

**Minutes of the Meeting
of the
Downtown Committee
of
Buffalo Urban Development Corporation**

**65 Niagara Square
901 City Hall
March 20, 2024
12:00 p.m.**

Committee Members Present:

Catherine Amdur
Daniel Castle
Darby Fishkin
Nathan Marton
Brendan R. Mehaffy (Committee Chair)
Christopher P. Scanlon

Committee Members Absent:

Dottie Gallagher
Kimberley Minkel
Karen Utz

Officers Present:

Brandye Merriweather, President
Rebecca Gandour, Executive Vice President
Kevin J. Zanner, Secretary

Guests Present: Katie Campos, Executive Director, Ralph Wilson Park Conservancy; Debra Chernoff, Buffalo Place; Cristina Cordero, Gardiner & Theobald (via Zoom); Alexis M. Florczak, Hurwitz Fine P.C.; Antonio Parker, BUDC Project Manager; and JJ Tighe, Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation.

Roll Call: The meeting was called to order at 12:06 p.m. A quorum of the Committee was not present. Agenda item 5 was presented first for informational purposes. Mr. Marton and Mr. Scanlon joined the meeting during the presentation of agenda item 5, at which time a quorum of the Committee was determined to be present. Mr. Castle and Ms. Fishkin left the meeting during the presentation of agenda item 6.

1.0 Approval of Minutes of the November 15, 2023 Meeting – The minutes of the November 15, 2023 meeting of the Downtown Committee were presented. Mr. Castle made a motion to approve the November 15, 2023 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Ms. Fishkin and unanimously carried (6-0-0).

2.0 Ralph Wilson Park – Modifications to 9th Amendment to BUDC-COB Wilson Subgrant Agreement – Ms. Gandour presented her March 20, 2024 memorandum regarding modifications to the ninth amendment to the BUDC-City of Buffalo Wilson Foundation subgrant agreement. Following her presentation, Ms. Fishkin made a motion to recommend that the BUDC Board of Directors: (i) amend its authorization to allow for the use of Community Foundation of Southeast Michigan funding to support Phase 1B of construction at Ralph Wilson Park; (ii) modify the allocation of Wilson Grant #3 funding in the First Amendment to the Subgrant Agreement from \$975,148.00 to \$935,148.00; and (iii) authorize the BUDC President or Executive Vice President to execute the Ninth Amendment to the Subgrant Agreement, as modified, and take such other actions as are necessary to implement this authorization. The motion was seconded by Mr. Marton and unanimously carried (6-0-0).

- 3.0 Ralph Wilson Park – Amendment to GLC Grant Agreement** – Ms. Gandour presented her March 20, 2024 memorandum regarding a proposed amendment to the GLC grant agreement. She noted that GLC is increasing the funding award to BUDC and that all other terms and conditions of the grant agreement will remain the same. Mr. Marton made a motion to recommend that the BUDC Board of Directors: (i) approve the amendment to the Grant Agreement with GLC awarding an additional \$819,933 to BUDC to support the Phase 1 construction of shoreline elements at Ralph Wilson Park; (ii) approve the first amendment to the BUDC-City of Buffalo GLC subgrant agreement allowing BUDC to transfer this additional funding for shoreline construction; and (iii) authorize the BUDC President or Executive Vice President to execute the amendment to the Grant Agreement and first amendment to the BUDC-City of Buffalo GLC subgrant agreement, and to take such other actions as are necessary or appropriate to implement this authorization. The motion was seconded by Ms. Amdur and unanimously carried (6-0-0).
- 4.0 Ralph Wilson Park – Gardiner & Theobald Contract Amendment #3** – Ms. Gandour presented her March 20, 2024 memorandum regarding the third amendment to the BUDC project manager agreement with Gardiner & Theobald. Following her presentation, Mr. Castle made a motion to recommend that the BUDC Board of Directors: (i) approve the third amendment to the agreement between BUDC and G&T to extend G&T's project and cost management services for an additional twelve months at a cost of \$764,000; and (ii) authorize the BUDC President or Executive Vice President to execute the amendment to the Agreement, and take such other actions as are necessary or appropriate to implement this authorization. The motion was seconded by Mr. Marton and unanimously carried (6-0-0).
- 5.0 Ralph Wilson Park – General Update** – Ms. Cordero provided an update regarding the Ralph Wilson Park project. She began with an overview of Park construction, noting that Phase 1A work was awarded in June 2023 and Phase 1B of construction is to be awarded in April-May 2024. Costs for Phases 1A and 1B of construction are fully funded. The award for Phase 2 of construction is targeted for the end of 2024. The cost of Phase 2 of construction has yet to be determined. Ms. Cordero and Ms. Merriweather then discussed funding commitments for the Park's shoreline. Ms. Merriweather noted that the BUDC Board of Directors accepted funding from DHSES through the City of Buffalo to complete shoreline design work. The City of Buffalo will submit an additional funding application to DHSES for shoreline construction, following the completion of the design work. The City is also submitting a funding application to BRICK for the shoreline construction. Mr. Tighe noted that a funding gap presently exists for shoreline construction elements of the Park. Construction of the shoreline is to be completed before other Park construction, due to flooding risks. Ms. Campos noted that the re-opening of the Park will occur in phases while development of other Park elements continues and that the Conservancy has been submitting grant applications for additional Park development phases.
- 6.0 Buffalo's Race for Place – Downtown Waterfront Improvement Plan Project Update** – Ms. Merriweather presented an update regarding the Downtown Waterfront Improvement Plan project. BUDC, the City of Buffalo, and MIG will have their final meeting on March 22nd in anticipation of the Plan rollout in April. One of the first deliverables in implementing the Plan will be the completion of Erie Street improvements from the I-190 to the Marina. Empire State Development has committed ten million dollars for these improvements, and additional funding will be needed. The project team will also review the implementation, community engagement plans, and funding aspects of a number of the Plan recommendations. Ms. Merriweather indicated that the Plan is intended to create a cohesive experience along the City's waterfront for users and to support additional development.
- 7.0 Buffalo's Race for Place – General Update** – Ms. Merriweather presented an update regarding Buffalo's Race for Place. BUDC is working with the City of Buffalo on implementation strategies for the Downtown Waterfront Improvement and Smart Streets Design plans. It is anticipated that implementation of these plans will require the retention of a project management firm to oversee the implementation of these plans. Queen City Pop-Up has completed its Black History Month programming,

which supported over thirty Black-owned businesses through the Downtown Dollars sweepstakes, Black Business Expo, and lunch crawl and happy hour.

- 8.0 Partner Updates** – Ms. Chernoff provided an update regarding Buffalo Place. The Cars Sharing Main Street project continues, with design work to begin shortly. Two Main Street grants are being finalized. The Downtown Country Market Survey has been completed. Buffalo Place received good feedback from the survey with ideas on where to move the market during construction on Main Street. The survey also provided information regarding work patterns of individuals who commute downtown to work.
- 9.0 Adjournment** – There being no further business to come before the Downtown Committee, the March 20, 2024 meeting of the Downtown Committee was adjourned at 12:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kevin J. Zanner
Secretary