



Regular Board Meeting of the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority

Wednesday, May 10, 2023 at 5:30 p.m.

Hybrid Format – at the Foundry, 101 Rogers Street and via Zoom

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APPROVED Meeting Minutes

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## MEETING FILES

- [Agenda/Notice](#)
  - [Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board on April 12, 2023](#)
  - [Staff Program Report](#)
  - [Quarterly Financial Report](#)
  - [11-13 Marcella Street Civil Complaint Packet](#)
  - [75 Ames Street M-1 Certificate of Completion Memo](#)
  - [2023 Forward Fund Program Proposal Memo](#)
  - [Final Draft Strategic Plan](#)
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## Opening Statement

At 5:35 p.m., Ellen Shore, CRA Operations Director, said that on March 29, 2023, a spending bill was signed into law by Governor Healy which, among other things, temporarily extended the provisions pertaining to the Open Meeting Law, allowing remote meetings, to March 31, 2025. Although CRA public meetings can be held remotely in accordance with that bill, tonight's meeting is being held in a hybrid format. There will be opportunities for public comment at the start of this meeting and at the discretion of the chair, either in-person or remotely. She then explained how to provide public comment. Reading materials can be found on the CRA's next meeting webpage. This meeting is also being recorded, including all video, audio, and chat messages.

## Call Roll

Chair Kathleen Born called the regular meeting of CRA Board. A roll call of Board members and the Executive Director was taken.

Vice Chair Conrad Crawford – present (in-person)  
Treasurer Christopher Bator – absent  
Asst. Treasurer Barry Zevin – present (remote)  
Asst. Secretary Margaret Drury – will be arriving later  
Executive Director, Tom Evans - present

Other CRA staff members were also present. Ms. Born said that because this is a remote meeting, all votes will be taken by roll call and that Mr. Evans will repeat the responses.

## Public Comment

No requests for public comment were offered.

### **1. Review of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board on April 12, 2023**

No comments were offered.

***A motion was moved by Mr. Zevin to accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board on April 12 and place them on file. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans.***

***Chris Bator – absent***

***Kathy Born – yes***

***Conrad Crawford – abstained as he did not attend the April meeting***

***Margaret Drury - absent***

***Barry Zevin – yes***

***Because there was no quorum for voting (2 absent, 1 abstain), the motion was put on hold.***

## **Communications**

### **2. Written communications received since the publication of this meeting notice.**

No communications were received.

## **Administrative Items**

### **3. Staff Program Report**

Kyle Vangel, Director of Projects and Planning, summarized the staff report found in the Board meeting packet.

Mr. Evans shared an aerial view of the solar array located on the roof of 99 Bishop Allen Drive. Ms. Born started a discussion regarding the positioning of the panels. Mr. Zevin asked whether the controller could track the performance of individual panels. Mr. Evans confirmed that it could and he would report the data back to the Board.

### **4. Quarterly Financial Report**

Ms. Shore introduced Cutty Thomas, from Withum, who is assisting staff with the financial reporting.

Mr. Thomas explained his report. The Financial Dashboard on the first page summarizes all the data on one page. He presented a Statement of Position, which is the balance sheet for a government entity. The \$5.2M variance is mainly due to the Foundry construction. The Statement of Activities is the Profit & Loan (P&L) statement. This gives more detail of what is shown on the dashboard. The Statement of Cash Flows explains what has been spent. An increase in Accounts Receivable (AR) is considered a cash outflow because the money hasn't been collected yet. The total balance is reflected on the cash line of the Statement of Financial Position.

Margaret Drury joined the meeting at 6:08 p.m.

The financial report also included Statements of Activity (or P&L) for Bishop Allen and for the Foundry. These tie into the dashboard. For Bishop Allen, personnel costs are in the CRA budget. What appears on the Bishop Allen P&L are rental income and rental expenses, including property management fees. The last column is a calculation of how the project is doing against the budget. Mr. Evans explained that the budget regarding income included the potential for a 5% vacancy. A similar statement is included for the Foundry.

Mr. Evans noted that there is a small water intrusion issue in the basement of Bishop Allen and SBN's rent has been modified accordingly until that can be fixed.

Mr. Crawford asked if the program funding or rental income goes through the Foundry or the CRA budget. Mr. Evans said that the income from ground floor spaces and one rentable second-floor conference room (The Point) goes directly to the Foundry; it will not appear on the CRA books. The only income that the CRA sees is from the rental of the offices and an electric reimbursement from the City.

Mr. Evans asked if depreciation was in the budget. Mr. Thomas said the depreciation is typically budgeted in a gap budget because it's non-cash and that expenses are added for the usage of assets. However, depreciation was only recorded on the last day of 2021. He will be speaking with the auditors tomorrow to get clarification on this

and other items. Mr. Evans said that Withum also be speaking with the auditors about the internal bookkeeping for the general CRA, the Foundry, and Bishop Allen transactions. Mr. Thomas said that he wants to make sure that the books are aligned for the audit in June.

## **5. Business Checking Account Activities**

Mr. Evans stated that this agenda item has nothing to do with the banking concerns at the national level. There have been some transactional issues that Treasurer Christopher Bator had brought up regarding the CRA's main checking account. Mr. Evans was told to look at other options, as efficiently as possible, without putting a tremendous burden on staff.

Mr. Evans explained public procurement law has changed and a 30B process is now needed to procure bank accounts. More research is needed because fee comparisons are difficult when banks waive fees for holding large amounts of money. A procurement process for all bank accounts will be needed. There are two bank accounts in Cambridge Trust that that are tied to the mortgage for Bishop Allen. In order to change the bank on these accounts, the mortgage would need to be refinanced or paid off.

Another issue to investigate is whether the CRA can have a local bank preference in the RFP, although convenience might be a qualitative factor in proposal evaluations. Staff needs to initiate a procurement process which has not been done before with a process that is not as simple as the other RFPs. Mr. Evans suggested that Withum help with the research and creation of the RFP. The future Director of Finance and Operations could sit on the selection committee.

***A motion was moved by Mr. Crawford, instructing the Executive Director to initiate a procurement process in accordance to Chapter 30B seeking a new bank to handle the CRA's general checking account and related business banking activities. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans.***

***Chris Bator – absent***

***Kathy Born – yes***

***Conrad Crawford – yes***

***Margaret Drury - yes***

***Barry Zevin – yes***

***The motion carried.***

## **Projects and Programs**

### **6. Civil Complaint regarding a 5-foot strip of land at 11-13 Marcella Street**

Mr. Evans said that the Board packet contains the original complaint, an amended complaint, and a proposed settlement agreement. He cited historical information regarding the CRA's residential rehab program in the Wellington-Harrington Urban Renewal area, in which the parcel in question is located. For an unknown reason, the parcel boundaries of the properties that were sold at that time omitted this five-by-five strip of land.

The plaintiffs, Nathan and Christine Rono, have put forth a civil action seeking a quiet title to the five-foot strip of land at 11-13 Marcella Street. Mr. Evans read a quote from CRA's counsel, Foley Hoag, "Following a review of the matter by counsel, the CRA has determined that it has no continuing interest in the land that is the subject of the complaint, having completed its project work and associated conveyancing in that area many years ago. It is recommended that members of the Board authorize Executive Director to enter into and agree upon judgment with the plaintiff as a means of resolving the CRA's involvement in the matter." Mr. Evans added that by doing so, this will avoid a default judgment on the case, which the CRA Treasurer had wanted to avoid. It also avoids any drawn out historic or legal investigation into why the parcel lines were drawn in such a way which created the remnant property.

The draft settlement has been reviewed by the plaintiff's counsel. The plaintiffs have agreed to it and have accommodated the timeframe allowing this matter to be discussed tonight before they take it before the judge.

Mr. Crawford asked if the five-foot strip of land is inactive. Mr. Evans responded that the strip of land has been used partly as a driveway and partly as a garden by the current owners. He added that most of the land in question

was part of a vacated public cul-de-sac. Although archives were not pulled on everything having to do with this parcel, there was a right-of-way that ran between two buildings. The Wellington-Harrington project vacated the public right-of-way and deeded portions of the cul-de-sac driveway to the neighboring property owners. Mr. Evans said that the CRA had a lot of property transactions in the Wellington Harrington area. His goal is to have those records scanned and made more readily available.

Ms. Born said that she does not have any issues with the result but was not happy that the owners felt the need for a litigious process rather than starting with a simple conversation. Ms. Born was not aware that the CRA still had interests in this sliver of land. Mr. Evans said that staff had done a property scan to determine if other land remnants existed. Many of the parcels of land that had been given to the City as part of CRA redevelopment activities were never officially recorded, including properties around the Volpe site. There has been a property record reconciliation with the Assessor's office and CDD. There might still be a parcel remnant inside Hartwell Homes that is actually part of the public sidewalk and should be given to the City. There's also a remnant on the Main Street sidewalk that should be transferred to the City once all the work on Main Street is done.

***A motion was moved by Ms. Drury to authorize the Executive Director to enter into an agreed-upon judgment regarding 11-13 Marcella Street with the plaintiffs of Civil Action No. 22 MISC 000333, as a means to resolve the CRA's involvement in the matter related to the expired Wellington-Harrington Urban Renewal Project. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans.***

***Chris Bator – absent***

***Kathy Born – yes***

***Conrad Crawford – yes***

***Margaret Drury - yes***

***Barry Zevin – yes***

***The motion carried.***

## **7. 75 Ames Street M-1 Expansion**

Cecelia Cobb, CRA Project Planner, summarized the memo in the Board meeting packet. Mr. Crawford asked for more details about the walkthrough. Ms. Cobb said that staff appreciated seeing the interior. CRA's primary concern is how the exterior facade interacts with the public realm, which was found to be in total compliance. It was actually difficult discerning which floor was recently renovated.

There was a discussion regarding this lab building's height at the time it was built. Mr. Evans spoke about its large glass windows.

In response to Ms. Born's question, Ms. Cobb confirmed that this expansion adds 14,000 square feet to the lab area. Mr. Evans noted that this square footage had been contemplated in all the EIR documents. This expansion idea was also included in the condominium documents for 75 Ames Street; there is actually a condominium on top of the Boston Properties garage. The parcel is shared with Boston Properties and the parking garage. When the building was converted into condos, extra space was realized, which made the transaction much simpler since it had been anticipated.

***A motion was moved by Mr. Zevin to authorize the Chair to execute a Certificate of Completion for the expansion of 75 Ames Street by the Broad Institute within the Kendall Square Urban Redevelopment Plan. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans.***

***Chris Bator – absent***

***Kathy Born – yes***

***Conrad Crawford – yes***

***Margaret Drury - yes***

***Barry Zevin – yes***

***The motion carried.***

## **8. 2023 Forward Fund Program Proposal**

Alexandra Levering, CRA Senior Project Manager, summarized the information in the memo included in the Board packet. The memo describes two Feasibility Study applications that were received from the Multicultural Arts Center and from the Cambridge YMCA. Both projects and organizations are mission aligned with the CRA.

Ms. Born asked whether the selection committee, which included City representation, needs to approve these grants. Ms. Levering said that these \$10,000 grants are being approved by CRA staff only. However, the selection committee, with seven to ten members from various City departments, will be assembled for the 2023 Capital Infrastructure Grant cycle, which will provide larger grants.

Ms. Levering spoke about the proposal for the 2023 Capital Infrastructure Grant outlined in the Board packet memo. There are not many changes from the 2019 and 2021 Capital Infrastructure Grants.

The 2023 CRA budget allocated \$100,000 for Feasibility Study grants, of which \$20,000 will be distributed, assuming tonight's motion is approved. If no other Feasibility Study grants are submitted later in the year, staff would like authorization to have the flexibility to use the remaining \$80,000 or a portion of the remaining \$80,000 for Capital Infrastructure Grants, depending on the types of future Forward Fund applications received.

Ms. Born asked if these grants are unavailable for operating expenses. Ms. Levering confirmed that these funds only go towards capital projects. Mr. Evans noted that during the CRA's strategic planning process, the definition of "feasibility study" might be expanded to include strategic planning or space needs studies to assist nonprofits with needs assessments for capital improvements.

***A motion was moved by Mr. Crawford, authorizing the Executive Director to initiate a new capital grant cycle of the Forward Fund for grants up to \$100,000 to nonprofit organizations, consistent with the program outline described by staff, and to approve a budget amendment of \$400,000 to administer this program. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans.***

***Chris Bator – absent***

***Kathy Born – yes***

***Conrad Crawford – yes***

***Margaret Drury - yes***

***Barry Zevin – yes***

***The motion carried.***

At 6:50 p.m., Ms. Drury left the meeting.

## **9. Strategic Plan Final Approval**

Mr. Vangel, presented the final draft of the Strategic Plan. He said that this is a culmination of over two years of work. He acknowledged the work of current and past staff, particularly Kathryn Madden who was the project manager until her retirement. The process involved collaboration with the CRA Strategic Advisory Group. This group, some members of which will change, will continue to advise CRA staff on a new era of projects. He also acknowledged the City of Cambridge for their partnership.

Mr. Vangel said that this draft incorporates Mr. Zevin's line edits as well as more details on the CRA's pre-2012 project history. He credited Ms. Cobb for her expertise in creating a significant graphical overhaul of the Word version of the document. This will be a great reference for CRA's use and for others to learn about the CRA's future interests and goals.

Mr. Crawford congratulated everyone. When individuals or organizations reach out asking about the CRA, this document will be a framework for introduction and discussion. It will help keep the CRA focused.

Mr. Zevin said that the document is very thorough. Although he hadn't proofread the document, he just noticed a typo on page 49 – a repeated "the" in the Affordable Nonprofit and Retail Space paragraph.

Ms. Born congratulated everyone and thanked the Strategic Advisory Group.

***A motion was moved by Mr. Crawford to approve the 2023 Strategic Plan as corrected. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans.***

***Chris Bator – absent***

***Kathy Born – yes***

***Conrad Crawford – yes***

***Margaret Drury - absent***

***Barry Zevin – yes***

***The motion carried.***

#### Other Business

At 7:05 p.m., Ms. Born said that the Board will be going into Executive Session now. The Board has concluded all of the business set forth on the regular agenda, and therefore, will not be reconvene in open session thereafter.

***A motion was moved by Mr. Crawford to enter into Executive Session to consider terms of potential real estate transactions for the Foundry Building at 101 Rogers Street, and to review property acquisition options for the development of affordable homeownership units. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans.***

***Chris Bator – absent***

***Kathy Born – yes***

***Conrad Crawford – yes***

***Margaret Drury - absent***

***Barry Zevin – yes***

***The motion carried.***

Ms. Shore will send a new meeting link for the Executive Session, which will start at 7:20 p.m.