



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

Regular Meeting / March 11, 2025
Minutes

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

Also attending: Ed Bove, Tyler Richardson, Barbara Spaulding and Katrina Parker.

Absent: N/A

- I. Edward called the meeting to order at 8:01 am.
- II. Additions/Deletions – Barbara suggested moving the BIAP application earlier in the agenda when the applicant arrives.
- III. Michael moved to approve the minutes of February 25, 2025. 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 \$22,345.49 and recommend approval to the Board of Finance for payment of Fund 100 expenses totaling \$4,493.00. Chris seconded. Motion was approved 7-0.

*Stephanie arrived.

VI. New Business – BIAP EIR Wellness Spa

Barbara introduced Katrina Parker saying the BIAP request is for a \$10,000 Forgivable Loan for a wellness spa and it meets the criteria through \$10,000 or more of personal investment. Katrina said she is a certified aromatherapist and plans to hire three professionals in the fields of Reiki , reflexology, and other alternative medicines. She also plans to offer a red-light therapy room which aids in circulation and healing. Currently the accessory structure or “barn” is being renovated. It took some time to merge 2 and 4 Parker Run for the purposes of acquiring the Home Business Permit. Mary asked if the spa was open after seeing posts online. Katrina said the spa is not open yet and that the posts are related to interest in employees and building a client base. Lori asked about the payment structure. Katrina said there will be a 20% fee on all services to cover overhead and the POS system will allow the employees to create their own schedules with a minimum of 15 clients per week. She does not plan to be open on Sundays, but the permit allows her to be operational 7 days a week. Chris said the loan requires the business to be in operation at the end of

3 years to be forgiven. He asked how she plans to prove, as a home business, that the business is operational at that time. Katrina said she hopes that at 3 years, at the minimum, she and one other therapist will be seeing a minimum of 15 clients per week. She anticipates 64-65 clients per month and has discussed potential employees with an aesthetician who teaches the Stafford program. Mary asked about the rental expenditure. Katrina said the amount was based on the lower end of what other spa and hair stylists are charging. She added that she makes products, and the employees can choose to pay cost for them or increase the fee to 25% of sales for use of all the products. The application was tabled for two weeks.

VII. Grant and Outreach Updates – Barbara provided the following updates:

East Creek Commons/HTRC and NWWVT Merger – Barbara received an email from Juliann Sherman that there is a government shutdown scheduled for March 14. She is not sure how this will affect these grants and is planning to reach out to Mary Cohen this week.

Rutland Creek Path Segment 3 – The final requisition has been approved for payment and VTrans will be in touch with closeout procedures. Barbara discussed the Segment 5 extension saying “if Segment 5 does not advance to construction phase by Dec. 2028, the amount of grant funding expended for preliminary engineering of \$135,579.36 will be required to be paid back no later than Nov. 30, 2029.” Prior to Andrew Strniste leaving there was discussion of relocating Segment 5 of the path and initial discussions were made with the two property owners affected. Michael added that there was discussion to widen the road for pedestrians and have the path go over the hill and this would meet VTrans requirements.

Hospital Heights aka Mahoney Grove Apartments - Barbara is working on the next requisition to include an RRA invoice for grant administration. The project is currently 100% complete and the community is fully leased. Once the beneficiary information is finalized, closeout procedures will commence.

Rutland Housing Initiative 120 Maple Street – The final requisition for construction and the RRA grant admin were approved and received. Photos will be shared at the next meeting. Collecting the beneficiary information is next followed by closeout procedures. There is a progress report due April 30 for the period Oct. – March, 2024.

Municipal Planning Grant – On March 3 the Aldermen approved applying for a MPG for design services for Planning Initiatives. The application is due March 31 at 6 pm. Ed Bove is writing the application and Barbara will assist with getting it submitted.

Bylaws Modernization Grant – The City’s request for an extension to complete the grant administration has been accepted by DHCD and a docu-sign amendment was

emailed to the Mayor for signature. The next requisition and progress report will be submitted this week.

BIAP Update – Pies the Limit annual report was submitted with the RRA Board packet. They will be celebrating their 1st birthday at 56 Strongs Avenue May 1-3 and will have free cookies, giveaways, and lots of fun stuff! Chris moved to receive and file the report. Michael seconded. Motion was approved 8-0.

Faith McClure has submitted additional information for consideration of her BIAP application for Bailey's Place and it will be on the agenda for March 25.

A ribbon cutting is being planned for Clover Exploration. Barbara is working with CEDRR and Kathleen and Jeff Saunders to schedule a ribbon cutting for March 28 at 11:30 am at the café and spa.

Blush Salon – The City received confirmation from Matt Bloomer that a lien on the property of 15 Center Street is not permitted due to the BIAP loan agreement not being tied to the mortgage. The treasurer's office will be invoicing Paige Carrara for the \$10,000. Barbara asked if the RRA Board wants to consider recommending to the Aldermen that a mortgage note be drafted for the BIAP loan or is there some other amendment that could be made to the loan document to assure repayment. Following discussion, the Board did not feel a mortgage and security note should be attached to BIAP loan. Dick suggested that discussing the Blush contract specifically should not be done in open session.

Barbara researched the BIAP process for Allyson Bradley of Nail'd It and the Aldermen did approve referral to HFCU, so Allyson was connected with Dylan at HFCU.

SAM Registration – The RRA's SAM registration has been updated.

- VIII. Project Updates – Ed Bove discussed the recent VEPC Board meeting held in Rutland saying that it was very positive. The City's TIF district could potentially be approved at the next VEPC meeting on March 27. The Phase filing for the hotel is also on track with negotiations ongoing with the development team. Ed will be asking the Aldermen at the next meeting to allocate funds formerly from ARPA to help with the next phase of work which will need a separate contract. This will get the project through the bond vote in the fall. Ed will keep the RRA apprised of any resources needed from the RRA to inject into the TIF. Ed also discussed how Morris Strategies is working with the Center Street businesses, the Herald and Mountain Times to drive the conversation in a positive direction for the TIF bond vote. Dick asked if the vote will be a special election and Ed said yes. There was discussion regarding some skepticism reported in the Herald by the two Rutland VEPC Board members. Michael clarified that the Board was doing its due diligence and that the consensus of the VEPC Board was positive. Mary noted that at the VEPC meeting there was a question about the City's plans if the TIF is approved. The response

from the City was that the RRA will be responsible for managing the TIF District. Israel asked about the contract with White & Burke. Ed explained that the contract covers the creation of the district, but a second contract needs to be signed for the next phase for the hotel project and he has an invoice pending for that contract.

- IX. BOA Update – Michael said that new Aldermen were recently elected, and that the new president will be designating the committee assignments. Trail remediation was approved and the sculpture trail will include a new sculpture at Trinity Church. The DPW updated the Board on the lead services lines. Mary asked if the sculptures were ever presented to the RRA because she is trying to document the City's ownership for insurance purposes. The Board discussed that Steve Costello brought the concept to Mayor Louras.
- X. Old Business –Executive Director Search Update – Edward said he held off signing the contract with Gallagher Flynn until after the election and asked the Board for their thoughts on moving forward with signing now. Chris said he is concerned because how will the position be funded? Edward discussed how the position would include the TIF work, and that the City's HR director recommended the salary range. He feels the current administration and Aldermen support the RRA. Dick suggested moving forward because the process will take time.

Chris suggested posting for an interim director. Mary said HR suggested using a more formal process than just reaching out to folks. Edward suggested placing an ad for a temporary part-time interim director who would not be considered for the permanent position. The consensus was that the temporary director would not be eligible for the permanent position but should have some level of expertise with development. Chris suggested posting the temporary position ASAP and Mary asked if the job description had been finalized. Edward said he will draft the temporary job description and circulate it amongst the Board.

There was discussion regarding what payment to Gallagher Flynn would be expected if a permanent director was not hired. Edward said the cost is 22% of the salary with 1/3 up front and he assumed it would be the same whether someone is hired or not. Ed Bove asked how involved the interim director would be with the TIF process. Edward said the interim director would be support to Ed for TIF. Chris added that as an a-political entity, the RRA should be advocating for TIF and be part of the conversation. Ed Bove added that he saw the interim director connecting with the 8-10 other sites in the TIF District.

Dick moved to authorize the RRA Chair to sign the contract with Gallagher Flynn for the recruitment of an executive director. Lori seconded. Mary discussed waiting to hear the Mayor's plans for the RRA before signing. Israel confirmed that they were signing a contract and not a letter of intent. Motion was approved 7-1.

Barbara asked if the RRA Board was still interested in inviting Lyle Jepson and Mose Cassaro from Startup Rutland to discuss the accelerator program at a future meeting. The consensus was that they are still interested.

- XI. Adjourn – All items on the agenda were addressed. The meeting adjourned at 9:05 am. The next meeting will be held on March 25 at 8 am.

These minutes were approved this ____ day of _____, 2025.

Mary A. Markowski, Secretary