

**NORTHEAST PUBLIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**  
**Minutes – Regular Meeting**  
**Date: 05/08/2020**

**Meeting called to order:** 10:30 AM

**Location:** Board Members and Public attendance via Zoom.

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**Welcome and Introductions**

Commissioner Kerns noted that a quorum was present.

**Attendees:**

NEPDA Board of Directors

- Josh Kerns
- Michael Cathcart
- Gerry Gemmill
- Scott Simmons
- Cheryl Stewart

Not in attendance: Jordan Tampien

Board Staff

- David Guthrie, Executive Director
- Megan Clark, EMLVO, Legal Counsel

Guests

- Ron Valencia, Spokane County
- Shae Blackwell, City of Spokane

**Approval of Minutes**

Josh Kerns noted that there was a typo in the prior minutes. Subject to this correction, a motion was made by Michael Cathcart to approve the April 10, 2020 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Gerry Gemmill. The motion passed unanimously.

**Board Updates**

Michael Cathcart indicated that he had briefed all council members about the need to “exempt” Beacon Hill from GFC waivers. Michael explained that the Development Agreement between the City and Beacon Hill included a provision to collect GFC’s, which would be used to reimburse the developer for public (water system) related costs. Waiver of these fees eliminates the source of reimbursement revenues, and is inconsistent with the intent of the Development Agreement. This was an oversight that should be corrected. Council will consider the matter at the May 18<sup>th</sup> council session.

**Public Comment:**

No public comments

## Executive Director Updates

- **Marketing and Communications:**  
It was noted that the board approved awarding the NEPDA marketing and communication contract, including website to Tilladelse. Approval is subject to review and agreement of all contract terms and conditions by NEPDA legal counsel.
- **Wellesley Avenue / NSC / 2020 TIB Grant**  
Contract with T-O Engineers fully executed. The Executive Director discussed the plans with the City of Spokane, (Katherine and Inga - Integrated Capital Management), who are supportive. They asked the NEPDA to confirm we can use NSC Wellesley interchange work as a “local match” for grant funding. Based on initial discussions, it appears that the Wellesley interchange was funded by the State of WA, while the NSC is federally funded. The state funding for the Wellesley interchange pairs well with the TIB grant application (State and State). The Executive Director is confirming with WSDOT Program Managers that we can use the Wellesley interchange work (\$40M+) as a local match. T-O Engineers prepared a proposed road section within the existing ROW of 55’, which was reviewed by the board. The City said a 60’ ROW is required. Therefore, ROW will have to be acquired. This is allowed with a TIB grant. It appears the Executive Director will need to secure an agreement from all property owners on the north side of Wellesley stating they will convey their property to the City for the ROW. This should be acceptable to the property owners because they will benefit from a new road if this grant is approved. Grant application date: August
- **Havana & Rowan / 2021 TIB, EDA or Build Grant**  
The NEPDA would like to secure grant funding to improve a backbone grid network in The Yard, including Wellesley, Havana and Rowan. We believe we can leverage the federal NSC work as a local match. Local match dollars are required for most state or federal grants. The NSC is only going by once, so we need to leverage this opportunity to the extent possible.
- **Beacon Hill – Permit Status**  
On 5/5/20, City Water Dept (James Sacamoto) said, *“The revised design for the Booster Station has been sent to the DOH along with the plans and design for the Tank.”* On 5/7/20, Pete Rayner wrote to the SBA, stating *“Beacon Hill is developing the largest residential property in the City of Spokane. Beacon Hill is also in the poorest zip code in the State of Washington. Our area is desperate for housing. The shutdown occurred in mid construction. We will be extremely challenged to complete the project per our loan commitments. The builders, our buyers, are also shut down. Needless to say this program could make the difference.”*
- **Whitworth University**  
It was noted that an intern from Whitworth University started working for the NEPDA (20 hours a week). He is creating a database of about 350 businesses in the NEPDA. This includes contact information. Only about 1/3<sup>rd</sup> response rate so far. He is asking, 1) whether they will agree to meet with the Whitworth MBA students who are studying barriers to development in the northeast, 2) perform an internet speed test, and provide us with the download/upload speeds and ISP, 3) ask whether they would support a Hillyard Chamber of Commerce.
- **Hillyard Chamber**  
On 4/21/20, The NEPDA Executive Director met with Toby Broemmeling, Executive Director of the West Plains Chamber of Commerce about forming a Hillyard Chamber of Commerce. Membership benefits include increased P/R and a unified voice politically (Govt. Affairs). He

questioned the financial viability and effectiveness of a Hillyard Chamber, and suggested a “CEO roundtable” with the largest companies in the area would be more effective. He said that the West Plains Chamber works because it represents the Tribes, EWU, SIA, etc. Small businesses have little say, and they tend to be focused on issues that should be handled by a “merchant association,” not a Chamber. The Board confirmed Toby’s conclusions, and concluded this is not something the NEPDA will lead. We will support the effort if others take the lead.

- CARES Act – Spokane County.  
The Executive Director confirmed that County CARES Act funding cannot be used for economic development related activities. This was confirmed by Commissioner Kerns.
- Other
  - Wellesley Ave. It was noted that in addition to the right-of-way alignment and road design, geotechnical and environmental work may be required for a more accurate cost estimate to include as part of our TIB grant application.
  - 2017 Master Plan update. The Executive Director noted that the NEPDA contains approximately 680 parcels of less than .75 acres, and over 180 single family homes in industrially zoned property. Only 29 parcels contain buildings of greater than 10,000 SF. While there are a handful of larger parcels, particularly in the County, small parcels are not suitable for larger businesses. Therefore, the NEPDA must focus on small and mid-sized business recruitment. Furthermore, single family is typically not compatible with industrial uses. We must consider ways to incentivize purchases of single family homes and their rapid conversion to business/industrial uses.
  - Grant Funding Strategic plan. Gerry Gemmill suggested speaking with The County Grants Administrator about the merits of hiring a consultant to help the board prepare a strategic grant funding plan. In response to Gerry’s request, the Executive Director spoke with Kari Grytdal, Spokane County Grants Administrator about the merits of retaining a consultant to develop a strategic grant funding plan. Kari is supportive. In response to this conversation, on 4/27 Kari wrote, *“The primary topic of conversation was the consideration of hiring an Engineer as a consultant to assist NEPDA in creating a strategic plan. I see no downside to the creation of such a plan. In creating strategic plans, it is always important to have an independent third party lead the discussions and assist the organization in it’s’ efforts. Hiring a consultant with specialized skills is vital to creating a workable final product. The creation of such a plan would be instrumental in identifying priorities for NEPDA, and funding opportunities which would result in the highest probability of success. The strategic plan would also allow NEPDA to be more competitive in funding opportunities. The plan adds credibility in the eyes of the funders. The plan typically includes community input which is necessary in receiving any grant funding. Additionally, the strategic plan also provides guidance to both staff and the Board for future project planning.”*
  - Broadband. It was discussed and agreed that high quality broadband is a precondition to attracting high quality next generation businesses. The Executive Director said that he would like to request broadband feasibility study proposals from at least two engineering firms.
  - BNSF. It was noted that we have built a solid relationship with the BNSF economic development manager for the region, who (at the request of the NEPDA) agreed to participate in SRTC Work Group (The Spokane Regional Freight Study and Investment Strategy). The results of this work group will include analyses that will provide a solid

foundation from which to identify a regional freight improvement strategy that can be incorporated in SRTC's next metropolitan transportation plan (MTP) update. This will include crafting a set of policy recommendations to guide future freight-related planning efforts, identifying key freight performance measures, and developing a prioritized list of freight projects addressing regionally significant needs identified in the study. Benefits include, securing buy-in from SRTC on grants via our (NEPDA) advocacies. Also, data could also be used to support a potential "Freight and Mobility" federal grant, which is on-par with BUILD, except the emphasis is on funding trucking, rail, and port/water infrastructure. The Executive Director noted that this is a long shot, but worth the effort.

- Hillyard Visioning Study. The Executive Director noted that he met with City of Spokane Planning Department, who expressed strong support for a new visioning plan for the Hillyard area, particularly downtown Hillyard. The current section of NSC will be complete in 3-years, at which time truck traffic will be reduced. One of the challenges to redevelopment in downtown Hillyard has been the heavy freight traffic on Market and Haven. When this heavy freight traffic is diverted to the NSC, we have an opportunity to slow the traffic, narrow the streets, widen sidewalks, increase public space, increase green spaces, all of which are conducive to a pedestrian and retail activity. It was further noted that we should consider promoting Hillyard Maker District, similar to the Bend Maker District. Shae Blackwell suggested another comparable area, called Fountains Square in Indianapolis. This is a former industrial area which had suffered for decades. It has subsequently been revitalized as a trendy artisan focused maker and entertainment district.
- Hillyard zoning and code analysis. The Executive Director noted that he had met with City of Spokane Planning Department about the need for a comprehensive zoning and building code analysis, to identify requirements or limits which act as barriers to development, or to incentivize development. The goal is to enhance financial feasibility of development. Planning staff was lukewarm to this suggestion. Scott Simmons said that the NEPDA needs to drive this effort, and to ask our elected officials to support this work. Michael Cathcart confirmed his willingness to help with zoning or code changes needed to incentivize additional development.

Scott Simmons asked for updated financial projections before committing to any additional engineering, planning or similar initiatives. The Executive Director indicated he would have updated financial projections at the June board meeting.

- Covid-19. Discussion ensued as to whether the NEPDA can help facilitate the following:
  - Northeast distribution center for supply of business PPE
  - Utilize existing supply chain in northeast Spokane to distribute PPE
  - Identify northeast businesses that can pivot quickly to produce PPE

It was determined that the above would be managed by City and County, and further action by the NEPDA was not required at this time. Josh Kerns suggested speaking with the Department of Emergency Management and the County Health Department Director to confirm.

### **Action Items**

- **Action Item No. 01:** Executive Director discussed the possibility of requesting Spokane County CARES Act funding for board approved NEPDA priorities. It was determined that CARES Act funding is not available for economic development. The Executive Director requested board

approval to solicit two proposals from MFA and Stantec to provide a NEPDA Strategic Funding Plan.

**Motion:** A motion to approve was made by Michal Cathcart. Josh Kerns seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

**Action Item No. 02:** Board approval authorizing Megan Clark to prepare Registered Agent, Resolutions. Megan Clark provided an overview of Action Item 2. Under current law, the appointment of a registered agent is required, which must be recorded with Spokane County. The purpose of appointing an Agent is to receive (legal) claims. The Executive Director noted that he would have the City to update the NEPDA website to include “registered agent contact information”

**Motion:** to approve a resolution of the Northeast Public Development Authority (the “NEPDA”) to appoint an agent to receive claims for damages made pursuant to RCW 4.96.020. A motion to approve was made by Scott Simmons. The motion was seconded by Michael Cathcart.

- **Action Item No. 03:** The Board was asked to authorize Megan Clark’s preparation of general resolutions for the NEPDA. The purpose is to reduce legal liability, for audit compliance, and, and to ensure consistency with other PDA’s.

Megan noted she would be preparing the following documents and/or resolutions for board review and consideration.

1. Corporate Officers (as of January 2020)
2. Individuals Enter into Contracts
3. Conflict of Interest Policy
4. Record Retention Policy
5. Executive Director Authority
6. Confidentiality Policy
7. Potential Review of original Bylaws and other governing documents to ensure they comport with the new Interlocal Agreement, and other recent changes to the NEPDA. Scott Simons noted that the Bylaws and Charter were modified in 2019, which should be reviewed.

**Motion:** A motion to approve was made by Gerry Gemmill. The motion was seconded by Scott Simmons. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

- **Action Item No. 04:** The board was asked to authorize Megan Clark to prepare an NEPDA employee handbook. The Employment Handbook and Policies would also include Whistleblower Policy(s) and Medical and Family Leave Policy.

**Motion:** A motion to approve was made by Michael Cathcart. The motion was seconded by Scott Simmons. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

It was noted that the next board meeting will be held on June 12, 2020, 10:30 AM to Noon.

Meeting Adjourned: 12:05 PM