

CANAL PLACE PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Tuesday, November 24, 2020, 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, November 24, 2020.

Authority Members Present: Janice Keene, Chair; Rebecca Ruppert, Jeremy Bender, 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; Melinda Kelleher, Downtown Development Commission.

I. CALL TO ORDER & CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

Mrs. Keene called the meeting to order at 1:33 PM.

II. REVIEW/APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND FINANCIALS

The following motion was offered by Mr. Morriss:

RESOLVED, that the open session minutes of the September 29, 2020 open session (Attachment #1) be approved as submitted.

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

The following motion was offered by Mrs. Ruppert:

RESOLVED, that the closed session minutes of the September 29, 2020 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 revenue during this time period shows rents, including owed rent, being paid to Canal Place. Additionally, there were no anomalies for the expense report.

The following motion was offered by Mr. Feldstein:

RESOLVED, that the Financial and Revenue statements for September and October of FY21 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 #5**), by stating:

- Staff continues to telework due to COVID-19 restrictions and are only in the office on Wednesdays to complete duties that cannot be done through telework. Staff also continue to pass onto tenants any Covid funding opportunities.
- Attended meetings to create a virtual site visit for recognition of Canal Place's performance upgrades done at the Western Maryland Railway Station. The Better Building Solutions in cooperation with CPPDA and the Department of General Services have scheduled an online event to showcase the station's energy savings.
- Finalized reimbursements for grant money owed to the CPPDA from the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority and ARC.
- Attended Canal Towns meetings as well as the planning meetings for the 50th Anniversary of the C&O Canal becoming a National Historic Park.
- Attended planning meeting for the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Management grant.
- Finalized review of the MHAA Economic Impact Study for the Passages of the Western Potomac Heritage Area.
- The CPPDA Legislative Audit is now underway virtually. Staff are responding to the auditor's questions and also meeting through online meeting platforms.
- Met with Daniel Taylor-Newman to discuss proposed marketing of lease space of the Western Maryland Railway Station.
- Began discussions with the cities of Cumberland and Frostburg to expand the heritage area.
- Participated in the Chamber of Commerce Leadership Allegany's Outdoor Recreation Day.
- Anticipate a second round of mini grants being opened in December for Non-Profits and Local Government entities.
- Maintenance is helping the Shops tenants prepare for the holidays with decorating.

IV. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE UPDATE

There was no update given.

V. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- **Department of General Services -Lease Rate Suggestion**

Ms. Ritchie report that she had been approached by representative of the Department of General Services about annual rent increases for the shop rents. Currently the shops' rents are increased based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI), which the board had previously set the method to be used. The DGS representatives felt it would be better to have the rate increases be similar to their process which is a standardized percentage (two percent). Mrs. Keene asked if legal counsel had an opinion on the topic. Mr. Cucuzzella replied that his opinion was to have it discussed at the current meeting. Mr. Czapski asked how this would affect current leases. Ms. Ritchie responded that it would only begin affecting the leases at the time of their next renewal. Mr. Czapski asked if the proposed percentage fell in line with the CPI. Miss Gray reported that the CPI values have maintained between 2.1 and 1.9 percent over the last three years.

The following motion was offered by Mr. Czapski:

RESOLVED, that the Canal Place Preservation and Development Authority approved the presented annual change to lease rates to a standard two percent for the tenants of the Canal Place Shops.

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

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

VIII. NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting of the Canal Place Authority is scheduled for Tuesday, January 26, 2021 at 1:30 PM.

Mrs. Ruppert 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. Bender and unanimously approved.

Canal Place Authority
Meeting Minutes
November 24, 2020

Closed Session Attendees: Janice Keene, Chair; Rebecca Ruppert, Leanne Mazer, Jeremy Bender, Stuart Czapski, Al Feldstein, Tina Cappetta, Deidra Ritchie, Eric Harman, Paul Cucuzzella and Nicole Gray.

IX. RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

The Authority returned to open session at 2:09 PM.

The following action was taken in closed session:

RESOLVED, that the Canal Place Preservation and Development Authority will not accept the proposal from Allegany Commercial Real Estate (ACRE) at this time for the marketing of the Western Maryland Railway Station.

X. ADJOURNMENT

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

The motion was seconded by Mrs. Ruppert and unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 2:09 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Janice Keene,
Chair