



RUTLAND REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
CITY OF RUTLAND

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Regular Meeting / July 23, 2024

Minutes

Attendance: Ed Clark, Michael Talbott, Chris Etori, *Stephanie Romeo, Mary Markowski, and Israel Mac.

Also attending: Ed Bove, Tyler Richardson, Hali Issente and Barbara Spaulding.

Absent: Dick Courcelle.

- I. Ed C called the meeting to order at 8 am.
- II. Additions/Deletions to the Agenda – Ed C added the following items to the agenda under New Business: Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper Community Placemaking Projects Grant, RRA Board Membership Governance and RRA Proposed Charter Change.
- III. Michael moved to approve the minutes of July 9, 2024. Chris seconded. Ed C asked for a correction on page 3 to change Ed C to Ed B. Motion was approved as amended 5-0.
- IV. Public Comment – None.
- V. Warrant – Israel moved to direct the Chair to sign the warrant for 800 expenses totaling \$1,721.29 and recommend to the Board of Finance payment of Fund 100 expenses totaling \$1,995.00. Chris seconded. Motion was approved 5-0.

*Stephanie arrived.

- VI. DRP Update – Hali, Executive Director of the Downtown Rutland Partnership (DRP) provided an update regarding Friday Night Live on July 26 and the partnerships with media for the event and support from Brian Budrow. The DRP received a \$5,000 grant from the Vermont Women’s Fund for workshops. He is working with the business committee for workshop ideas such as social media/marketing. Recently a group of CCV students volunteered to remove the 2022 inserts from the downtown trash cans and some trash cans will be activated with painted murals. The DRP has 12 board members and is reactivating its committees. Hali will provide a list of the board members to Barbara. He is working with Shannon Marie Patch to create reels of Downtown businesses; the reels have had 1,000 views. There is a Rutland display at the Guilford Welcome Center that has a QR code to track interest and the impact will be shared going forward.
- VII. BOA Update – Michael provided the following Alderman updates: the City will support the 3rd Annual Whoopie Pie Festival from the Mayor’s contingency fund, the

request to fund Real Rutland was sent to Committee, Rebekah Stevens' nomination to the Planning Commission was tabled for two weeks, both Chris Louras and Megan Novak were hired for the Homeless Transition Housing two-year positions, Andrew Strniste has been attending the public hearings in Mendon, on behalf of the City, as an abutter to the Econo Lodge project and potential for hazardous waste product near the City's watershed, the City received a \$75,000 tree grant to reduce impervious surface in the area of Justice Square, the City also received a \$104,000 VTrans Class II paving grant for Dorr Drive. Michael continued saying in the C&ED Committee the BIAP discussion for Blush Salon was tabled until the owner was available, the Committee met with the Beldens to review the hotel plans, the Special Events Permit was amended to include street closure notification and waste removal plan, revenue from parking in Downtown has increased in 2024 by \$15,000 and Bob Protivansky has been in contact with the parking garage owners regarding cleaning the street level. Lastly, the Mayor has been discussing potentially moving the library and city services to the Asa Bloomer Building.

VIII. RRA Quarterly Report for 6/30/2024. Both the RRA Quarterly newsletter and grant/loan excel report were provided to the Board. Michael moved to submit the RRA Quarterly reports to the Mayor and Board of Aldermen. Chris seconded. Motion was approved 6-0.

IX. Old Business – BIAP Application – C Brown Automotive LLC
The Board discussed the conditions placed on the property by the DRB and whether the applicant's BIAP loan could be conditioned to include those conditions. The applicant does not own the property, but included in his application improvements to the property that would address the conditions. Chris moved to recommend to the Board of Aldermen approval of the \$10,000 BIAP Forgivable Loan for C Brown Automotive LLC. Michael seconded. Motion was approved 6-0.

SBD RLF for 24 Wales Street – Ed B said the committee met to discuss the application for 24 Wales Street. The committee concluded that it would be necessary for the City Treasurer to be on the committee going forward and that more information was needed because the committee would not be able to rely on the review from NWWVT. The applicant was determined ineligible for the City's Rental Revolving Loan Fund because the project exceeds the 4 or less units. Ed B will reach out to the applicant and reschedule a committee meeting to include Mary.

RRA FY24 Fund Balance – Hali provided an update on the signage quote from Green Screen Graphics to refresh the signs on Main Street and the four Downtown gateway signs. The quote is \$10,000 for 11 signs and includes updating the signage, repainting the posts and brackets. Hali will also get two additional quotes to follow procurement guidelines. Michael asked who will install the signs. Hali said installation is included in the quote. Chris discussed how there is a lot of signage and at some point, the four City gateway signs also need to be refreshed. Michael said he is in support of refreshing the 20 year old Downtown signs with the new branding. Mary suggested that the Board wait to decide on how to spend the surplus until the

first meeting in August when she will have final year-end numbers. She also asked the Board if it was still considering using the funds to replace the Downtown trash receptacles. Michael said the Mayor has met with John Casella, who owns the existing trash cans and empties them, regarding replacing them. Chris suggested waiting until August when the Board will know the budget and have all of the quotes to discuss spending the RRA fund balance.

Proposed BIAP Changes - Barbara provided the Board with a summary of the BIAP success, an updated BIAP list, draft BIAP changes and draft Emergency Loan Provision. She said the C&ED Committee is awaiting a recommendation from the RRA on how to proceed. Chris reminded the Board that a subcommittee of himself, Mary and Michael, was formed at the June 25 meeting to discuss the proposed BIAP changes, as well as, strategize the funding and capacity for the micro loans. Hali said there are no current micro loan requests, and the application was removed from the DRP website. He will provide a list of micro grant recipients to show how the BIAP and micro grants are connected. Israel discussed being more judicious with the BIAP funds to make sure those businesses who truly need them are receiving them. Chris asked Barbara to set up a committee meeting to discuss the BIAP and micro grants.

- X. New Business – Treasurer’s Report. Mary said the June preliminary report is for information only. She called attention to the balance sheet saying there is \$16,000 in unassigned fund balance with the potential for another \$40,000 available after adjustments.

Conflict of Interest Forms – Board members provided the forms. Both Michael and Stephanie will submit them electronically.

Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper Community Placemaking Projects Grant – Ed B discussed the availability of \$3,500 in funding for projects in Downtown that could be implemented this calendar year. One of the projects in the Placemaking plan was string lights in Center Street Alley. He is working with Jay Sabataseo and Mark Foley to get permission to hang the lights. The application is due July 30. Ed B said there is potentially another application from the MINT for a robotics derby on Center Street. Hali said he could coordinate a volunteer service group to clean the alley in conjunction with the lights. Mary asked if this would be a City grant or an RRA grant. It would be an RRA application. The Board consensus was to apply for the lighting project.

RRA Proposed Charter Change – The Board debated whether the charter change should allow for a Board member to be a property owner, regardless of residency, from the entire City of Rutland or exclusively from the Special Benefits District. Chris argued that allowing a property owner from the City would be the least restrictive. Mary and Israel argued allowing a property owner within the Special

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Benefits District was the impetus for the change. Chris moved to change the proposed §9-36.5 Board of Commissioners, composition 1) d. to “One member shall be a property owner within the City of Rutland, regardless of residency, and shall be appointed by the Mayor with the approval of the Board of Aldermen pursuant to the charter of the City of Rutland.” Michael seconded. Motion was approved 5-1.

RRA Board Membership Governance – Ed C said following the article he provided that ran in the Herald, he received the names of 5 City residents interested in serving on the RRA Board. He said he will reach out to the candidates for information so the RRA Board can make recommendations to the Mayor for the two vacant seats.

RRA Annual Barbecue and Olympics – Barbara asked the Board to respond to which date was more desirable for the event.

All items on the agenda were addressed. The meeting ended at 9:09 am. The next regular meeting will be held August 13 at 8 am.

These minutes approved this ____ day of _____, 2024.

Mary A. Markowski, Secretary