

City of Worcester, Massachusetts

Edward M. Augustus, Jr.
City Manager

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Chief Executive Officer
Worcester Redevelopment Authority



WORCESTER REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Friday, May 12, 2017

8:00 A.M.

City Hall, Levi Lincoln Chamber

Worcester, MA 01608

Present:

Worcester Redevelopment Authority Board

Vincent Pedone, Chair
David Minasian, Vice Chair
Michael Angelini
Sumner Tilton

Staff

Michael E. Traynor, Esq., Chief Development Officer
Heather Gould, Assistant Chief Development Officer
Jennifer Beaton, Deputy City Solicitor
Erin Cahill, WRA Financial Manager
Jeanette Tozer, Office of Economic Development
Jane Bresnahan, Office of Economic Development

Pursuant to a notice given (attached), a meeting of the Worcester Redevelopment Authority was held at 8:00 A.M. on May 12, 2017.

1. Call to Order

Mr. Pedone called the meeting to order at 8:00 A.M.

2. Roll Call

Mr. Traynor called the roll.

3. Minutes of the April 14, 2017 Meeting

Mr. Pedone asked the Board to review the minutes of the April 14, 2017 meeting. Mr. Pedone was not at the meeting. Mr. Angelini offered approval of the April 14, 2017 minutes and Mr. Tilton seconded approval. By a roll call vote the minutes were unanimously accepted.

New Business

1. Report on Union Station Signage Analysis

Mr. Traynor reviewed with the Board the signage and wayfinding projects that have been undertaken within Union Station and the Board's suggestion that a survey be taken of people who are unfamiliar with the facility, similar to a signage survey undertaken by Massport. Jeanette Tozer presented the Union Station Signage Survey Report to the Board, which outlines and assesses comprehensive upgrades made to the Union Station signage system between 2014 and 2017, describes current wayfinding conditions at Union Station based on visitor surveys conducted in April 2017, and identifies short-term and long-term improvements for the facility's wayfinding signage system. Survey responses were generally consistent, and recommended improvements included updating signage to reflect the change in business name of a current tenant and revising select directional arrow signs. Short-term improvements also include installation of sign pylons at all entrances, a project that will be partially reimbursed by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding, as well as implementation of a monitoring system to periodically assess the signage. Mr. Angelini noted that the survey identified a need to update signage directing visitors to the second floor restrooms and the ticketing kiosk and inquired about the abatement of these issues. Mr. Angelini requested that the short-term improvements identified in the report be addressed in the near future. Mr. Angelini also requested an explanation of a \$7,500.00 item in the finance report, and Erin Cahill stated that the \$7,500.00 was for the design work done for the recently completed signage project and that \$47,000.00 has been spent on the actual signage. Mr. Angelini stated that for future projects, an assessment should be completed in advance of expending funds. Chair Pedone requested a timeline for implementing the recommended improvements; Mr. Traynor responded that a vote was originally planned for the meeting to acquire and install additional signage but that the existing contract was too old. Mr. Traynor thanked Mr. Angelini for suggesting the signage survey.

2. Informational Item Regarding Union Station Commercial Leases – Names of Respective Lessees' Principles and Copies of Respective Lease Exhibits Showing Location and Extent of Leased Premises

At the last meeting Mr. Traynor provided the Board with a review of commercial leases and their summary of terms. Included in the packet at this meeting are the names of respective lessees' principles and copies of lease exhibits depicting the location and extent of the leased premises. Mr. Angelini discussed the length of the leases and requested that the WRA have coordinated termination dates which would help facilitate planning. Mr. Tilton asked if there are personal guarantees of any of the leases. Mr. Traynor explained that there are no personal guarantees and that existing tenants responded to an RFP for their space at Union Station. Mr. Traynor explained that in the future the Board would be the determining factor if a personal guarantee would be included.

3. Informational Item - Inventory of WRA owned properties

Mr. Traynor stated to the Board that this item is a follow up to a request from the last meeting. The Board was provided with an inventory of the nine (9) properties that are owned by the WRA, which includes the three (3) parcels that are listed under meeting agenda item number four. The properties also include Union Station, the WRTA Hub, and remnant parcels from the Elm Park Urban Renewal Project from the 1960s. The WRA intends to take steps to divest from the properties, and the WRA will talk to DPW&P about assuming responsibility of a street parcel near Elm Park that is currently owned by the WRA. Other parcels appear to be taken care of by the abutting property owners and the WRA will reach out to see if they are interested in taking ownership of the parcels. Mr. Traynor explained that there are no developable parcels except those which will be discussed in the Executive Session. Mr. Traynor explained that 35 North Ashland Street is a parcel owned by the WRA that is functioning as a street but has never been laid out as a public way. Mr. Angelini inquired about the WRTA property at Foster Street and Mr. Traynor explained that the WRA receives FTA funding, which provides an eighty (80) percent reimbursement for projects, as part of their long-term lease agreement. Erin Cahill informed the Board that the WRA receives approximately \$2 million of FTA funding per year. Mr. Traynor explained that taxes are now paid at Union Station and they are to be included in the rent payments of the tenants.

Chair Pedone asked that the Board take Item No. 4 & 5 together because both are requests for Executive Session. Mr. Traynor explained that there are two votes to take up relative to entering into Executive Session.

4. Request Executive Session to Discuss the Value and Disposition of three parcels of land located at Washington Square (02-013-0000F; 02-013-25-28; 02-013-00002).

Whereas, the chair has declared that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the Authority;

Now Therefore, Be it Voted that the Worcester Redevelopment Authority hereby convene in executive session for the purposes of considering the disposition and value of three parcels of land located off Washington Square and reconvene in open session.

5. Request Executive Session to Discuss the Deployment of Security Personnel and Strategies with Respect Thereto

Voted that the Worcester Redevelopment Authority hereby convene in executive session for the purposes of discussing the deployment of security personnel or devices at Union Station and reconvene in open session.

On a roll call vote the Board voted 4-0 to convene in executive session at 8:22 A. M..

The Board reconvened in Open Session at 8:52 A. M.

6. Authorize the Issuance of a Request for Proposals for the Disposition of three parcels of land located at Washington Square (02-013-0000F; 02-013-25-28; 02-013-00002).

Mr. Traynor reviewed with the Board a minimum disposition price of \$1.1 million dollars for three WRA-owned parcels of land located at Washington Square, which is consistent with the commercially appraised value of the parcels. The Request for Proposals will state that the preferred use of the property will be for commercial purposes.

On a roll call vote the following motion was approved 4-0, upon forgoing terms:

Voted that the Worcester Redevelopment Authority hereby authorizes its chief executive officer to issue a Request for Proposals to dispose of three parcels of land located off Washington Square (02-013-0000F; 02-013-25-28; 02-013-00002)

7. Authorize Amendment No. 1 to the Contract with RIBI to Provide for Additional Security Personnel

The Board discussed amending the contract with RIBI to hire an additional security guard.

Mr. Minasian offered the following motion:

Voted, that the Worcester Redevelopment Authority hereby authorizes its chair or vice-chair to execute Amendment No. 1 to the contract with the Rhode Island Bureau of Investigation and Protection, Ltd. for additional security services at Union Station at the current contract pricing of \$14.94 per hour.

Mr. Angelini seconded the motion; it was voted 4-0 on a voice vote.

Mr. Traynor reviewed that at the last WRA Board meeting, the Board authorized a mutually agreed upon termination of the agreement with RIBI because the company could not provide sufficient staffing. Subsequent to that meeting, RIBI represented that it can supplement its work force and will add an additional security guard. Mr. Traynor recommended the Board's approval of the additional personnel and, if the Board approves, staff will monitor RIBI's performance over the summer to see how security services are handled.

8. Financial Update Report

**Monthly Expenditure Report
Updated Executed Contracts and Payments**

Ms. Cahill stated that for the period April 10, 2017 through May 8, 2017 there were expenses incurred totaling \$53,881.27 in operating costs.

9. Status Reports – Miscellaneous/Improvement Projects

- a) Union Station Harding Street Improvements Project**
- b) Union Station Interior and Exterior Signage Project**
- c) Union Station – Vendor & Maintenance Performance**
- d) Union Station – Leak Remediation Project**
- e) Tenants Updates**
- f) Security Update**
- g) Urban Revitalization Plan**

Ms. Tozer stated that the Harding Street banners have been installed and pavement markings for the taxi queue are scheduled to be installed the following week. Leak remediation design is ongoing and the application to utilize the construction manager at-risk process is being completed. Mr. Traynor informed the Board that the Worcester Police Department responded to

an incident at the Lava Lounge on May 5, 2017. The maximum occupancy of the lounge is 166 and more than 300 people were inside of the restaurant at the time of the incident. The tenant will be summoned before the License Commission. Chair Pedone inquired as to what can be done with rough plumbing for the rental space at Union Station. Mr. Traynor stated that completing this task would limit the build out and potential development of the space. There have been discussions to put aside city and WRA funding such that when space is leased some of the rough costs would be used for the core and shell buildout. DPW&P Commissioner Moosey stated that it would be about \$4.00 per square foot to fit out the rental space out. Mr. Angelini questioned the justification of Rutland Nurseries snow removal costs in the Finance Report. Mr. Traynor explained that the costs are for snow removal from areas located off of the public way and that the work was bid out. Chair Pedone asked that the City Manager set aside marketing monies for the Urban Revitalization Plan.

9. Adjournment

There being no further business, the Board motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:52 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael E. Traynor, Esq.
Chief Executive Officer