

CANAL PLACE PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Tuesday, November 26, 2019, Meeting Minutes
Western Maryland Railway Station, Third Floor Conference Room
Cumberland, Maryland

Pursuant to notice distributed to members of the Canal Place Preservation and Development Authority, posted in the main entrance of the Western Maryland Railway Station, and circulated to the press, a meeting of the Authority was held at the Western Maryland Railway Station, 3rd Floor Conference Room, Cumberland, Maryland, on Tuesday, November 26, 2019.

Authority Members Present: Janice Keene, Chair; Robert Smith, Ray Morriss, Al Feldstein, and Stuart Czapski.

Staff Present: Deidra Ritchie, Executive Director; Eric Harman, Financial Officer; Paul Cucuzzella and Nicole Gray, Administrative Specialist.

Others Present: Bryan Gowans, WCBC Radio; William Bauman, C&O Canal Association; Rob Reckart, Local 423 Carpenter Union; Ron Lewis, Diann Lewis, Donelly F. Bohrer, Robin Summerfield, and Josh Nolen, National Park Service.

I. CALL TO ORDER & CHAIRMAN’S REMARKS

Mrs. Keene called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM. Mrs. Keene and Ms. Ritchie thank the following people for helping with the rehabilitation of the canal boat replica, “The Cumberland”: Ronald W. and DiAnn Lewis, volunteer coordinators; Rob Reckart, Local 423 Carpenters Union representative; and William Bauman, C&O Canal Association. Ms. Ritchie expressed her gratitude for all their efforts and gave each a plaque or certificate commemorating the occasion.

II. REVIEW/APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND FINANCIALS

The following motion was offered by Mr. Smith:

RESOLVED, that the open session minutes of the September 24, 2019 open session (Attachment #1) be approved as distributed.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Czapski and unanimously approved.

Mr. Harman reviewed the Revenue sheets (**Attachment #2**) and the monthly Financial reports (**Attachment #3**) for September and October 2019, and reported that for revenues were typical for the time period and expenses were also typical but did included a second payment made to CEC, Inc., the engineering firm working on the Canal Place River Park feasibility study.

The following motion was offered by Mr. Feldstein:

RESOLVED, that the Financial and Revenue statements for September and October FY20 be approved as distributed.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Morriss and unanimously approved.

III. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Ritchie highlighted her Executive Director's Report (**Attachment #4**), by stating:

- Allegany County Tourism and Canal Place were awarded the "Best Cooperative Partnership" Award at the recent Maryland Travel and Tourism Summit held at Rocky Gap Casino & Resort. The award recognized their combined efforts to rebrand Maryland's first heritage area as Passages of the Western Potomac Heritage Area.
- The newly renamed heritage area is also getting a newly revamped website thanks to Dave Romero. The website should be operational in early 2020.
- Met with the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad to prepare for holiday functions.
- The Maryland Heritage Areas Authority has hired Parker Phillips to conduct an economic impact study of all the heritage areas in Maryland. Interviews regarding visitor numbers, peak seasons, and visitor experience have been conducted.
- November 4, 2019, CEC, Inc. presented the first draft of the River Park at Canal Place project. The presentation was well attended.
- Organized a meeting to address African American Heritage projects and priorities which was well attended; follow up meetings are anticipated.
- Maryland Heritage Areas Mini Grants are being revamped.
- Notice was given that the District One Delegation meeting would happen on January 22, 2020, in Annapolis.

IV. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE UPDATE

Mr. Josh Nolan, the new Western Maryland Supervisor for Interpretation, reported that there are many staffing changes within the park service as multiple division chiefs have retired along with the Superintendent; no replacements Superintendent has been named at this time. Many projects are continuing including visitor surveys, resurfacing of the towpath, Paw Paw Tunnel rock scaling, as well as the construction of the new headquarters in Williamsport, Maryland. Candoc to Spring Gap was identified as a section of the towpath that is some of the roughest, no timeframe was given for its repair.

V. OLD BUSINESS

- **Footer's Dye Works Update**

Ms. Ritchie stated that all the apartments are full, Sprint has moved into the first floor, and Dig Deep Brewery is booming with business. There are currently two retail spaces available on the first floor and it is understood that there is interest in those available spaces.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- **Presentation of River Park**

Ms. Ritchie referred the attendees to read her Executive Directors report for the status of the park.

- **Website/Social Media**

Ms. Ritchie stated that since Canal Place no longer has a marketing position, staff has taken on those duties and she is very appreciative of the staff for what has been accomplished. At this time a brochure was created by Miss Gray to promote the shops to visitors. Mr. Harman has taken on the management of the Facebook page and explained his goal with Tenant Spotlights and in the future, History Spotlights, in an effort to get “likes” up for the page.

- **Energy Performance Contract**

Ms. Ritchie stated that there is a green initiative for state agencies and that data was sent to the state to create a baseline number for Canal Place. Preliminary numbers show that the recent improvements have already increased the utility savings for the agency.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mrs. Keene thanked all board members for their commitment to the cause and also thanked staff for their hard work.

VIII. NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting of the Canal Place Authority is scheduled for Tuesday, January 28, 2020 at 1:30 PM.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Feldstein offered a motion to adjourn the open session.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Morriss and unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 2:15 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Janice Keene,
Chair