

CANAL PLACE PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Thursday, July 13, 2023 Meeting Minutes
Frostburg State University Campus, Gira Center, Room 397, Frostburg, 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 in person at Frostburg State University, Gira Center, Room 397, Frostburg, Maryland, on July 13, 2023.

Authority Members Present: Janice Keene; Rebecca Ruppert, Bradford Nixon, and Al Feldstein.

Staff Present: Deidra Ritchie, Executive Director; Nicole Gray, Financial Manager; Adam Snyder, Legal Counsel.

Others Present: Joe Rogers, Maryland Department of Planning; Bethany Fife, Frostburg Director of Community Development; Chris Stevens, NPS; Jessica Sainz, Allegany County Tourism; Representative, WCBC Radio (via Zoom); August Carlino, Nancy Morgan, and Peter Samuel, Acorn Hill Strategies Consultants.

I. CALL TO ORDER & CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

Mrs. Keene called the meeting to order at 9:45 AM.

II. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND FINANCIALS

The following motion was offered by Mr. Feldstein.

RESOLVED, that the open session minutes of the May 30, 2023, open session (Attachment #1) be approved as submitted.

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

Miss Gray reviewed the Expense report (**Attachment #2**), and the Revenue report (**Attachment#3**), for the month of May 2023

Miss Gray stated that expenses remained the same and there is nothing out of the ordinary to report. One tenant paid towards their back rent, but an outstanding balance remains. All other rent payments are current. The June 2023 financials were not available due to the timing of this meeting.

The following motion was offered by Mrs. Ruppert.

RESOLVED, that the Financial Expense and Revenue statements for May FY23 be approved as distributed.

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

III. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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

- The EV chargers have now been installed at Canal Place. We are now in discussions about the potential of installing electric bike charges at Canal Place as well.
- Participated in two Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (MHAA) Grant Review panel meetings to answer questions regarding FY24 MHAA grant submissions for the Passages of the Western Potomac Heritage Area (PWPHA).
- Spoke at the Rotary Club meeting about the River Park at Canal Place.
- The Cumberland Railroad Museum has vacated Space C-5 at the Shops at Canal Place, and Elaia Oil & Vinegar will occupy that space. Simplee Kountry has vacated Space C-2, and Jasmina Hair Salon will occupy that space.
- Robert Dettinburn has confirmed that Dig Deep Eatery will remain open in Space C-3.
- The Levitt Amp Concert Series held at Canal Place and sponsored by The Allegany Arts Council has been a great success and a thank you to Executive Director, Julie Westendorff.
- AFNHA Tourism Summit August 2 at Allegany Museum and August 3 at Evergreen Heritage Center.

IV. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE UPDATE

Chris Stevens represented the park service for this meeting. Mr. Stevens provided towpath conditions from milepost 150-184.5 that includes Paw Paw, WV Spring Gap, MD, and Cumberland, MD. He confirmed that the Visitor Center in Cumberland remains open Friday through Sunday from 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

V. OLD BUSINESS

River Park Update

Ms. Ritchie stated that at our last board meeting the subject of potentially eliminating the Wills Creek Bridge is now off the table due to the pipe that will rewater the basin located on Canal Place property is attached to that bridge. The Department of General Services (DGS) will be renovating the bridge rather than eliminating it. The preliminary engineering report that will provide all of the information that will enable Canal Place to proceed with the engineering, permits, and design of the River Park will be presented by the consultant at the end of July. The City of Cumberland will then assist with creating the RFP. Ms. Ritchie mentioned that the capital Budget forms need to be submitted before the \$6 million will be awarded for the River Park Project.

- **PWPHA Expansion Update**

Ms. Ritchie stated that Acorn Hill Strategies would elaborate on the expansion after our board meeting."

- **New Tenants-Shops at Canal Place-**

Ms. Ritchie noted that the new tenants for the Shops at Canal Place were discussed during her Executive Director's Report earlier.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- **FY24 MHAA Grants**

Crystal Lloyd is representing Canal Place for the MHAA Grant Award meeting via Zoom at this time. Allegany County was awarded \$90,000 for sediment testing, and \$90,000 for bathroom installation at the Frostburg Depot and the GAP trail were approved. Canal Place was awarded a \$100,000 management grant, and a \$25,000 mini block grant

- **E-Bike Chargers**

Ms. Ritchie stated Mountain Maryland Trails (MMT) submitted a proposal for E-Bike chargers to be placed on Canal Place property which would cost approximately \$6,000. Ms. Ritchie was under the assumption that the chargers were to be funded by MMT, but after meeting with John Emerick, Vice President, Mountain Maryland Trails, the plan was for Canal Place to offer a match of \$3,000 have the chargers installed. Ms. Ritchie expressed concerns about Canal Place's budget, and that Canal Place would own them, which could cause liability to Canal Place due to maintaining the chargers, and the cost associated with said maintenance. Further discussion about the topic will continue.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Feldstein posed a question to Mrs. Keane in regard to the upcoming event being held at the Evergreen Heritage Center and a discussion ensued between the two of them.

VIII. NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting of the Canal Place Authority is scheduled for Tuesday, September 26, 2023 at a place to be determined at 1:30 p.m. Further details to follow.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

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

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

The meeting adjourned at 10:05 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Janice Keene, Chair