



RUTLAND REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
CITY OF RUTLAND
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Regular Meeting / September 24, 2024
Minutes

Attendance: Edward Clark, Michael Talbott, Israel Mac, Dick Courcelle, *Stephanie Romeo, Chris Etori and Mary Markowski

Also attending: Ed Bove, Mayor Doenges, Hali Issente, Jennifer Usher and Barbara Spaulding

- I. Edward called the meeting to order at 8 am.
- II. Additions/Deletions – Edward moved the BIAP application after the warrant.
- III. Michael moved to approve the minutes of September 10, 2024. Chris seconded. Motion was approved 6-0.
- IV. Public Comment – None.
- V. Warrant – Michael moved to direct the Chair to sign the warrant for 800 expenses totaling \$5,696.64 and recommend to the Board of Finance payment of Fund 100 expenses in the amount of \$1,995.00. Chris seconded. Motion was approved 6-0.
- VI. BIAP Application – Make It Sew.

Barbara introduced Jennifer Usher and said the request is for a \$10,000 BIAP forgivable loan to expand Make It Sew at 69 Center Street by including 67 Center Street, formerly the Speakeasy Café. The expansion will allow for the creation of a customer service area, additional dressing rooms and another seamstress. Mary asked if Jennifer owns the building. Jennifer said she leases it from Patty Ryan. Jennifer said that her business is growing, and she recently hired two seamstresses from the Refugee Resettlement Program and hopes to add additional employees. She said that there is an interior doorway that connects the two spaces that will be uncovered. She plans to increase the number of changing areas, create a full workroom and purchase equipment. Edward said the Board will table the application for two weeks.

*Stephanie arrived.

- VII. DRP Update – Hali reported that the Sept. 6 FNL was the most attended by both vendors and the public. He will share the results of the survey at the next meeting. The DRP has started organizing seasonal events including the Downtown Tree Lighting, Small Business Saturday, Jingle Bell Shop, holiday window contest and the gift guide. Hali said several businesses recently opened Downtown including

Bougie on a Budget, the Chop Shop and Vape N Smoke City. He is excited for the expansion of Make It Sew. Hali attended the Vermont Downtown Retreat in Grand Isle and learned how other downtowns are dealing with the issues of unhoused and crime and shared how Rutland is managing. He and Ed will be making the final decisions this week regarding the two sign options presented by Nikki, and he thanked the Board for the funding to address the replacement and updating of Downtown signage. Hali will present the DRP quarterly report in October. Mayor Doenges added that he is in talks with John Casella regarding replacing the trash receptacles in Downtown.

VIII. BOA Update – Michael provided the following Aldermanic updates: the Board authorized the DPW to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Engineering Services for a Water System Study and referred the study to the Public Works Committee. The Aldermen also approved new parking fines as follows:

- The fines for parking in a designated disability zone by someone other than a disabled person or passenger and or parking too near or at a fire hydrant would each be set at \$150.
- The fines for parking on a sidewalk, parking in a crosswalk, and violating the winter parking ban would each be set at \$75.
- A fine for violating the greenbelt parking ban would be added and set at \$30.
- The fine for overparking at a space subject to a parking payment system would be set at \$30 for the first offense, \$45 for the second offense, and \$60 for each subsequent offense.
- The fine for overparking at a designated time zone would be set at \$25 for the first offense, \$35 for the second offense, and \$50 for each subsequent offense.
- The fine for all other violations would be set at \$25.

The fines for the greenbelt parking were suspended until the Traffic Committee meets to discuss the Winter Parking Ban. The Board approved the Johnsons Controls Performance Based Energy Contract and authorized the Mayor to sign the Base Project Energy Contract. Michael said in his and the Mayor's absence Sharon Davis will be acting Mayor and Alderman Whitcomb will chair the Oct. 7 Aldermen's meeting. Mary asked about the Cannabis Control Board's vote regarding the indoor cultivator license. Michael explained the failure of the motion to approve was a no vote. There was discussion on whether the Cannabis Control Board should be dissolved or be a different make-up of the Board. Michael said the City Attorney has recommended dissolving the Cannabis Control Board.

IX. Old Business.

Mary encouraged the RRA Board to attend the Community & Economic Development Committee meeting at 5:30 pm on 9/25 being held at the Hub for the TIF District presentation from the RRA and next steps for Rutland.

Ed said that the hotel developers want to present their plans at the RRA's next meeting on Oct. 8. He will have it added to the agenda.

Barbara mentioned that Mary Cohen of the HTRC has decided not to proceed with the VCDP application for the 133 Forest Street project due to the costs associated with the BABA rule. There was discussion regarding whether a policy should be instituted to collect a fee for the work done by the City and RRA in the event an application is pulled. Dick said this would need to be made clear at the onset of the application request.

Ed has researched a property of interest for the RRA.

X. New Business – Treasurer’s Reports July 31 and August 31, 2024.

Mary said she has one adjustment to make regarding the train station project. She also needs to get Edward’s signature on the Simple IRA.

Ed said the cost approved for the signage project was up to \$10,000 and may actually be \$12,000. Mary suggested waiting to make any changes to the budget until the final invoice is received. There was discussion regarding who is responsible for the wayfinding signs. The Mayor suggested that the City owns the signs and he will contact Tom Franzoni to make sure they are maintained. Mary said they should be covered under the City’s insurance.

The RRA will postpone the barbecue until the office support person is hired and two vacant Board seats are filled. The Mayor said he has been unable to interview potential Board members, but understands the need to get the vacant seats filled. Dick asked if the RRA as a quasi-board is allowed to vote via email. Ed said if a special meeting is properly warned, board members could phone in for a roll call vote. Michael said he is unavailable for the Oct. 8 RRA meeting

XI. All items on the agenda were discussed. The meeting ended at 8:37 am. The next regular meeting will be held October 8 at 8 am.

These minutes approved this ____ day of _____, 2024.

Mary A. Markowski, Secretary