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**Holyoke Redevelopment Authority**  
**Meeting Minutes - Wednesday May 17, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.**  
City Hall Annex Conference Room 403  
Or via Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87855129209>  
Meeting ID: 878 5512 9209

**Members Present:**

Daphne Board, Chair  
Carl Eger, Vice Chair  
John Whelihan, Treasurer  
Jorge Colon, Asst. Treasurer

**Staff Present:**

Aaron Vega, Executive Director  
Jennifer Keitt, Senior Project Manager

**Others Present:** Matthew Mainville, Holyoke Housing Authority

**1. Call to Order**

Chairperson Daphne Board called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m. and announced that the meeting is being recorded and is being held both in person and virtually. The Chair then read the following disclaimer: "The meeting is being held both in person and remotely according to Chapter 22 of the Acts of 2022, extending the remote meeting provisions of Governor Healey's March 29, 2023, executive order. The meeting notice contained a link to "GoToMeeting" providing the public with remote access." A roll call followed:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Daphne Board	X	
Jorge Colon	X	
Thomas Creed		X (with regrets)
Carl Eger	X	
John Whelihan	X	

**2. HRA Board Business**

**a. HRA Meeting Minutes of April 12, 2023**

A motion to approve the meeting minutes of April 12, 2023, was made by Carl Eger and seconded by John Whelihan. A roll call vote followed:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
John Whelihan	X	
Carl Eger	X	
Jorge Colon	X	
Daphne Board	X	

**3. Property / Project Updates and Next Steps:**

**a. South Holyoke Homes (Holyoke Housing Authority):**

The Chair introduced Matthew Mainville, Executive Director of the Holyoke Housing Authority (HHA). Mr. Mainville provided an update highlighting that Phase I is completed and should be occupied by the end of month with tenants eager to move in. Mr. Mainville reaffirmed Holyoke Housing Authority's intentions to make a difference in the South Holyoke neighborhood around Carlos Vega Park. Anyone wanting to see the new units is invited to do so. For Phase II, Holyoke Housing Authority is working with MassHousing through the Commonwealth Builders program for funding. Holyoke Housing Authority obtained the design, the permits, and went out to bid; bids came back \$2M over budget. They rejected all the bids; it went back out. Second round – bids came back \$1.6M over budget. They are discouraged but continue to push forward. They have reached out to a modular company out of Pennsylvania. They are working on providing a proposal amount for the construction. They also contacted their architect for assistance and are waiting to hear back. Conversations with

MassHousing have provided insightful information showing a pipeline of projects for Commonwealth Builders with everyone in the pipeline encountering the same issues as HHA is. MassHousing has been exploring other resources/funding opportunities and additional tools to help Commonwealth Builders projects move forward. Phase II will go out to bid as 2a, 2b and 2c for the third time. HHA is committed to Phase II's home ownership plan. Mr. Mainville expressed appreciation for the ARPA application letter of support provided by the Board. It's anticipated that all development/construction costs will remain high for the foreseeable future, but HHA is committed to the project. The Chair thanked Mr. Mainville for the update.

**b. 216 Appleton Street (Appleton Mills Apartments / WinnDevelopment):**

The Chair introduced Matthew Robayna from Winn Development. Mr. Robayna states that they have pulled building permits. They will engage the contractor to begin work around July 4<sup>th</sup>. They are also working with the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) to close out on their funds. They held a kickoff meeting with DHCD, they obtained an attorney who is currently drafting the financing documents. They plan on starting construction prior to closing on all the financing. Closing is expected to occur in August. They are awaiting the ARPA decision which is the last piece of their gap financing. Discussions regarding Phase II have been ongoing. There has been some back and forth on proposed designation. An application is going to be submitted for MassDevelopment's Underutilized Property Program (UPP). The UPP funds would be for some of the structural stabilization work in buildings 1, 2, 3 and 4. They are looking to install a temporary roof and beam/post replacement. To prevent further deterioration. Looking to put in an application with DHCD in the next year or two once they have enough historical credits incurred as of that date. Significant movement on the sites should begin soon. Commissioner Whelihan asks about the sale of the property at 5 Essex. Mr. Robayna confirms that they did close on the 5 Essex St property. They are prepping for demolition – ie. disconnecting utilities, etc. so they will be ready once construction begins. The Board expresses their excitement for this project. Mr. Dyjach explains that the necessary documents: Phase II purchase agreement (related to ground lease) and partial release of utility easement - are forthcoming. Need to start the process to close on the HRA's acquisition of 191 Appleton Street. Mr. Robayna said once the Phase I property is closed on, they will be able to move on to Phase II and pull permits, etc. They currently have some general architectural sketches. Chair asks if all three sites will be worked on simultaneously in the near future. Per Mr. Robayna, most of the work will be performed at the 216 Appleton site first primarily. It has the longest schedule of work. Demolition of 5 Essex St may begin fairly early on. Demo inside 216 Appleton will be first. Repointing of outside brick to occur thereafter. Chair asks if Winn has been in contact with the residents at 101 Cabot St. Mr. Robayna explains that they were in touch with the residents with regard to historic tax credits, so they are aware of the project. It's been a while since they've reached out to the residents. Winn will reach out with a project update to the 101 Cabot St residents. The Chair thanked Mr. Robayna for coming in and providing an update.

**c. 37 Appleton Street (American Environmental, Inc.):**

No one from American Environmental attended. Mr. Dyjach explains that the company presented a project last Fall and that an update as to the current status was requested. An email invitation was sent out. No response. Further discussions to be had regarding the property in executive session.

**d. Race and Main Street land (Canal Row, LLC):**

The Chair states that Denis and Marco Luzuriaga will not be pursuing the option agreement. Considering the current costs of construction, it's not a surprise. There has been other interest in the property and staff will prepare a sale notice to solicit proposals. The funding for this current project was stymied when the Housing Development Incentive Program (HDIP) money was cut. The Luzuriaga's Armour Building project is still going forward. Carl Eger questioned if standing still on the property due to the high prices, we should try to wait it out. The Chair suggests that other entities may be able to do something with the property sooner.

**4. Other Business**

- a. Aaron Vega noted that Freight Farms are going to be painted and hopefully moved soon.
- b. One Holyoke is going to move the tiny home.
- c. John Dyjach said that the City Council requested the HRA to provide an update at an upcoming Development and Governmental Relations (DGR) Committee meeting. Chair suggested Staff, HRA

Chair and 1 HRA member attend to provide an update on HRA activities over the last year. Carl Eger volunteered to take part. Staff will relay the Board's acceptance of the invitation and provide the Board with more information as it becomes available.

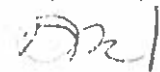
- d. John Dyjach noted that the Sale Notice for the Armory property is being updated to better reflect the type of development sought for the property.

**5. Executive Session and Adjournment.**

The Chair states that the HRA will enter Executive Session. With no other business, a motion was made at 6:01 p.m. by Carl Eger and seconded by Jorge Colon to adjourn the Regular meeting. A roll-call followed:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Carl Eger	X	
Jorge Colon	X	
Daphne Board	X	
John Whelihan	X	

Respectfully Submitted,



Daphne Board, Chairperson