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

Regular Meeting / July 8, 2025
Minutes

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

Also attending: Tyler Richardson, Michelle Erickson, Christopher Bourque and Barbara Spaulding

I. Edward called the meeting to order at 8:01 am.

II. Additions/Deletions – Edward suggested moving the two BIAP applications after the warrant.

III. Larry moved to approve the minutes of June 24, 2025. Lori seconded. Motion was approved 6-0.

IV. Public Comment – None.

V. Warrant – Israel moved to direct the Chair to sign the warrant for 800 expenses totaling $24,432.56 and recommend to the Board of Finance approval of Fund 100 expenses totaling $1,071.00. Mary seconded. Barbara explained that the first invoice for the FY26 DRP contract is higher because the new contract amount was not evenly divisible by 12. The 11 remaining invoices will be equal amounts. Motion was approved 6-0.

*Chris arrived.

VI. New Business – BIAP application for Treviso, 24 Wales Street. Barbara introduced the application saying Michelle Erickson is applying for a $10,000 BIAP forgivable loan and referral to HFCU for a secured loan to assist in opening a modern Italian restaurant at 24 Wales Street, in the former Table 24 space. Funds will be used to renovate the space and purchase equipment. The application meets the criteria for the loan with a personal investment of more than $10,000.

Michelle discussed the menu saying it will be a seasonal menu and heavy on specials. She anticipates a soft opening on July 17. The electrical and plumbing passed inspection on July 7. The costs were higher than expected and she is hoping for this loan to help. Larry asked about the menu being new to Rutland. Michelle said she plans to combine some things not seen or familiar in Rutland and that there are foodies in the area who will be appreciative. She hired a chef from Nashville, as well as Abby Sweeney and currently has a full kitchen staff hired. Michelle was

asked if she was aware of the City's R&M tax and she said she filled out the required document with the State. Mary said she will share the City's rules with the applicant. Michelle said although she has never operated a restaurant, she has been a business owner in Killington. Edward thanked Michelle and explained that the application will be tabled until the next meeting in July.

BIAP application for Olympic Pizza relocation. Barbara introduced the application saying Christopher Bourque is applying for a $5,000 BIAP grant to relocate and expand his pizzeria to 54 Woodstock Avenue. Funds will be used to purchase new equipment. The application meets the criteria of 15% of the total project cost up to $5,000. The total project cost is $850,000.

Christopher said that the total cost is now $1.1 million. He said the City has been missing a pizza/bar establishment. He added that the existing apartment space will be converted to allow for private parties. Creating the dine-in option will increase his sales by 20%. Christopher discussed his hiring philosophy saying he would like to hire 9 more staff. Edward said his firm is the architect on the project and he will recuse himself from any vote. Chris asked about the building being set back from the road and how Christopher plans to use the property. Christopher said he will pave the driveway, add lighting, landscaping with removal of the junk trees and add signage. He is also considering a patio behind the restaurant. Larry asked if the neighbors had been notified. Christopher said he spoke to a few but plans to do so after the closing which is scheduled in two weeks. Edward said the application will be tabled until the next meeting in July.

VII. Grant and BIAP Updates – Barbara presented the following updates:

NBRC Center Street Infrastructure- On Monday June 30 Barbara attended the NBRC Rutland City kickoff meeting at the Hub and was assigned the role of grant administrator for this grant. CEDRR is the Local Development District (LDD) and hired Elisabeth Kulas to assist with Shasta Mattino being the grant contact at CEDRR. The award came with 3 immediate requests, update SAM registration, register for the virtual new grantee training session on July 10 and revise the budget. Mary is handling the SAM update; Barbara has registered for the training and Elisabeth is working on the budget revision with Ted Gillen. Barbara will need to register again with NBRC online to perform the grant management.

VTrans Bike & Ped Applications – Resolutions for both the Large-scale and small-scale VTrans applications were signed by the Aldermen Monday night. The deadline for submitting the grants is July 11. Barbara will be working with Ted to submit them on behalf of the City.

Hospital Heights aka Mahoney Grove Apartments - The progress report submitted April 30 requires modifications. Barbara is working with Andy Miller to provide the requested information.

Rutland Housing Initiative 120 Maple Street –The required final public hearing to close out this grant was held June 16. The grant end date was June 30, however the units have not all been leased so an amendment to extend the completion date was submitted. Jon Hale reported that the 3 VHIP units have been challenging to lease because several referrals did not meet the criteria. The one unrestricted unit has been leased since May 22, but the third-floor unit faced a delay due to the egress window height. The issue has been resolved, and the space will be shown as an efficiency. There is a plan to also reduce the rent, if needed, for the third-floor efficiency.

Housing Planning Grant – The City was awarded $240,000 from the Vermont Office of Economic Opportunity to provide technical assistance to address Vermonters experiencing homelessness. The first requisition for $93,000, originally rejected, has been approved. Funds are expected in July. The next requisition will accompany the progress report due July 15.

Animating Infrastructure Grant – Alderman McClure filed an application on behalf of the City. Grant funds may be used to conduct a process to select an artist(s) or to work with an already identified artist for your public art project. The grant should support the artist(s) fees to design the artwork and to engage the community. There is no match, but any expenses over the grant award are the responsibility of the City. Award notifications are expected July 24.

HTRC/NWWVT Merger Planning Grant -The City received an extension of time to June 1 to submit the award conditions for the $60,000 planning grant. The conditions were submitted June 26. The PM-4 form naming the RRA as the grant administrator was approved by the Aldermen on Monday. Once the Grant agreement is executed there will be additional conditions that will need to be met prior to any requisitions. A progress report for the period ending June 30, 2025, is due July 30.

East Creek Commons – The City received an extension of time until November to submit the award conditions for the $500,000 implementation grant. A progress report for the period ending June 30, 2025, is due July 30.

Outreach – The paperwork for the $5,000 BIAP grant to Bellaluccia's has been delayed due to a death in the applicant's family. Barbara continues to reach out to get the paperwork processed.

The loan paperwork for Erica Jokinen was provided by Atty. Bloomer on July 3. However, Barbara is unsure who will be processing the documents on the City side. She can complete the check request but is uncomfortable handling the closing on behalf of the City. She forwarded the documents to the Mayor, Tyler and Mary.

The Aldermen approved the BIAP Agreement between the City and HFCU on Monday night. Barbara will follow up with the Mayor and Dylan Watts of HFCU to get the document executed. The only change, besides dates, was the interest rate, which reflects current rates.

VIII. TIF Update – Ed Bove was unable to attend due to a conflict with another meeting, but provided an update to be entered into the minutes:

- VEPC Board Meetings on 7/31 & 8/28 to review and approve the Phase Filing for the Hotel/Center & Wales St project. Ed B will update roles and participation in these meetings by RRA Board and Staff in the next week.
- Targeting a November 4th bond vote – new RRA director will be critical to garner support from Downtown businesses and entire (non-Downtown) community for a successful bond vote.
- Working with City Clerk on ballot language. For a November vote, we will have to have ballot materials ready by mid-August.
- Ongoing meetings: Hotel Task Force, PR/Communications group, Parking Garage working group, and Downtown business/construction information working group. The new RRA Director will be heavily involved.
- Working with DPW on contracts for Streetscape design and alignment with NBRC grant and VTrans applications.
- Provided updated budget numbers to Mary – we are on budget targets. Will need updated expense detail for 006 and 010.

Barbara said she provided, in the Board packet, the updated spreadsheet of the costs associated with TIF that have been processed through the RRA warrant. There have been other expenses associated with the TIF district creation and the balance for those costs is zero.

IX. BOA Update – Larry discussed some of the people's concerns who spoke outside the rail at Monday's meeting. He also said that the Mayor congratulated Barbara on 30 years with the RRA. Mary discussed providing the Aldermen with information regarding the tax rate and the $65,000 for the RRA per the City/RRA contract. There was also discussion about which expenses can be reimbursed through the TIF Bond. It was Mary's understanding that Stephanie from White & Burke said the $65,000 for the RRA was not a TIF reimbursable expense.

X. Old Business – BIAP State Street Self-storage tabled from June 24. Chris moved to recommend approval to the Aldermen for a $10,000 BIAP Forgivable Loan to State Street Self-Storage for their expansion. Lori seconded. Discussion regarding whether the motion needs a majority of the Board of 5 yes votes to pass, or a majority of the members present. The discussion included the need for the two vacant seats on the RRA Board to be filled. The motion was called and failed with 4 yes and 3 no votes.

RRA FY26 Budget tabled from June 24 –. Lori moved to approve the RRA FY26 Budget as presented. Chris seconded. Chris asked if the salary line had been adjusted to reflect 11 months for Sean. Mary said both the salary line and healthcare lines were adjusted. The Board discussed how to cover the shortfall if the Aldermen don't approve the City's fund balance assignments for FY25. Motion was approved 7-0.

RRA FY25 Fund Balance Assignments – Mary proposed that the anticipated fund balance of $60,000, after paying Gallagher Flynn and any remaining FY25 expenses, be assigned to admin reserve and business development. She also proposed creating a new assignment for TIF. Chris made the argument for assigning the fund balance to Admin Reserve. He moved to assign $35,000 to Admin Reserve and leave the remaining balance unassigned. Lori seconded. Motion was approved 7-0. Mary said it will be important for the Board to be heavily involved in the FY27 budget process. Israel asked what would happen if the TIF bond fails. Mary believes work would continue on Center Street using the NBRC and VTrans grants, but the City would be on the hook for the matching funds.

Executive Director Search update – Edward said that Sean Adkins will start on July 28. He suggested that the next RRA meeting be rescheduled to July 29 from the 22nd. Israel so moved. Chris seconded. Motion was approved 7-0.

XI. New Business – Discussion of DRP Streetscape subcontract and process. Barbara said she met with Hal and was informed that the Rec is unable to provide the streetscape work for the Downtown. Hal is asking the RRA for guidance on subcontracting the work with the $11,000 budget. Edward suggested creating a written scope of work and reaching out to entities who may submit quotes and evaluate those for the subcontract. Chris stated the RRA/DRP Agreement does not require RRA Board approval for DRP subcontracts.

July 10 Party Update – Edward reminded Board members to RSVP if they had not already.

XII. Adjourn – All items on the agenda were addressed. The meeting ended at 9:18 am. The next meeting will be held on July 29 at 8 am.

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

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Mary A. Markowski, Secretary