

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

**95 Perry Street, 4th Floor
Buffalo, New York 14203
January 15, 2025
12:00 p.m.**

Committee Members Present:

Catherine Amdur
Bryan J. Bollman
Daniel Castle
Darby Fishkin
Nathan Marton
Kimberley A. Minkel
Karen Utz

Committee Members Absent:

Dottie Gallagher
Crystal Morgan

Officers Present:

Brandye Merriweather, President
Rebecca Gandour, Executive Vice President
Mollie Profic, Treasurer
Kevin J. Zanner, Secretary
Atiqa Abidi, Assistant Treasurer

Guests Present: Katie Campos, Executive Director, Ralph Wilson Park Conservancy; Alexis M. Florczak, Hurwitz Fine P.C.; Brian Krygier, Director of IT, ECIDA; Sean Najewski, Gilbane Building Company; and Angelo Rhodes II, Northland Project Manager.

Roll Call: The meeting was called to order at 12:05 p.m. by Ms. Minkel, who served as chair of the Committee. A quorum of the Committee was present. Ms. Amdur and Mr. Marton joined the meeting during the presentation of item 2.

- 1.0 Approval of Minutes of the December 11, 2024 Meeting** – The minutes of the December 11, 2024 meeting of the Downtown Committee were presented. Ms. Fishkin made a motion to approve the December 11, 2024 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Ms. Utz and unanimously carried (5-0-0).
- 2.0 Ralph Wilson Park – General Update** – Mr. Najewski provided an update regarding the Ralph Wilson Park construction project. Grading of the soccer fields is moving forward, and lights for the athletic fields have been installed. Work along the shoreline continues and remains on schedule. Planting along the South Lawn of the Park will continue in the spring. Storm networks on the Park side are nearly complete, and grading of the sled hill has commenced. Ms. Campos then provided an update regarding the Conservancy. While sharing video footage of the Park's progress, she commented on upcoming programming by the Conservancy, including Winter Fest, which will take place on February 22nd. The Winter Fest will serve as a trial run for the Conservancy's operations and partnership with other organizations, including the Olmsted Park Conservancy and Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper.

- 3.0 Buffalo's Race for Place – COB-BUDC Memorandum of Understanding** – Ms. Merriweather reported that BUDC has been working with the City of Buffalo Office of Strategic Planning and Department of Public Works to implement public infrastructure improvements in Downtown Buffalo and the Waterfront area. BUDC has developed a draft outline for a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to outline each partner's respective roles and responsibilities and memorialize the mechanism for the flow of project funds. The infrastructure improvements will be funded by the Accelerator Fund, which is held by ECIDA and controlled by the City of Buffalo. The Committee discussed the MOU outline, funds currently available in the Accelerator Fund, and selection of a project manager through the BUDC RFP process, which is presently expected to be brought to the Committee for review at its February meeting. Ms. Gandour added that state funds from Empire State Development and federal funds from the City of Buffalo will also be used to support the infrastructure improvements.
- 4.0 Buffalo's Race for Place – General Update** – Ms. Merriweather presented an update regarding Buffalo's Race for Place. Waterfront coordination sessions and meetings regarding implementation of infrastructure improvements continue with the Office of Strategic Planning, Department of Public Works, and other 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. BUDC has received ten applications for the open project manager position. Interviews for the position will be scheduled soon.
- 5.0 Queen City Hub Revisited – General Update** – Ms. Merriweather presented an update regarding Queen City Hub Revisited. Work on this initiative continues. Now that collection and analysis of data from stakeholders has been completed, discussions have turned to an appropriate toolkit to address the identified challenges. A meeting with Leonard Skrill is taking place today at Buffalo Place. Ms. Merriweather will be participating on a panel January 16th hosted by the Buffalo Niagara Partnership to discuss Queen City Hub Revisited.
- 6.0 Partner Updates** – None.
- 7.0 Adjournment** – There being no further business to come before the Downtown Committee, upon motion made by Mr. Castle, seconded by Ms. Utz and unanimously carried, the January 15, 2025 meeting of the Downtown Committee was adjourned at 12:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kevin J. Zanner
Secretary