

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

Via Video Conference Call & Live Stream Audio

**June 16, 2021
9:00 a.m.**

Committee Members Present:

Trina Burruss
James W. Comerford
Darby Fishkin
Michael Finn
Brendan R. Mehaffy (Committee Chair)
Kimberley Minkel
Darius G. Pridgen

Committee Members Absent:

Dottie Gallagher

Officers Present:

Brandye Merriweather, President
Mollie Profic, Treasurer
Kevin J. Zanner, Secretary
Atiqa Abidi, Assistant Treasurer

Guests Present: Tuona Batchelor, Erie County Department of Environment & Planning; Alexis Florczak, Hurwitz & Fine, P.C.; Art Hall, BUDC Senior Project Manager; Jamee Lanthier, ECIDA Compliance Officer; and Michael Schmand, Buffalo Place, Inc.

- 1.0 Roll Call:** The meeting was called to order at 9:02 a.m. A quorum of the Committee was present. Mr. Finn and Mr. Pridgen joined the meeting during the presentation of item 3.0.

The meeting was held via video/telephone conference in accordance with the provisions of Executive Order 202 issued by Governor Andrew Cuomo on March 12, 2020, as amended. The meeting was also live-streamed to the general public and recorded. A transcript of the meeting will be made available at a later date.

- 2.0 Approval of Minutes of the May 19, 2021 Meeting** – The minutes of May 19, 2021 meeting of the Downtown Committee were presented. Mr. Comerford made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Ms. Burruss and unanimously carried (5-0-0).

- 3.0 Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park – GLC Funding Agreement #2** – Ms. Merriweather presented an update regarding additional grant funding from the Great Lakes Commission (GLC) for the Centennial Park project. GLC has approximately \$238,000 in funding available for additional work and analysis relating to the inlet portion of Centennial Park. The grant award will allow two design alternatives to be explored for the inlet, and will promote project resiliency, sustainability and habitat uplift. GLC has not issued the grant documents yet. Ms. Merriweather indicated that she anticipates receiving grant

documents prior to the June 29th Board of Directors meeting and will request Board approval to accept the grant funds.

- 4.0 Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park – General Update** – Ms. Merriweather presented a general update regarding the Centennial Park project. The Fourth Amendment to the MVVA Master Services Agreement has been drafted and submitted to MVVA for review and execution. Ms. Merriweather reported that ten million dollars in DASNY funding has been identified for the pedestrian bridge and inlet work. The City of Buffalo is working with New York State with respect to the grant agreement. The park conservancy board, which was formed to address and promote park sustainability, held its first board meeting last week.
- 5.0 Buffalo’s Race for Place – General Update** – Ms. Merriweather presented an update regarding Buffalo’s Race for Place. Ms. Merriweather reported on her presentation at the Massachusetts DOT National Innovation Conference on Race for Place and the Future of Mobility report and their connection to equity initiatives in Buffalo. She updated the Committee regarding BUDC’s assistance with the review of the Mohawk Ramp RFP responses and the transportation demand management RFP responses. BUDC staff recently met with Wendel on the Ellicott Node Concept Plan and is excited to move forward with the project. Ms. Merriweather also noted that BUDC is also working with Invest Buffalo Niagara on talent attraction strategies and coordinating with the City’s Parks and Public Works Departments and the Office of Strategic Planning regarding infrastructure and public realm improvements initiatives.
- 6.0 BBRP Loan Program – General Update** – Ms. Merriweather informed the Committee that BUDC is working with three potential applicants for the BBRP loan program. Responses to the current RFP are due June 30, 2021. Responses that are complete are anticipated to be presented at the Committee’s July meeting. Ms. Fishkin inquired as to the payment status of outstanding BBRP loans. Ms. Merriweather responded that all loans have been repaid in full, with the Phoenix Brewery Apartments loan being the most recent loan that was repaid in full.
- 7.0 Downtown Infrastructure – General Update** – Ms. Merriweather reported that work continues with respect to the Entertainment District infrastructure project. The public is supporting businesses in the Entertainment District even with the ongoing construction.
- 8.0 Partner Updates** – Mr. Schmand reported on the Farmers’ Market and noted that the weekly Thursday & Main concert series at Fountain Plaza will begin on July 8th. Projects are lining up for the Better Buffalo Fund and Buffalo Place plans to seek additional funding for the Main Street Grant Program.
- 9.0 Adjournment** – There being no further business to come before the Downtown Committee, upon motion made by Mr. Pridgen, seconded by Mr. Comerford and unanimously carried, the June 16, 2021 meeting of the Downtown Committee was adjourned at 9:18 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kevin J. Zanner
Secretary