

**CANAL PLACE PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**  
**Tuesday, November 30, 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, November 30, 2021.

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

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

**Others Present:** Greg Larry, Cumberland Times-News; Bryan Gowans, WCBC Radio; Melinda Kelleher, Downtown Development Commission; and Josh Nolen, National Park Service.

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

Mrs. Keene called the meeting to order at 1:35 PM.

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

The following motion was offered by Mr. Czapski:

**RESOLVED, that the open session minutes of the September 28, 2021 open session (Attachment #1) be approved as submitted.**

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

Miss Gray reviewed the Revenue sheets (**Attachment #2**) and the monthly Financial Expense reports (**Attachment #3**). Miss Gray reported that the expenses for September included three pay periods as well as payments for CEC, Inc. for work on the river park project as well as Liberty Fire Solutions for replenishing the kitchen fire suppression system at Crabby Pig. Miss Gray reported that in regards to revenue all tenants are current, noting that the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad has begun paying rent. Mr. Bender asked if the train was paying on time and Miss Gray confirmed that the rent payments have been paid on time or early.

The following motion was offered by Mr. Feldstein:

**RESOLVED, that the Financial and Revenue statements for September and October of FY22 be approved as distributed.**

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

### III. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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

- Canal Place has advertised and conducted interviews for the Administrative Aide position that is currently vacant.
- The Department of General Services (DGS) facility maintenance team met onsite to fly a drone over the Western Maryland Railway Station dormers and roof.
- Met with Greg Larry to discuss the placement of the Joe Maphis bench at Canal Place. The dedication of that bench was held November 10, 2021.
- Attended the ten-year anniversary for the Garrett County Mountain Maryland Gateway to the West Heritage Area at the Garrett County Chamber of Commerce.
- Attended several Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (MHAA) meetings as well as MHAA Coalition meetings.
- Attended the city of Cumberland's Sustainable Communities Plan Update meeting.
- Participated in a meeting to update the Allegany County Visitors Guide.
- Held a tenant meeting at Canal Place. Melinda Kelleher from the DDC updated the tenants of the Farmers Market moving to Canal Place in 2022. Wes Heinz of the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad provided updates on the railroad.
- The "A Mazing City" Arts Council display will remain at the Canal Place Festival Grounds until the end of the year.
- Met with the auditors regarding the FY19-21 CPPDA audits to answer questions and provide them with the documents they need to complete the audits.

### IV. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE UPDATE

Josh Nolen of the National Park Service reported that Park Service personnel hosted the Secretary of the Interior and Congressman Trone at their new headquarters in Williamsport. The park continues to work toward an agreement with Allegany County Tourism to solidify their relationship in order to reopen the Visitor Center in Cumberland. At this time no indoor spaces are open in the park and the future opening of any indoor space will be based on current Covid-19 safety as well as local transmission rates.

### V. OLD BUSINESS

#### • **FY22 Mini Grant Approval – Ratification**

Ms. Ritchie explained that the FY22 Mini Grant season had started and that there were five applicants. These five applicants (Allegany High School, Allegany County Historical Society,

Allegany County Tourism, Frostburg First, and the Jane Gates House) had a combined ask of \$13,180. Canal Place is able to award up to \$25,000 to fund these applications. Ms. Ritchie stated that an email that was sent to board members on October 19, 2021, requesting members to vote on the decision to award all the applicants of the FY22 Mini Grants and a majority vote was received. At this time Ms. Ritchie requested a ratification of that vote. Mrs. Keene stated that online vote received “yay” votes from seven board members being Mrs. Ruppert, Mr. Czapski, Ms. Mazer, Mr. Feldstein, Mr. Bender, Mr. Smith as well as herself. Mr. Feldstein asked what was done with the remaining money. Ms. Ritchie explained that in previous years there was a second round of mini grants offered with all remaining funds being returned to MHAA.

The following motion was offered by Mr. Feldstein:

**RESOLVED, that the Canal Place Preservation and Development Authority approved the ratification of the awarding of the FY22 Mini Grant funds to the following applicants: Allegany High School, Allegany County Historical Society, Allegany County Tourism, Frostburg First, and the Jane Gates House.**

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

- **River Park Update**

Ms. Ritchie reported that meetings continue with federal representatives to garner their support for funding that will be sought after through federal channels. The prospectus for the river park has been submitted to the Army Corps of Engineers and the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) and Ms. Ritchie is hopeful that MDE will be scheduling the first public hearing in early December. Additionally, Civil and Environment Consultants (CEC) has sent out letters to the property owners about surveying the boundaries for the river park.

## **VI. NEW BUSINESS**

- **MHAA Request for Additional Funds**

Ms. Ritchie explained that the Governor of Maryland announced that the state had a surplus of money. The MHAA Coalition, made up of the thirteen state heritage areas, met to determine if they should ask for additional funds for projects that are not currently being funded. A Zoom meeting was held with Secretary Brinkley of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) to discuss whether or not the ask would be appropriate. Ms. Ritchie stated that Secretary Brinkley was acceptable to the request but suggested that it be project specific. Each heritage area has submitted a letter for projects that they hope to have completed. Ms. Ritchie stated that while the dollar amount of the funds received is unknown she is hoping that they will be able to go towards the river park in the form of matching funds.

- **MHAA FY23 Grant Round**

Ms. Ritchie stated that the MHAA grant round for FY23 is now open. This is the earliest that the grant round has been opened. All of the pertinent information will be posted on the Canal Place website as well as sent to those within the heritage area. Several webinars and question and answer sessions are being provided for those interested. Dates to keep in mind are January 28, 2022, for the Intent to Apply with full application being due to Canal Place by the middle of March.

#### **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 25, 2022 at 1:30 PM.

#### **IX. ADJOURNMENT**

Mrs. Ruppert offered a motion to adjourn the open session.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Bender and unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 1:58 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Janice Keene,  
Chair