

CANAL PLACE PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Tuesday, May 25, 2021, Meeting Minutes
Via Zoom 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 via Zoom at the Western Maryland Railway Station, 3rd Floor Conference Room, Cumberland, Maryland, on Tuesday, May 25, 2021.

Authority Members Present: Janice Keene, Chair; Rebecca Ruppert, Stuart Czapski, Al Feldstein, Ray Morriss and Jeremy Bender.

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

Others Present: Greg Larry, Cumberland Times-News; Melinda Kelleher, Downtown Development Commission; Robert Smith, City of Cumberland; Jan Wunderlick and Terry Murphy.

I. CALL TO ORDER & CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

Mrs. Keene called the meeting to order at 1:32 PM.

II. REVIEW/APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND FINANCIALS

The following motion was offered by Mr. Feldstein:

RESOLVED, that the open session minutes of the March 30, 2021 open session (Attachment #1) be approved as submitted.

The motion was seconded by Mrs. Ruppert and unanimously approved.

The following motion was offered by Mr. Feldstein:

RESOLVED, that the closed session minutes of the March 30, 2021 closed session (Attachment #2) be approved as submitted.

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

The following motion was offered by Mr. Czapski:

RESOLVED, that the open session minutes of the May 5, 2021 open session (Attachment #3) be approved as submitted.

The motion was seconded by Mrs. Ruppert and unanimously approved.

The following motion was offered by Mrs. Ruppert:

RESOLVED, that the closed session minutes of the May 5, 2021 closed session (Attachment #4) be approved as submitted.

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

Mr. Harman reviewed the Revenue sheets (**Attachment #5**) and the monthly Financial reports (**Attachment #6**). Mr. Harman reported that the revenue was standard with the announcement that two new tenants have made their first rent payments in April. For expenses, it was noted that there were three pay periods in March, and there was also a payment for the state budget and reporting system of \$14,700.

The following motion was offered by Mr. Feldstein:

RESOLVED, that the Financial and Revenue statements for March and April of FY21 be approved as distributed.

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

III. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Ritchie highlighted her Executive Director's Report (**Attachment #7**), by stating:

- Congratulations to Janice Keene for being recognized as one of Maryland's Top 100 Women for 2021. Janice previously was given this same honor in 2013 and 2015.
- Received and ranked MHAA grants for Fiscal Year 22. Thank you to Janice Keene, Rebecca Ruppert, David Jones, Kathy McKenney, and Julie O'Neal for their time and assistance in these review and rankings.
- Wrote and submitted a MHAA Management Grant for Canal Place and the Passages of the Western Potomac Heritage Area. In addition, wrote and submitted applications for the FY 22 Block Grant and Management Plan Update.
- Attended a Cumberland Mayor and City Council meeting to request matching funds for the Passages of the Western Potomac Heritage Area Management Plan Update to expand the heritage area. Thank you to the city for the approval of the \$25k to update the plan.
- Participated in the Dedication of the new Mile Marker Zero Monument at Canal Place. Thanks to Tim Martin for assisting with the installation of that marker and to all the board members who attended the ceremony.
- The Del McCoury Band will play on the Canal Place Festival Grounds on May 31, 2021 from 2-5 pm. This is a free concert and everyone is invited to attend. Thank you to Del McCoury, Barb Buehl, the city of Cumberland, and to Canal Place for making this happen.

IV. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE UPDATE

There was no update given.

V. OLD BUSINESS

- Station Lease Update

Ms. Ritchie reported that the station has a new tenant ATR Advantage, a human resource/payroll service. Additionally, it was noted that the agreement with Goodfellow Realty, to handle finding new tenants, has not been signed at this time due to some issues in their paperwork, but the spaces have been shown by staff.

- River Park Update

Ms. Ritchie referred board members to the proposed River Park Timeline (**Attachment #8**). Ms. Ritchie stated that she was pleased with the progress in such a short amount of time with a plan drafted and approved since the kickoff in 2017. Mitigation will begin next once the property owners are identified on the river park boundary. With local businesses wanting to donate to the project the Community Trust Foundation was contacted to see if they could represent the river park as a 501(c)3. Mrs. Ruppert and Ms. Ritchie met with and upon state approval and some documentation, this partnership will be feasible.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- **Office of Legislative Services – Audit**

Ms. Ritchie explained that every three years the state conducts an audit on state agencies. Recently an audit was conducted on Canal Place and the subsequent report (**Attachment #9**) indicated one finding for not having a FY18 audit completed. Ms. Ritchie went on to explain that the FY18 was solicited on time, a firm was selected and they are still not done the audit. Ms. Ritchie has been in touch with the firm on numerous occasions and only recently has the firm begun work on the audit again with a promise of completion by the end of May. It was suggested by OLA to solicit firms from the state website which was done and several firms did send in bids for the FY19-20-21 audits. The firm SB & Company of Owings Mills, Maryland who is a minority business, was selected and upon the FY18 audits completion they will begin the FY19-20-21 audits.

- **Department of General Services – Capital Maintenance**

Ms. Ritchie stated that in 2013 the Department of General Services (DGS) was brought up to view the property, as they were not aware that there were state owned buildings at Canal Place. Since that time, it has been the hope of Canal Place staff to have the capital maintenance fall under the DGS budget. At this time there are loose slates and crumbling mortar on the dormers of the Western Maryland Railway Station. A more recent inspection from DGS has resulted in

DGS agreeing to take on the repair and they have also started the process of getting Canal Place entered into their budget for capital repairs, which is anything over \$5,000.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

Terry Murphy and Jan Wunderlick spoke on the need for help on the Washington Street Bridge which is currently not open to both pedestrian and vehicular traffic. The pair asked for support on a petition for the replacement of the bridge.

Robert Smith, an engineer for the city of Cumberland, stated that he was available to answer any questions from board members and meeting attendees on the bridge and gave some technical information on the bridges that are currently not open for traffic.

Mrs. Keene stated that at this time the board would like to take the information under advisement and will respond with questions if they should arise.

VIII. NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting of the Canal Place Authority is scheduled for Tuesday, July 27, 2021 at 1:30 PM.

Mrs. Ruppert made a motion to enter into closed session under General Provisions Article § 3-305(b)(4) to consider a preliminary matter that concerns the proposal for a business or industrial organization to locate, expand, or remain in the State, relating to the leases at Canal Place, and (14) before a contract is awarded or bids are opened, discuss a matter directly related to a negotiating strategy or the contents of a bid or proposal, if public discussion or disclosure would adversely impact the ability of the public body to participate in the competitive bidding or proposal process.

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

Closed Session Attendees: Janice Keene, Rebecca Ruppert, Stuart Czapski, Al Feldstein, Ray Morriss, Jeremy Bender, Deidra Ritchie, Eric Harman, Paul Cucuzzella and Nicole Gray.

IX. RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

The Authority returned to open session at 2:39 PM.

No action was taken in Closed Session.

X. ADJOURNMENT

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

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The motion was seconded by Mr. Czapski and unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 2:39 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Janice Keene,
Chair