



RUTLAND REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
CITY OF RUTLAND
1 Strongs Avenue
RUTLAND, VERMONT 05701
(802) 775-2910

Regular Meeting / November 26, 2024
Minutes

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

Also attending: Ed Bove, Hali Issente, Mayor Doenges, Gordon Dritschilo, Elisabeth Kulas, Justin Belden, Carley Perry, Jody Smith, James Schneider and Barbara Spaulding

- I. Edward called the meeting to order at 8 am.
- II. Additions/Deletions – Edward suggested moving the Horizons’ extension request after the warrant.
- III. Michael moved to approve the minutes of Nov. 12, 2024. Chris seconded. Motion was approved 7-0.
- IV. Public Comment – None.
- V. Warrant – Israel moved to direct the Chair to sign the warrant for 800 expenses totaling \$310.65. Chris seconded. Motion was approved 7-0.
- VI. Old Business – Horizons Early Learning Center Final Annual BIAP report

Barbara introduced Jody and James and explained that they submitted their final annual report per the BIAP loan agreement. They were here to request an extension of the loan deadline in order to fulfill their obligation. Jody discussed how a flood in March cost the project an additional \$74,000 and she distributed photos. James discussed difficulty with their contractor who went from 16 employees to 1 after COVID which made finishing the work difficult. He said that 3 years ago the original project cost was \$250,000 and now the project is a million dollars. Jody added that there has been no gap in services and the after-school program will continue at their current location.

*Stephanie arrived.

Mary asked how long of an extension they would be requesting. James said conservatively the project could be completed in 6-8 weeks. Edward discussed his affiliation with the project and recused himself. The length of the extension was debated by the Board. Mary suggested that the City Attorney be brought into the conversation as there is no provision for an extension in the current policy. Michael

moved to grant a six-month extension pending Attorney review. Dick seconded. Motion was approved 6 yes, 1 no with Edward abstaining.

VII. DRP Update – Downtown Rutland Vibrancy Fund Letter of Attestation

Barbara said the Board signed the same letter last year as the official “municipality” for the supplemental Downtown Vibrancy Fund funding for the Downtown Rutland Partnership. Chris moved to circulate the letter for signature. Lori seconded. Motion was approved 8 – 0. Hali thanked the Board and reminded them that the tree lighting ceremony is Friday November 29 followed by Small Business Saturday which will include events downtown. He said he would provide a larger update in December.

VIII. BOA Update – Michael provided the following updates: the nomination of Ed Bove to the Planning Director Zoning Administrator position was approved, a cannabis license was approved for Little Amsterdam Alternatives, the BIAP loan for Prouty’s Parlor was approved and following review by the Aldermen, there were no questions regarding the City’s Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. A motion to support the Christmas Convoy and subsequent parades and celebratory events is pending the City’s Attorney position of liability.

IX. Old Business – Un-table Townline Grill & Bakery BIAP application

Chris moved to recommend to the Aldermen approval of a \$10,000 BIAP Forgivable Loan to Townline Grill & Bakery. Lori seconded. Motion was approved 8-0.

Update on Blush Salon BIAP Loan – Barbara said a certified letter was sent to Paige Carrara that included a request she attend the Dec. 10 RRA meeting with the documents discussed at the Nov. 4 Aldermen’s meeting. A copy of the minutes from that meeting were included with the letter. On Nov. 25 Barbara received the return receipt card acknowledging receipt of the letter. No contact has been made regarding whether Paige has the documents or will attend the Dec. 10 meeting. Michael said he has not received anything from her as well. Barbara will keep the Board apprised.

Downtown Hotel – tax stabilization/WWRI requests

The Board heard from Elisabeth Kulas, Consultant, and Justin Belden regarding the requests for tax stabilization and WWRI for a downtown hotel and living project at the vacant corner of Center & Wales Street. Included in the discussion was how tax stabilization works with TIF and the timing of the larger request to the City. Elisabeth addressed the \$5 million clean-up of the site and other investments the Beldens will be making to offset the “asks”. The Board debated how to proceed without knowing the whole proposal. Michael suggested that members of the RRA Board attend the C&ED Committee on Dec. 12, which will go into an Executive Session to discuss the full proposal. Chris advocated that the RRA Board could go into Executive Session at its Dec. 10 meeting to hear the full proposal before making

a recommendation to the Aldermen regarding the requests. The requests were tabled to the next meeting.

X. New Business – Election Results.

Barbara provided the election results of Nov. 5 regarding the RRA’s charter change to include a member of the Board who is a property owner within the City of Rutland. The total votes counted were 7,716 with 4,699 yes, 1,454 no, and 1,562 blank votes and 1 overvote. The Board discussed the next steps in this legislative session.

Treasurer’s Report 10/31/2024 – Mary suggested tabling the report for the next meeting and she asked to include discussion regarding the Neighborhood Rental Rehab program for the next agenda.

XI. Adjourn.

Lori moved to adjourn. Dick seconded. Motion was approved 8-0. The meeting ended at 9:02 am. The next regular meeting will be held December 10 at 8 am.

These minutes approved this ____ day of _____, 2024.

Mary A. Markowski, Secretary