

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

**65 Niagara Square
920 City Hall
March 15, 2023
12:00 p.m.**

Committee Members Present:

Catherine Amdur
Daniel Castle
Dottie Gallagher
Nathan Marton
Brendan R. Mehaffy (Committee Chair)
Karen Utz

Committee Members Absent:

Darby Fishkin
Kimberley Minkel
Darius G. Pridgen

Officers Present:

Brandye Merriweather, President
Rebecca Gandour, Executive Vice President
Kevin J. Zanner, Secretary

Guests Present: Alexis M. Florczak, Hurwitz Fine P.C.; Sean Najewski, Gilbane Building Company; and Antonio Parker, BUDC Project Manager.

Roll Call: The meeting was called to order at 12:05 p.m. A quorum of the Committee was present. Ms. Amdur joined the meeting during the presentation of agenda item 2.

- 1.0 Approval of Minutes of the January 18, 2023 Meeting** – The minutes of the January 18, 2023 of the Downtown Committee were presented. Ms. Gallagher made a motion to approve the meeting minutes and was seconded by Mr. Castle. With four affirmative votes and one abstention from Ms. Utz, the motion did not carry. The minutes will be presented for approval at the next meeting of the Committee.
- 2.0 Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park – Project Update Presentation** – Mr. Parker introduced Mr. Najewski to present the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park project update. The tree clearing work is being completed by Scott Lawn Yard and the 34 Group. Information relating to scope and initial offers are being obtained by Gilbane from prospective bidders on the construction work. Mr. Marton added that negotiations continue to move forward with Gilbane on finalizing contract language, with two issues outstanding for which the City is awaiting Gilbane’s input. Gilbane and the City hope to finalize the GMP contract by April 17th. Mr. Mehaffy added that the Ralph Wilson Park Conservancy board is engaging in conversations regarding community access to the Park. The Committee then discussed blizzard damage to Centennial Park and the impact on construction, noting that the storm’s damage has resulted in limited access to the Park.
- 3.0 Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park – MVVA Amendment #10** – Mr. Parker presented his March 15, 2023 memorandum regarding the 10th amendment to the BUDC-MVVA agreement for phase

1/1A and phase 2 construction administration services. The Committee asked about funding commitments for the services. BUDC staff clarified that the 10th amendment will include language providing that services for phase 2 of construction will not proceed until funding for this phase has been approved by the Wilson Foundation. Ms. Gallagher made a motion to recommend that the BUDC Board of Directors: (i) approve an amendment to the MVVA Agreement in the amount of \$4,334,386 for construction administration services at Ralph Wilson Park, subject to receipt of funding from the Wilson Foundation for phase 2 of construction; and (ii) authorize the BUDC President or Executive Vice President to execute the amendment to the MVVA Agreement and take such other actions as are necessary to implement this authorization. The motion was seconded by Ms. Utz and unanimously carried (6-0-0).

4.0 BBRP Loan Program Update – Ms. Merriweather provided an update on the BBRP loan program. The BUDC Loan Committee met on March 8th to discuss the future of the loan program. Based on these discussions, BUDC is working on winding down the program prior to the program’s December 31, 2025 sunset date. The Committee discussed the need for further conversations with the Downtown Committee and BUDC Board regarding the future use of the loan program fund balance.

5.0 Buffalo’s Race for Place – General Update – Ms. Merriweather presented an update regarding Buffalo’s Race for Place. BUDC continues to work with MIG regarding the Inner Harbor and Waterfront Public Realm master plan. MIG and Stantec, which is working on the City’s Smart Streets Design Program, held public meetings recently regarding this work at Seneca One Tower. ESD has committed \$10 million in funding for improvements in and around Erie Street that will be coordinated with and informed by upcoming real estate developments including Bridges Development’s work on the Marine Drive apartments. BUDC is coordinating with MIG for its next visit to Buffalo, when MIG representatives will meet with residents and community stakeholders. BUDC continues its work with the Project for Public Spaces on the placemaking grant received for the Ellicott Node. The Board of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library approved its matching funds for the electrical cost and installation for the library underpass lighting.

6.0 Partner Updates – None.

7.0 Adjournment – There being no further business to come before the Downtown Committee, on motion made by Ms. Gallagher, seconded by Ms. Utz and unanimously carried (6-0-0), the March 15, 2023 meeting of the Downtown Committee was adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kevin J. Zanner
Secretary