hasche plans to use DRS's industrial electricians for this. Pricing estimates for one compressor to be repaired is \$21, and for both is \$34k. Parts have been ordered by Higgins and they will be doing the work.

There are numerous areas of failure to piles and drains in DRS's manufacturing space. Per the lease, the FRA is responsible for interior piles. The estimate for this work is \$150k. We will need to go out to bid for the work or use a state contractor. Ms. Donoghue stated that if this is considered an emergency, we can get it fixed immediately by a company of our choice, but all steps must be documented on why it was emergent.

Mr. Hasche presented an estimate for \$3,225 for a new gate at 866 Main Street. He said that Attorney Aveni wanted the walkway included in the gated area to keep people off the property, so a new quote would be needed to reflect that. Dr. Bayless stated that he felt the walkway should be kept as is. Mr. Caron asked if no trespassing signs could be put up. The Board discussed further and agreed not to extend the gate to the walkway.

A roofing company recently came out to repair leaks in the Registry of Deeds area. Mr. Hasche is getting a quote for newly discovered roof leaks. The company who came out said the roof is in decent shape and if kept up and maintained, we should be able to get more life out of it.

3. Executive Director's Update

Ms. Donoghue stated that RFP for the Johnsonia lot (520 Main Street) will be released on Monday and the deadline for proposals will be in December. She would like to put together a small subcommittee to review RFP responses before they come to the larger board. The RFP will be posted publicly on our website and social media, in newspapers and in the Worcester Business Journal.

Ms. Donoghue has signed Putnam Place up for United Way's Day of Caring to clean up the site on September 20. Tracy Sladen has been working hard on marketing our vacant space. An option for Suite 103 is a convenience store. The Board discussed this option and did not feel it was a good fit. Ms. Donoghue has asked Tracy Sladen to put Building 3 on the market for sale, with a lease of the land in place. Mr. Roy said that as we move

forward with that sale, he would like stipulations of a timeline for activation of the site so it doesn't remain dormant.

Ms. Donoghue informed the board that our local delegation was able to earmark \$750,000 for the FRA again this year to use towards housing. There is a Purchase and Sale for the sale of 66 North Street, and we are moving forward to sell that. She asked if the Board would be amenable to changing the meeting date from September 18 to September 24, and the Board agreed.

6. PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

No members were present to provide updates.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Roy motioned to adjourn the regular meeting at 9:17 a.m. Seconded by Ms. O'Kane. Motion carried 5-0.

NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED: September 24, 2024

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah U. Stebulis
Business Administrator