

**CANAL PLACE PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**  
**Tuesday, July 27, 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, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Conference Room, Cumberland, Maryland, on Tuesday, July 27, 2021.

**Authority Members Present:** Janice Keene, Chair; Rebecca Ruppert, Leanne Mazer, Stuart Czapski, Al Feldstein, and Ray Morriss.

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

**Others Present:** Greg Larry, Cumberland Times-News; Bryan Gowans, WCBC Radio; Melinda Kelleher, Downtown Development Commission; Kathy McKenney, City of Cumberland; Bill Atkinson, ECO Atkinson; Anthony Bates, National Park Service; and Wesley Heinz, Western Maryland Scenic Railroad.

**I. CALL TO ORDER & CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS**

Mrs. Keene called the meeting to order at 1:34 PM.

**II. REVIEW/APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND FINANCIALS**

The following motion was offered by Mr. Feldstein:

**RESOLVED, that the open session minutes of the May 25, 2021 open session (Attachment #1) be approved as submitted.**

The motion was seconded by Ms. Mazer and unanimously approved.

The following motion was offered by Mr. Czapski:

**RESOLVED, that the closed session minutes of the May 25, 2021 closed session (Attachment #2) be approved as submitted.**

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

Mr. Harman reviewed the Revenue sheets (**Attachment #3**) and the monthly Financial reports (**Attachment #4**). Mr. Harman reported that the revenue was typical for May and June with some accruals dictated by the year end close out. Mr. Harman did report that all tenants are current on rent. For expenses, it was noted that it was also typical for May and June with end of year notations and state fees applied. Mr. Morriss asked for confirmation on the tenant's payments being up to date. Mr. Harman confirmed that all tenants were up to date with rent. Mr. Morriss stated that hearing that was the best financial report you can get.

The following motion was offered by Mr. Feldstein:

**RESOLVED, that the Financial and Revenue statements for May and June of FY21 be approved as distributed.**

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

### III. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Ritchie highlighted her Executive Director's Report (**Attachment #5**), by stating:

- Mr. William Atkinson has been contracted with the CPPDA, the city of Cumberland, and Allegany County, as Project Manager for the River Park at Canal Place.
- Thank you to Tri County Council for asking me to welcome the new Co-Chair of the Appalachian Regional Commission and their new Director as they met in the CPPDA Conference Room. In addition, I was given the opportunity to present the River Park at Canal Place project.
- Del McCoury held a free concert on the Canal Place Festival Grounds. Canal Place staff placed a river park display at the event and approximately \$152 was donated to the project. The funds will be used for match for the River Park Survey project.
- Attended multiple Maryland Heritage Areas Authorities Quarterly and Coalition meetings.
- Met with the new General Superintendent of the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad, Wes Heinz.
- Reported information on the administration an operation of the CPPDA and the Passages of the Western Potomac Heritage Area to the STARS (State Transparency and Accountability Reform) Commission. Followed up with a written report for questions they had.
- Mr. Harman has been busy with the FY18, FY19 and FY20 audits as well as with year end close out for the state.
- We welcome back the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad to the Station! The WMSR has been negotiating with Canal Place to expand their holding as well, and we look forward to them growing.
- Congratulation to Charis Winery! They were awarded gold for their table wine Gabriel at the 2021 Finger Lakes International Wine and Spirits competition. The competition included entries from all 50 states and 23 different countries and included large, corporate wine producers. Be sure to check out all of Charis Winery's offerings today!
- Will be attending the Maryland Association of Counties conference held in Ocean City August 17-20 as well as the C&O World Conference in Hagerstown August 31.

#### **IV. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE UPDATE**

Anthony Bates reported for the National Park Service that the Visitor Centers are still closed throughout the park. NPS is working on a general agreement with Allegany County Tourism to re-open the center in Cumberland. There is no official re-opening date but NPS is hopeful that it occurs prior to the end of the fiscal year. Health and safety are of paramount importance for employees and visitors. There will be a virtual Junior Ranger camp and details can be found on the park website. Additionally, work continues on several projects as well as preparing for the ribbon cutting on the new headquarters in Williamsport. Mrs. Keene asked if, in regards to the re-opening of the Visitor Center, if that would be announced via local radio or on [mdmountainside.com](http://mdmountainside.com)? Mr. Bates replied that no specific media announcement has been discussed, but a consistent message will be stated when all the Centers re-open, which is hoped to be simultaneously.

#### **V. OLD BUSINESS**

- Grant Awards

Ms. Ritchie reported that the following grants were awarded:

- \$64,500 to the Allegany Museum for their HVAC system/Creation of New Exhibit Space
- \$95,000 to the Allegany County Commissioners for the Washington Street Library Restoration
- \$100,000 Heritage Area Management Grant to the CPPDA
- \$30,000 to the CPPDA for the Heritage Area Expansion, Management Plan Update
- \$25,000 Block Grant to the CPPDA/PWPHA for the Mini Grants Program

Mr. Feldstein asked what the library restoration consisted of. Ms. Ritchie explained that for the portion of the grant it will include retaining wall and sidewalk repair as well as tree removal and planting.

#### **VI. NEW BUSINESS**

- **River Park**

Ms. Ritchie ask Mr. Atkinson to update the board on the River Park project. Mr. Atkinson, project manager for the River Park, thanked those who have put their faith in him to complete the project. Work has been ongoing with a private developer who is facilitating a mitigation bank for the project and to get permitting to allow commencement of the project. Additionally, the developer is working on finding federal funding to reduce the cost of the mitigation. There are two Requests for Proposals (RFPs) that are out and that will need contracting approval from the board once proposals are received and evaluated. The RFPs involve grant writing and a boundary survey and once those consultants have been decided upon work will begin on getting

permits and paperwork to the Corp of Engineers. For the purposes of this project the City of Cumberland has agreed to take ownership of the dam so that it can be removed through mitigation. State Highway will maintain the pillars of the bridge that connected to the dam to make sure that they maintain their integrity. The mitigation team looks at the project as an ecological project and will do what is best for the river, and while they cannot do any of the river features or trails, they will keep those aspects in their plans and under consideration when they do their portion of the project. Mr. Atkinson then went over the details of the proposed timeline for the project. Mrs. Keene and Mr. Morriss both congratulated Ms. Ritchie and Mr. Atkinson in the progress of the project.

#### **VII. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

#### **VIII. NEXT MEETING DATE**

The next meeting of the Canal Place Authority is scheduled for Tuesday, September 28, 2021 at 1:30 PM.

Mr. Czapski made a motion to enter into closed session under General Provisions Article § 3-305(b) (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. Feldstein and unanimously approved.

**Closed Session Attendees:** Janice Keene, Chair; Rebecca Ruppert, Leanne Mazer, Stuart Czapski, Al Feldstein, Ray Morriss, Deidra Ritchie, Eric Harman, Paul Cucuzzella and Nicole Gray.

#### **IX. RETURN TO OPEN SESSION**

The Authority returned to open session at 2:28 PM.

No action was taken in Closed Session.

#### **X. ADJOURNMENT**

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

The motion was seconded by Mr. Morriss and unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 2:28 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Janice Keene,

Canal Place Authority  
Meeting Minutes  
July 27, 2021

Chair