

Worcester Redevelopment Authority

Michael P. Angelini
Chair

Peter Dunn
Chief Executive Officer



WORCESTER REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Thursday, September 12, 2024

9:00 A.M.

City Hall, Levi Lincoln Chamber

Worcester, MA 01608

Join on your computer, mobile app or room device

MICROSOFT TEAMS CALL IN AND MEETING INFORMATION

Meeting Link: [Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 252 009 710 202

Dial-In Option: 469-998-7682 Passcode: 664 426 520 #

Worcester Redevelopment Authority Board

Michael Angelini, Chair
Richard Burke
Sherri Pitcher
Walter Weekes
Nicholas Pepper

Staff

Peter Dunn, Chief Executive Officer
Alexis Delgado, WRA Finance Manager
Victoria Porteiro-Cejas, Office of Economic Development
Jane Bresnahan, Office of Economic Development

Pursuant to a notice given, a meeting of the Worcester Redevelopment Authority was held at 9:00 A.M. on Thursday, September 12, 2024

1. Call to Order

Chair Angelini called the meeting to order at 9:05 A.M.

2. Roll Call

Mr. Dunn called the roll – Ms. Pitcher, Mr. Pepper, Mr. Weekes, Mr. Burke, and Chair Angelini

3. Approval of Minutes: August 15, 2024

Mr. Weekes offered the motion to approve the minutes.

Mr. Pepper seconded the motion.

The minutes were approved on a 4-0 roll call.

New Business

1. Authorize Execution of Change Order 1 to the Owner-Contractor Agreement with Antonelli Construction, Inc. in the amount of \$6,738.00

Mr. Dunn advised the Board previously approved a contract with Antonelli Construction in 2023 relating to reconfiguration and improvements to the café space – approximately 300 square feet in the common area of Union Station. The total scope at the time was \$43,201.00; that work was completed. The proposed change order in the amount of \$6,738.00 is necessary replacement of door frame and door to that same area.

Mr. Burke offered the motion.

Voted, that the Worcester Redevelopment Authority hereby authorizes its chair or vice-chair to execute Change Order #1 to the Owner-Contractor Agreement between the Worcester Redevelopment Authority and Antonelli Construction Company, Inc. in the amount of Six Thousand, Seven Hundred Thirty-eight Dollars and no cents (\$6,738.00) relative to Union Station Common Area Improvements.

Mr. Weekes seconded the motion.

The motion was approved on a 4-0 roll call.

2. Authorize Request for Proposals for Lease Agreement Relative to Union State café space.

Mr. Dunn recommended holding this item as staff would like to confirm some additional details. Chair Angelini asked if staff have received indication of interest. Mr. Dunn confirmed staff have received inquiries if the space is available. Chair Angelini asked if there will be a rent amount advertised when the solicitation is released. Mr. Dunn confirmed there will be a stated minimum bid price and the RFP will include other criteria to be evaluated in addition to rent. Chair Angelini emphasized the amenity and utilization of the space is just as important or more important than the rent to be received.

Mr. Burke asked if there was a possibility for a connection to the Food Hub. Mr. Dunn suggested they would be invited to submit a proposal along with other interested parties.

Item held as recommended.

3. Financial Update Report

- a. Report on Prior Month's Executed Contracts and Payments**
- b. Report on Downtown Urban Revitalization Plan Expenditures**

Chair Angelini explained to the Board the financial reports are not action items, no motion required, but reminded members of the Board of the fiduciary responsibility and encouraged the members to ask questions. Mr. Dunn echoed the sentiment and provided an overview of the different financial reports that are included in each month's Board packet, including expenditure summaries, vendor contracts, etc.

Mr. Dunn also reminded the Board of the procurement process and contracting authority – any contract in excess of \$25,000 needs to be presented to the Board for consideration. Mr. Dunn advised the Department of Public Facilities will have some upcoming procurement for MEP contractors.

Mr. Dunn further described the loan authorization and expenditure summaries provided by the finance team specific to the Downtown Urban Revitalization Plan as a whole and specifically the Denholm Building project, and Ballpark Project. Mr. Dunn clarified that the loan authorizations provided by City Council for the URP are separate from the WRA operating and capital budgets.

Mr. Dunn described the final report relative to Federal Transit Administration grant funding under the State of Good Repair program, where the WRA can leverage 80% of various activities both for preventative maintenance along with capital improvements at Union Station. The report gives a breakdown of various projects including completion status for both design and construction. Mr. Dunn also described that with Mr. Bedard taking on the role of Chief of Public Facilities he has been going through the active project list as well as the needs at Union Station so that we can give a more detailed update and presentation to the Board.

Chair Angelini appreciated the overview and asked Mr. Dunn when the staff might be prepared to make that presentation. Mr. Dunn suggested the November meeting.

Chair Angelini asked about the large expenditure of \$3 million on the Denholm financial report paid to Steve Bik and Associates – assuming related to the purchase of the property. Mr. Dunn confirmed they were the escrow agent for the acquisition and were not the beneficiary of the \$3 million.

Mr. Burke asked about legal services – a vendor that does not have local presence, prompting the question about whether the WRA seeks local vendors and if there is a preference for local vendors. Mr. Dunn confirmed and gave the example of the recent outreach with the cleaning bid. Mr. Dunn also described that appropriate procurement procedures are followed depending on the value of a contract and the type of service or purchase. Mr. Dunn also described the legal services vendor referenced – Foley Hoag – their particular expertise in urban renewal law and previous conversations regarding the same topic that arose with the Board when that firm was selected and contracted. Chair Angelini also mentioned the inability of his law firm, for example, to be a vendor due to conflict and also appreciated the question from Mr. Burke.

Chair Angelini commented on the design services with the capital projects at Union Station and asked Mr. Dunn to describe the process of procuring those services as well as the review that takes place to ensure pricing is reasonable. Mr. Dunn first acknowledged that the FTA report on capital projects and preventative maintenance is a summary that looks back several years. In terms of procurement on design services, WRA works in partnership with the City of Worcester Designer Selection Board (DSB) process. That Board is made up of a number of different department representatives. Design firms that are deemed qualified are then available for on-call services. Mr. Dunn acknowledged that Nault Architects as been working with the WRA on Union Station for many years and as a result of their extensive knowledge of the building at this point, staff believe they are able to offer very competitive pricing. Mr. Dunn also referenced that other architects have been engaged by the WRA such as the waterproofing assessment conducted by Lameroux Pagano Associates.

Chair Angelini asked how it is determined that pricing from professional services like lawyers, accountants is fair and on what basis is that conclusion reached. Mr. Dunn appreciated the question and advised without direct participation on the DSB or direct point of contact with Nault for example, he would prefer to follow up with the Board when Public Facilities is available to perhaps comment further on that process. Chair Angelini clarified there is not suggestion that these are dishonest people, but looking for the Board to keep an eye on process and whether any changes to the process are worth studying. Mr. Burke appreciated the discussion and relationship to his question about the Boston law firm versus a local firm that might provide better pricing.

4. Status Reports

- a. Union Station**
- b. Downtown Urban Revitalization Plan**
- c. The Cove**

Mr. Weekes asked about the next steps with the Denholm Building. Mr. Dunn advised with the LDA signed with Menkiti Group they will proceed with spending earnest money on predevelopment, particularly confirming the environmental conditions at this stage. Would anticipate they would then advance their concept design to more civil engineering in preparation for a Definitive Site Plan Application with the Planning Board. Concurrent with these predevelopment activities they will consistently be working to secure the necessary financing.

c. The Cove

Mr. Dunn the project is winding down in the next week or so for final inspections. Chair Angelini asked Mr. Dunn for his sense of prospective tenants. Mr. Dunn suggested optimistic outlook on lease up based on absorption rates at other comparable properties as well as the appeal of this particular project.

Chair Angelini appreciated the staff and the meeting discussion.

5. Adjournment

There being no further business, Mr. Dunn called the roll to adjourn the meeting at 9:49 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Dunn
Chief Executive Officer