



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

Regular Meeting / May 13, 2025
Minutes

Attendance: Edward Clark, Mary Markowski, *Stephanie Romeo, Israel Mac, Larry Cupoli, Chris Etori and Lori Arner

Also attending: Tyler Richardson, Ed Bove, Mayor Doenges, Jessica Mazzariello, Rebecca Buonadonna and Barbara Spaulding

Absent: Dick Courcelle

- I. Edward called the meeting to order at 8 am.
- II. Additions/Deletions – Edward moved the Auditor’s Report to 8:05 am and the BIAP application to follow the report.
- III. Larry moved to approve the minutes of April 22, 2025. Lori seconded. Motion was approved 6-0.
- IV. Public Comment – None.

*Stephanie arrived.

- V. Warrant – Israel moved to direct the Chair to sign the warrant for 800 expenses totaling \$22,345.56 and recommend payment of 100 expenses totaling \$6,902.65 to the Board of Finance. Chris seconded. Motion was approved 7-0.

Edward announced that Dick Courcelle has resigned from the RRA Board effective immediately.

- VI. TIF Update – Ed Bove said at last night’s Community and Economic Development Committee meeting a motion was made to recommend approval of the Hotel Development Agreement and TIF Phase Filing to the full Board on May 19. Ed discussed the timeline going forward saying VEPC will review these documents for two board meetings in July and August, the City will prepare for the bond vote during August and September, and there will be a special vote in October to go out to bond for Center and Wales Streets infrastructure work.
- VII. FY24 Audited Financial Statements – Auditor’s report. Rick Brigham, attending via phone, said the RRA received the best opinion on the FY24 Financial Statements as an Unqualified Opinion. He said page 4-5 were the user-friendly analysis, page 8 was the balance sheet which showed a healthy fund balance at 6/30/24, pages 10-19

provided a deeper dive into the fund balances and page 20 is the budget actual at 6/30/24. In regard to the material weaknesses and deficiencies, there were none found resulting in a clean audit with no findings. Rick added that there were no difficulties with staff or management. Mary said the fund balance was a result of not having hired an Executive Director and she asked if that was of any concern to the auditor. Rick said there were no concerns, and that cash flow is important for unforeseen items.

VIII. New Business – BIAP application for Bellaluccia’s

Barbara introduced the application saying Jessica Mazzariello is applying for a \$5,000 BIAP grant to open an intimate apparel and contemporary footwear store at 58 Merchants Row. The application meets the criteria through more than \$35,000 of personal investment toward renovations of the space, inventory and a POS system. Jessica discussed the need for an intimate apparel and undergarments store in Rutland as she had been sending customers to Manchester. The store will also sell pajamas. She has a great clientele base and feels the proximity to Fruition is key to her success. She promotes positive body image and feels all women deserve to feel good about themselves. Jessica said people are excited for the store to open. Lori asked what was previously in the location. Jessica said Rewind. Mayor Doenges said with retail being more online, brick and mortar stores need to focus on specific audiences to succeed, and this is a good example. Edward said the application is clearly supported, but the process is to table the recommendation for two weeks.

IX. Grant and Outreach Updates – Barbara presented the following updates.

VTrans FY2025 Bike/PED Grant – The project includes installation of new sidewalk and safety improvements on Seabury Street and Church Street. The grant is for \$75,000, 50% of total project costs. The Board authorized the Mayor to sign the GA on May 5 and Barbara has provided the necessary paperwork for the general ledger codes to be created. DPW will be project manager and RRA will provide grant admin.

Hospital Heights aka Mahoney Grove Apartments - The progress report due April 30 was submitted. Awaiting beneficiary information to close out the grant.

Rutland Housing Initiative 120 Maple Street –The progress report due April 30 was submitted as an interim report. A final report will be initiated with close out. The award end date is June 30, 2025. The Aldermen will be asked on May 19 to set the final public hearing for June 16. The monitoring visit was held April 18 and all documentation requested was provided. Still awaiting letter of compliance.

Resources for Planning Projects Grant – The City was awarded the Municipal Planning Grant on April 30 in the amount of \$19,000 to develop resources for Planning Projects. Ed Bove will be taking the lead on this project and Barbara will be assisting with grant administration.

BRIC Grant – LHMP – First requisition has been approved and received.

Rutland Creek Path Segment 3 - The City received closeout notification from VTrans that as of 4/10/2025 the project was in compliance with FHWA requirements and the project files can be disposed of after three years.

BIAP Update – On May 5 the Aldermen approved the \$10,000 BIAP Forgivable Loan for Camille’s Experienced Clothing. The loan paperwork has been executed and a check should be ready on Friday.

The Aldermen were asked to set a C&ED Committee meeting for an update on the BIAP. To be discussed will be how the 11/2024 amendment is working, a BIAP mixer to be held in conjunction with HFCU for existing BIAP recipients and pending applications and an update on potential business closings. Barbara will be looking for a recommendation on the closings from the RRA Board prior to the C&ED meeting.

There are 3 applications expected for June: a grant request from Yutori Wellness Spa, a loan request from James DeRosia for expansion of a storage business, and a \$5,000 grant request from Olympic Pizza who are expanding at a new location in Rutland.

The Aldermen referred discussion of considering new housing units as opposed to just rehabbed units in the City’s Market Rate RLF to the C&ED Committee.

The Rutland Regional Planning Commission will be presenting the 2026 Regional Plan and Regional Future Land Use Map to the C&ED Committee on May 21 at 5:30 pm.

Also on May 21, there will be a groundbreaking celebration for Maplewood Commons apartments from 2 to 3 pm at 133 Forest Street.

- X. Board of Aldermen Update – Larry discussed the visit from Andrew Brown, Chairman of the Rutland County Council, UK. Mr. Brown spoke about his role in the Rutland County Council with a slide presentation and gifted Rutland City with a Rutland County, UK flag. Mr. Brown was presented with a certificate from the Loyalty Day Parade for being the farthest traveled marching unit.

- XI. Old Business – Executive Director Search

Edward said there are 3 potential applicants being vetted with one having a second interview this week.

SBD RLF Application – C Street Holding Corp.

Barbara said she had difficulty scheduling the committee meeting to discuss the application from Erica Balestra Jokinen for heat pumps and a new roof in her properties at 42, 46 and 25/29 Center Street. The RLF policy states that the committee is made up of 2 RRA members, 2 DRP members and the Mayor or his assignee. Hal provided the names of the two DRP members as Andy Paluch and Jadziah DeRosia. Lori volunteered to be on the Committee with Chris for the RRA. Barbara will reach out to schedule a meeting as soon as possible.

Barbara mentioned, for the good of the order, that Kaleidoscope Art Supply was featured in the Rutland Herald article about Secretary of State Copeland's visit to Rutland. She also mentioned that the Vermont Farmers Food Center received a \$466K grant for expansion.

- XII. Adjourn – All items on the agenda were addressed. The meeting adjourned at 8:43 am. The next meeting will be held on May 27 at 8 am. Lori said, in light of the Monday holiday, she could be reached by phone if needed for a quorum on May 27.

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

Mary A. Markowski, Secretary