

**Minutes of the Meeting
of the
Board of Directors
of
Buffalo Urban Development Corporation**

**95 Perry Street– 4th Floor Vista Room
Buffalo, New York 14203**

**January 28, 2025
12:00 p.m.**

Directors Present:

Mayor Christopher P. Scanlon (Chair)
Bryan J. Bollman
Scott Bylewski
Daniel Castle
Janique S. Curry
Darby Fishkin
Thomas Halligan
Elizabeth A. Holden
Thomas A. Kucharski
Nadine Marrero
Nathan Marton
Dennis M. Penman (Vice Chair)
Karen Utz

Directors Absent:

Catherine Amdur
Dennis W. Elsenbeck
Dottie Gallagher
Kimberley A. Minkel
Crystal Morgan
David J. Nasca

Officers Present:

Brandye Merriweather, President
Rebecca Gandour, Executive Vice President
Mollie Profic, Treasurer

Guests Present: Greg Baker, Gilbane Building Company; Jonathan Epstein, *The Buffalo News*; Alexis M. Florczak, Hurwitz Fine P.C.; Soma Hawramee, ECIDA Compliance Manager; Brian Krygier, Director of IT, ECIDA; Angelo Rhodes II, Northland Project Manager; Paul Tronolone, Empire State Development; and Sandy White, Mustard Seed World Consulting Group.

- 1.0** **Roll Call** – The meeting was called to order at 12:12 p.m. by Mayor Scanlon. Ms. Florczak called the roll of directors and a quorum of the Board was determined to be present. Mr. Marton and Ms. Curry joined the meeting during the presentation of items 4.5 and 4.6, respectively.
- 2.0** **Approval of Minutes – Meeting of December 17, 2024** – The minutes of the December 17, 2024 meeting of the Board of Directors were presented. Mr. Penman made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bylewski and unanimously carried (11-0-0).
- 3.0** **Monthly Financial Reports**
 - 3.1** **Finance Update & Audit Plan for Year Ended December 31, 2024** – Ms. Profic reported that the 2024 year-end audit is underway. Freed Maxick presented the audit plan to the Audit & Finance

and Real Estate Committee at the joint meeting of the committees on December 10, 2024. Draft audited financial statements will be reviewed by the Audit & Finance Committee in March before being presented to the BUDC Board of Directors later that month.

4.0 New Business

4.1 Appointment of Nadine Marrero to BUDC Downtown Committee – Ms. Merriweather welcomed Ms. Marrero to the BUDC Board and congratulated her on her new role as the Executive Director of the City of Buffalo's Office of Strategic Planning. Following her Board orientation, Ms. Marrero expressed interest in serving on the BUDC Downtown Committee.

4.2 Appointment of Nadine Marrero to BUDC Real Estate Committee – Ms. Merriweather reported that, following her Board orientation, Ms. Marrero expressed interest in serving on the BUDC Real Estate Committee.

4.3 Appointment of Nadine Marrero to BUDC Governance Committee – Ms. Merriweather reported that, following her Board orientation, Ms. Marrero expressed interest in serving on the BUDC Governance Committee.

At the conclusion of the presentation of items 4.1 through 4.3, Mr. Penman made a motion to appoint Ms. Marrero to the BUDC Downtown, Real Estate, and Governance Committees. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kucharski and unanimously carried (11-0-0).

4.4 Ralph Wilson Park Project Update – Greg Baker of Gilbane Building Company presented an update regarding the Ralph Wilson Park project. Work continues along the shoreline, which is expected to be complete in July-August. The subbase for the soccer fields has been placed. Looking ahead, lighting and communication lines will be installed for the sports fields, weather permitting. Ms. Gandour then shared a video update from the Ralph Wilson Park Conservancy and announced that the Conservancy's Winter Fest will take place on February 22, 2025.

4.5 Northland Corridor Project Update – Mr. Rhodes presented an update regarding Northland Corridor projects. BUDC is interviewing respondents to the Phase 3 general construction and energy construction RFPs and anticipates making recommendations for these awards next month. With respect to Phase 4 redevelopment, the National Parks Service has conditionally approved the SHPO Part 2 application for 631 Northland. In addition, the Brownfield Cleanup Program application for 631 Northland has been approved by NYSDEC. With respect to 741 and 777 Northland Avenue, BUDC is reviewing LiRo's draft letter prior to its submission to SHPO. Mr. Rhodes also reported on the Northland BOA nomination plan, noting that BUDC is reviewing the draft BOA report prepared by Colliers Engineering & Design.

Mr. Rhodes then reported to the Board that Manna is vacating its space at 683 Northland at the end of February. BUDC staff is preparing an RFP for a new food operator at Northland and anticipates releasing the RFP next month. Ms. Merriweather added that BUDC has been communicating with the Northland Workforce Training Center, which has arranged for food service on campus during the RFP process. Ms. Merriweather then introduced Sandy White to present an update to the Board. Ms. White noted that there is momentum in the Northland Corridor. She provided an overview of Mustard Seed's community engagement efforts in the Corridor, noting there had been calls for a transformative project in East Buffalo which the Northland Corridor redevelopment project has answered.

Ms. Florczak then provided an update regarding a recent memorandum from the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) that directs federal agencies to temporarily pause all federal financial assistance, including federal grants and loans in order for the current Administration to review alignment with recently issued executive orders. While uncertainty surrounds this directive. Ms. Gandour commented on the potential impact to BUDC projects, including the Ralph Wilson Park project and Phase 3 of redevelopment at Northland, both which include federal funding sources.

4.6 Buffalo's Race for Place Project Update – Ms. Merriweather presented an update regarding Buffalo's Race for Place. BUDC and legal counsel have completed a preliminary draft of an MOU to memorialize the responsibilities of the parties, funding sources, and flow of funding for the infrastructure improvements projects. BUDC anticipates that the Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning and Department of Public Works will provide additional comments and feedback to the MOU, which will be brought to the BUDC Board for approval in the future. BUDC continues to work with the waterfront coordination group regarding implementation of infrastructure improvements with its partners. Holiday programming for the Queen City Pop Up Downtown Dollars program has wrapped up. BUDC is collaborating with Buffalo Place, The Exchange at Beverly Gray, and the City's Diversity Office on Black History Month programming. The Black Business Expo will take place on February 20th in Seneca One Tower which will highlight a number of Black-owned businesses in the City of Buffalo. With respect to the Queen City Hub Revisited initiative, Ms. Merriweather was part of a panel hosted by the Buffalo Niagara Partnership to discuss the initiative and maintaining momentum in Downtown Buffalo. BUDC has received a number of applications for the open project manager position and is conducting applicant interviews this week.

4.7 Buffalo Lakeside Commerce Park – Project Update – Ms. Gandour presented an update regarding Buffalo Lakeside Commerce Park. CBRE continues to market the available properties at BLCP. With respect to the Property Owners Association, Uniland and BUDC each owe their respective second assessment payment for 2024. BUDC will be paying its second assessment payment once its year-end audit is complete.

5.0 Late Files – None.

6.0 Tabled Items – None.

7.0 Executive Session – None.

8.0 Adjournment – There being no further business to come before the Board, on motion made by Mr. Kucharski, seconded by Mr. Bollman and unanimously carried, the January 28, 2025 meeting of the Board of Directors was adjourned at 12:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Alexis M. Florczak
Secretary of the Meeting