



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

Regular Meeting / September 23, 2025
Minutes

Attendance: Edward Clark, Mary Markowski, Chris Ettori, Larry Cupoli, Stephanie Romeo

Also attending: Sean Adkins, Ed Bove, Nikki and Ben Powell, Hal Issante, Mayor Doenges and Barbara Spaulding

Absent: Lori Arner and Israel Mac

- I. Edward called the meeting to order at 8:02 am.
- II. Additions/Deletions – Edward suggested moving the BIAP request and BIAP Update from Euphoric Hair Experience after the warrant.
- III. Larry moved to approve the minutes of Sept. 9, 2025. Chris seconded. Motion was approved 5-0.
- IV. Public Comment – None.
- V. Warrant – Chris moved to direct the Chair to sign the warrant for 800 expenses totaling \$453.44. Larry seconded. Motion was approved 5-0.
- VI. New Business – BIAP Application – Rustic Magnolia

Barbara introduced the application saying the request is for a \$5,000 BIAP grant to open a flower shop and community workshop space at 230 N Main Street, Taylor Park, in Rutland. The funds would be used to renovate the space which was formerly an office of Rutland Mental Health Services and purchase equipment. The application meets the criteria for a BIAP grant with total investment of \$25,000.

Nikki discussed her plans to open the flower shop and her commitment to community engagement through the schools. She also discussed her sustainability plans which include a bring back vase program and using recycled foam. Chris suggested she collaborate with Clover Exploration and Wonderfeet in a group marketing effort. Mary asked about her experience as a business owner. Nikki said she had been the office manager for a lawyer and worked for her parents when they owned Bomoseen Golf Land. Together with her husband, they have been Scout leaders for 12 years. She also took business classes at VTCU and she had a conversation with Lisa in the Treasurer's office regarding the 1% local options tax. Edward said the request would be tabled for two weeks.

VII. DRP Update – Discussion of sign request for Howe Center

Hal said he received a request from David Giancola to return the sign to the corridor sign at Madison and North Main Street directing people to Howe Center. The total cost of the sign including design, brackets and installation is \$456.50. The sign would also include Rutland Recreation Community Center. Chris discussed the origin of the sign and suggested leaving space to also add Casella Training Facility. Edward asked who should pay for the sign with the locations being outside of the Special Benefits District. Chris moved to approve an amount up to \$500.00 from the RRA's business development fund to pay for the addition of a sign in support of entities mentioned to the sign on Madison Street. Larry seconded. Motion was approved 5-0. Edward asked Hal when the parklets would be removed from Center Street. Hal said Oct. 19.

VIII. Executive Director Update – Sean provided the FaceLIFT application process and application in the RRA Board packet. He said he had not taken the concept to the Aldermen because he was not sure if the funding source had been identified and depending on that source whether he needed to get Aldermen's approval. Edward said as stated in the BIAP policy, the RRA makes a recommendation to the Aldermen and therefore the Aldermen need to approve any changes to the BIAP policy and funding.

Sean said he has been appointed to the Land Banking Committee for the State, however he will lobby for local level management to allow for more control.

Mayor Doenges discussed the Economic Development Fund (EDF) to be funded initially through the sale of 107 West Street. The lease payments were directed to the parking meter fund to resolve its deficit. The parking meter fund is now self-sustaining. The EDF would be managed by the RRA to assist where market failure exists instead of relying on the general fund. Sean added that this will also help with TIF as an interest-bearing account that will grow with other resources over time.

Sean asked the Board if they would be open to increasing the \$5,500 donation to CEDRR to up to \$10,000 for additional radio ads. Mary said she would like to see how the initial \$5,500 was spent. Larry discussed the missing information on the TIF lawn signs. There was discussion regarding what would be the best media use for the additional funding. Edward suggesting leveraging the ads for the public meeting on Oct. 6. Sean discussed hosting a webinar. Ed Bove talked about the door knob hangers with the TIF vote date and QR code. He also mentioned the radio ads being done by David Allaire, Sharon Davis and Bill Gillam as effective. There was a PEGTV Rutland Region Report taped recently discussing the TIF Bond vote that has received good feedback. Chris discussed a direct marketing plan and calling people who will vote "yes" and making sure they get out to vote. Larry discussed growing concerns with the lack of voters going to the polls. Hal said they will be canvassing the Downtown and handing out a voter "toolkit", as well as, another group

canvassing outside the Downtown. Chris moved to approve up to \$10,000 total donation to CEDRR from the RRA's Business Development Fund in support of advertising the TIF Bond vote to include direct voter contact. Stephanie seconded. Motion was approved 5-0.

- IX. TIF Update – Sean said the City has received the \$500,000 Sales Tax Reallocation.
- X. BOA Update – Larry said the draft zoning plan was sent back to the Planning Commission. He discussed the concerns from neighbors of the Loretto Home regarding that location housing the homeless. Larry also said that the Mayor put forth a name for the Recreation Superintendent, but the Board had some issues with the fact that the Mayor had not appointed someone within the 90 day window. Mary agreed that the issue of the recreation superintendent is looming over the City and needs to be resolved sooner rather than later. Ed said he believed that the Planning Commission would leave the zoning map “as is” which would allow for an emergency shelter in the Park District. The Aldermen would need to make a change to the zoning map.
- XI. Old Business – None.
- XII. New Business – BIAP Second Annual report The Mad Rose. Chris moved to receive and file. Stephanie seconded. Motion was approved 5-0.

BIAP Update – Euphoric Hair Experience

Barbara forwarded the letter dated 3/18/2024 from La'Keiah to the RRA Board in their packet. She expected La'Keiah to be in attendance to discuss her current situation. Edward suggested reaching out to La'Keiah and having her attend one of the October meetings. Mary asked Barbara to prepare a list of \$10,000 BIAP Loan recipients. Mayor Doenges discussed changing the BIAP loans to all grants, but that he would not like to see the program change dramatically because he sees how it attracts businesses to Rutland. He would be in favor of the grants being used to reimburse expenses as opposed to being given up front.

- XIII. Adjourn – Larry moved to adjourn. Chris seconded. Motion was approved 5-0. The meeting ended at 8:57 am. The next meeting will be held on October 14 at 8 am.

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

Mary A. Markowski, Secretary