

CANAL PLACE PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Tuesday, May 31, 2022, 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 31, 2022.

Authority Members Present: Rebecca Ruppert; Al Feldstein, Ray Morriss, Bradford Nixon, and Jeremy Bender.

Staff Present: Deidra Ritchie, Executive Director; Nicole Gray, Financial Manager and Crystal Lloyd, Administrative Aide.

Others Present: Adam Snyder, Litigation Deputy Chief at State of Maryland, Robin Summerfield, Aide to Senator Cardin, Brian Gowans, WCBC Radio, Shayna Gutcho, Aide for Representative Trone, Greg Larry, Times News, and Anthony Bates, National Park Service.

I. CALL TO ORDER & CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

Mrs. Ruppert called the meeting to order at 1:33 PM. Mrs. Ruppert acknowledged the departure of LeeAnn Mazer due to her work schedule and thanked her for her service during her time as a board member of Canal Place. Mrs. Ruppert announced new board member, Bradford Nixon, legal counsel at Frostburg State University. Mr. Nixon announced that he and his wife had moved to the area 5 years ago and that she is the Executive Director for the Allegany Arts Council. He was excited that Ms. Ritchie had asked him to be part of the Board of Directors at Canal Place Preservation Authority. Mr. Feldstein joked that all of the art he presents to the Arts Council is placed in a back room. Mrs. Ruppert also announced Canal Place's new attorney, Adam Snyder, Litigation Deputy Chief at State of Maryland. Attorney Snyder announced that he has been with the Attorney General's office for 25 years, the first half of his career was spent with the Department of the Environment with respect to variety of issues in relation water fusion control and the past 6 years overseeing the advice that are 400 some lawyers give to their agency clients advice and the past 6 years as the Deputy Chief of Civil Litigation Division in the federal court with appellate litigation with a variety of constitutional type issues. Attorney Snyder stated that he was excited to be here

and work with the many fine people and organizations associated with Canal Place and is excited and get started.

II. REVIEW/APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND FINANCIALS

The following motion was offered by Al Feldstein:

RESOLVED, that the open session minutes of the January 25, 2022, open session (Attachment #1) be approved as submitted.

The motion was seconded by Mayor Ray Morriss and unanimously approved.

Miss Gray reviewed the Revenue sheets Miss Gray reported on the expense reports for January, February, March, and April 2022 due to the March 2022 Board of Directors' meeting being postponed. The last 4 months we have been doing a lot, and we have paid over \$26,000 for engineering land and expenses to the River Park Project and that has been our big expense. We were given payroll bonuses in the amount of \$1,500 from the State of Maryland for February and that along with catching up Ms. Lloyd's payroll and for that reason, the month of February was above the other months as far as expenses. We have been spending the way that we should have been for all of our expenses. We are caught up on all rent paid by tenants, and we do have some tenants who periodically pay their rent ahead of time. Otherwise, everything with revenue is good. Please let me know if you have any questions on the financials.

The following motion was offered by Al Feldstein:

RESOLVED, that the Financial and Revenue statements for January, February, March and April of FY22 be approved as distributed.

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

III. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Ritchie highlighted her Executive Director's Report (Attachment #1), by stating:

- The CPPDA would like to take a moment to express their deepest sympathy to the family of Doug Hutchins (Hutch) who lost his battle with pancreatic cancer on May 13, 2022. Hutch was a long-time owner of Cumberland Trail Connection located at the Shops at Canal Place. No word from his family on a memorial service, but we will notify everyone once we find out any information. RIP Hutch.
- Met with several MHAA applicants to assist them with the upcoming MHAA grants.
- Attended Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area Board meeting.
- Congratulations to the following Allegany County entities that received funding from the AFNHA mini grant round: Allegany County Tourism to open the Toll House for tours-\$1,278, Evergreen Heritage Center for Self-Guided Tours-\$5,000, Allegany Museum Creative Center-\$5,000
- Presented a power point entitled Canal Place the next five years to the Canal Towns Partnership.
- At the request of Delegate Jason Buckle, a meeting to discuss the Canal Place Task Force Study was held. No further movement on the final report has occurred.
- Participated in monthly meetings with the Maryland Coalition of Heritage Areas.
- Attended City of Cumberland Sustainable Community meetings.
- Attended Carver Center Board of Directors meetings.
- Worked on and submitted the CPPDA/PWPHA FY23 Management Grant and Block Grant.

- Submitted three Earmark Requests to the District 6 Representatives for the River Park project. Followed up on the request to Senator Van Hollen and provided the additional materials his office requested.
- Submitted an Intent to Apply to the Rural Maryland Council to assist in the funding for the heritage area boundary expansion and management plan update
- Attended Civil War Trails partnership meeting.
- Attended the dedication of the Allegany Museum's Crossroads of American display and the dedication of the 1309 of the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad.
- Attended Cas Taylor's Bridge Dedication that was held at Canal Place
- Attended Working Women's Lunch
- Attended International Women's Day at Rocky Gap. Congratulations to Julie McCoy for putting on a very successful event.

Administrative/Operational

- Attended the Cumberland Economic Development Commission's Strategic Plan Update meeting.
- Reviewed FY23 MHAA grants and provided comments and recommendations.
- Advertised RFP for PWPFA boundary expansion and management plan update.

- Submitted AFNHA mini grant on behalf of the CPPDA. This grant will supplement funding for the PWWHA boundary expansion and plan.
- Participated in the grants review for the AFNHA mini grants.
- Submitted a grant to the AFNHA and was awarded \$2,000 to be utilized for the PWWHA boundary expansion and management plan update.
- Met with Land and Water Solutions, Army Corp, MDE, Bill Atkinson, and CEC Inc to discuss outcome of the River Park at Canal Place prospectus. At this point, the mitigation banking project service area was not recommended to be extended to the D.C. area. Additional ecological justification must be provided to the Intergovernmental Review Team in order for them to reconsider an extended service area. Had follow up discussions with MDE, Army Corp, and American Rivers regarding this project.
- Prepared and presented the CPPDA'S FY23 Budget Testimony to the House and Senate.
- Attended quarterly meeting of the MHAA.
- Met with the Mayor of Westernport/Circuit Rider to discuss heritage area expansion.
- Met with State Information Technology Department rep on several IT issues.
- Participated in meeting with auditors for an update on the FY19-21 audits.

- Met with John Noel from C&O National Historic Park for updates on C&O Canal projects.
- Had discussions with the Baltimore National Heritage Area Director, Shauntee Daniels, in regards to national heritage area grants.
- Attended Appalachia Envisioned Roadshow.
- Presented PWPHA and FY23 MHAA project grants to the MHAA grants panel.
- Reviewed draft management plan for the AFNHA.
- Attended meeting with C&O National Historic Park regarding upcoming projects in Allegany County.
- Hosted Chalk It Up Event at Canal Place.
- Met with Tifani Fisher from NAACP
- The RFP for the PWPHA Management Plan Update and Boundary Expansion was advertised twice over the last several months. We received no responses. We will work with Allegany County Tourism to revisit the proposal and then resubmit proposal.

Tenants at Canal Place

Maintenance has been busy at the shop area and on the grounds with Spring clean-up.

Upcoming Meetings and Conferences

Maryland Heritage Area Grants Review to the grants panel, June 6th.

Upcoming Events

June 5-Cumberland Pride Festival

June 18 & 19-Juneteenth Event

June 24 & June 25- Rock the Mountains

June 30-Story Time- Allegany County Library

July 8, 9 & 10 Old AHS-Fade to Blue

July 23-Love Revival/City Outreach Church-Afternoon of Fellowship

July 26th- Story Time-Allegany County Library

IV. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE UPDATE

Mr. Anthony Bates, Parks Partnership Coordinator, (standing in for Tina Cappetta) attended the meeting representing the NPS and provided the following updates: Unfortunately, National Park Service (NPS) is very sad that their partnership that they have had with Allegany County Tourism for several years is ending. Their team is committed to having an office in Cumberland and they are working hard to find a ranger to be stationed here in Cumberland. On a positive note, this will open up an opportunity for additional partnerships who would be willing to manage the facility here. They would appreciate any contract information about anyone willing to partner with them on this opportunity.

NEW BUSINESS

Decision was made to ratify/approve the Grant Review Committee and the MHAA Grants before Mr. Feldstein had to drop the call due to a Board of Education (BOE) meeting he needed to attend so that we could meet the quorum requirement.

FY22 Grant Review Committee Approval/Ratification-Dee Dee

This is to ratify the online vote for the approval of the additions to the grant review committee. The online vote occurred March 23, 2022. The online vote had 6 "yeas" (Janice, Becky, Ray, Stu, Bradford, and Al).

Review/Questions – Approval of grant review committee. Ms. Ritchie announced that Julie O’Neil (YMCA), Melinda Kelleher (Downtown Development Commission), Ruth Davis-Rodgers (City of Cumberland Department of Community Development), Deidre Robertson (Frostburg First), and the following were added to this committee and that she is requesting approval/ratification of these members.

RM Motion for Approval of Ratifying Approval of grant review committee. Mayor Morriss made the motion to approve.

AF Second for Approval of Ratifying Approval of grant review committee. Mr. Feldstein made the second motion.

All in Favor /Opposed – All in favor

The following motion was offered by Mayor Ray Morriss:

RESOLVED, the FY22 Grant Review Committee Approval/Ratification.

The motion was seconded by Al Felstein and unanimously approved.

FY23 MHAA Grants- Dee Dee

(Previously we have voted on this but they have already been submitted to MHAA)

Review/Questions – FY23 MHAA Grants

RM Motion for Approval of FY23 MHAA Grants- Mayor Morriss made the motion to approve.

JB Second for Approval of FY23 MHAA Grants- Mr. Bender made the second motion.

All in Favor /Opposed- All in favor

The following motion was offered by Mayor Ray Morriss:

RESOLVED, the FY23 MHAA Grants.

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

OLD BUSINESS

- **River Park Update**

Mr. Atkinson did not attend the meeting, and Ms. Ritchie indicated that she had no updates and that there would be the last and final meeting on June 7 with the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Maryland Department of the Environment (IRT Meeting), to try to justify the service area for the River Park starting at Allegany County Fairgrounds that extends to the Chesapeake Bay. The problem is that there is not enough ecological justification to allow for that large of a service area from Cumberland to the Bay. We have one last shot at providing that ecological justification to the IRT on June 7. They will make their final decision probably later in June. Obviously, we are hoping for good news, but the problem seems to be that any work we would do up here, for example, removal of the dam and then sediment clean up behind that dam is not going to have a large enough impact to affect the area downstream. They are suggesting a smaller service area and with a smaller service area it is not enough financial investment for land and water solutions to put in their own money to take down the dam and take care of the project. Again, that meeting is scheduled for June 7th, and we will let you know the outcome of that meeting.

- V. **PUBLIC COMMENT-** Mr. Robin Summerfield of Senator Cardin's office stated that there were 2 Earmark requests submitted by Ms. Ritchie in the amount of \$6 million each and they have been approved. The first one is for the North Branch Water Trail, and the second one is for the River Park Project. The second

VI. NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting of the Canal Place Authority is scheduled for Tuesday, July 26, 2022 at 1:30 PM.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

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

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

Respectfully Submitted,
Rebecca Ruppert,

Canal Place Authority
Meeting Minutes
May 31, 2022

Co-Chair