

Holyoke Redevelopment Authority
Meeting Minutes - Wednesday September 20th, 2023, at 5pm
City Hall Annex Conference Room 403
via Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82968849889>
Meeting ID: 829 6884 9889

Members Present:

Daphne Board, Chair
 Carl Eger, Vice Chair
 Patrick Beaudry, Member
 Thomas Creed, Member
 Jorge Colon, Asst Treasurer

Staff Present:

Aaron Vega, Executive Director
 John Dyjach, Assistant Director
 Jennifer Keitt, Senior Project Manager
 Kimberly Casiano, Clerk

Others Present: Michael Sullivan

1. Call to Order

Chairperson Daphne Board called the meeting to order at 5:03 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 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		RECEIVED NOV 28 2023 Holyoke City Clerk's Holyoke, MA
Jorge Colon	X		
Thomas Creed	X		
Carl Eger	X		
Patrick Beaudry	X		

2. HRA Board Business

a. HRA Meeting Minutes of August 16, 2023

Carl Eger makes a motion to approve the minutes. Said motion was seconded by Patrick Beaudry. Roll call followed:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Patrick Beaudry	X	
Carl Eger	X	
Thomas Creed	X	
Jorge Colon	X	
Daphnee Board	X	

3. Property/Project Updates and Next Steps

Go out of order and take up 3f.

f. TDI/Mass Development

Chair introduces Kevin Moforte, the City of Holyoke's TDI fellow (Transformative Development Initiative). Aaron Vega provides an introduction. Transformative Development Initiative (TDI) is a program designed to drive development opportunities within designated districts. This is the second time that Holyoke has had a TDI fellow. We are one [1] year into our fellows three [3] year contract. The current TDI district is High Street from Suffolk Street to Route 391 highway. We need to capitalize on the resources available through the TDI program, including access to funding, to spur public and private investment. Further discussions to be had on moving forward. Kevin Moforte thanks Aaron for the introduction and explains that through the partnership, TDI has awarded \$100k for storefront improvements, new business operations, and collaborating to help open an industrial kitchen available to the public. TDI initiatives also awarded \$270,000 to five projects, through the TDI Equity grant program for new businesses/non-profits, that will open within one year. Working on creating a High St Business Association under the Chamber of Commerce that meets the first Thursday of every month. Hoping to move toward a Business Improvement District to help address issues in the downtown area. Kevin Moforte has been meeting with people in and around the High Street area to find out what the community needs. The biggest concern is the need for more housing. The second major concern is homelessness and drug use. The third is the perception of safety downtown. TDI, in working with the Holyoke Redevelopment Authority (HRA), hopes to accelerate conversations and find ways to support each other, advance and accelerate the infilling of the vacant properties and storefronts, assist in the development of housing and public spaces. Thomas Creed asks if there is a specific ask from HRA. Aaron Vega explains that we wanted TDI to bring updates regularly, but we also want to open discussions on other viable ideas. Kevin Moforte explains that having a TDI fellow means we have a direct connection to Mass Development (a large statewide organization) and are able to have them pay attention to our projects. High Street downtown needs massive investments and there is a role to be played by the HRA, TDI, Mass Development and the City. Carl Eger asks who makes the decisions. Kevin Moforte explains that it's the TDI partnership that decides on the projects and how money is spent. Daphne Board asks how much underutilized space and empty floors exists on High Street. Kevin Moforte states that he is finalizing a vacant storefront inventory document for Mass Development and will forward it to Aaron Vega for forwarding to the Board. There will be a meeting with Mass Development and Mass Housing to see how we can accelerate some projects. The Chair thanks Kevin Moforte for attending.

Chair goes back to agenda order - #3a.

a. 216 / 191 Appleton Street (Appleton Mills Apartments / WinnDevelopment)

John Dyjach gives an update on the status of the project. Anticipating a mid-September closing. Some non-material, non-substantive change requests came back from the lenders. Staff continues to have bi-weekly check ins with the Winn project manager. No issues have arisen, and it looks like everything is going forward. Aaron Vega adds that there was an issue last month that has been resolved regarding the railroad. Once the railroad is sold, city staff will meet with the new owners. Most of the current Pioneer Valley railroad staff are staying on. Agreements include 18-month stay for access to the railroad side. Air rights are being discussed. John further explains that a shovel in the ground event may happen sometime in October. City taxes will be paid at closing.

b. Race Street parcels

John Dyjach gives brief update that we have received a proposal formerly land for canal row that will be discussed further in executive session.

c. 123 Pine Street (CAN properties, LLC)

John Dyjach gives brief update that we have received a proposal to amend the existing agreement. The proposal will be discussed in executive session.

d. 37 Appleton Street (American Environmental, Inc.)

Staff continues to work on obtaining an update:

e. City to HRA Property Transfer

John Dyjach provides a brief update that the transfers of several city properties to the Holyoke Redevelopment Authority (HRA), previously submitted to the City Council, were approved at the last city council meeting.

The chair confirms receipt of letter from OneHolyoke CDC regarding the Hygge house and wants to invite OneHolyoke in for the next meeting to discuss an extension of the expired agreement.

Thomas Creed asks for clarification regarding the date of 216 Appleton Street's closing. John Dyjach confirms we don't have an exact date but everything is ready and lined up. Thomas Creed asks for confirmation that the City to HRA property transfers was the full list of properties that had been previously circulated. John Dyjach confirms yes. Lastly, Mr. Creed asks if there is still the necessary insurance on the property. John Dyjach explains that we made that request of OneHolyoke and they have been non-responsive. We have no document confirmation that they are carrying liability insurance. Staff will follow up.

4. Other Business

None

5. Executive Session

The Chair states that the HRA will enter Executive Session.

6. Adjournment

With no other regular business, a motion was made at 5:45 p.m. by Patrick Beaudry and seconded by Thomas Creed to adjourn the Regular meeting. A roll call followed:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Carl Eger	X	
Thomas Creed	X	
Jorge Colon	X	
Daphne Board	X	
Patrick Beaudry	X	

Respectfully Submitted,



Daphne Board, Chairperson