

NIAGARA FALLS URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY

**Minutes of Meeting – July 16, 2012
City Hall – 745 Main Street – Room 17
Niagara Falls, New York**

Present: Mayor Paul A. Dyster, Chairman
Council Member Glenn Choolokian
Council Member Kristen Grandinetti
Council Member Charles Walker
Ms. Doreen O'Connor
Mr. Jeffrey Paterson

Absent: Council Member Robert Anderson
Council Member Samuel Fruscione
Mr. Michael Hooper
Ms. Janet Markarian

Staff

Present: Mr. Richard Zucco, Legal Counsel
Ms. MaryAnn Colangelo, Recording Secretary

Others Mr. Craig Johnson, Corporation Counsel
Present: Niagara Gazette Reporter

Mayor Dyster called the meeting to order at 5:53 p.m. Roll was called and a quorum was present (6 Members).

Minutes of Meeting

The minutes of meeting dated June 19, 2012, were put before the Board. There being no questions or comments concerning the minutes a motion for approval was made by Mr. Paterson, second made by Council Member Walker. Unanimously approved by voice vote (6 members).

Approval of Stipend for Director of Business Development/NFURA Executive Director, from July 16, 2012 through December 31, 2012

After consultation with URA Legal Counsel Richard Zucco and Corporation Counsel Craig Johnson, Mayor Dyster stated that he was going to pull Item #4: Stipend for Director of Business Development/NFURA Executive Director from the agenda.

Mayor Dyster stated that N.F.C. Development Corp. approved a transfer to the City of funds through the end of 2012 for the Senior Business Development Director position. This person will also act as N.F.C. Executive Director. Upon approval by the Urban Renewal Board, a stipend of roughly \$1,000.00 per month would be offered to this person to serve as NFURA Executive Director. In addition, this person would also serve as Acting Director of Economic Development, a City position budgeted at an annual salary of \$1.00. Among other things, this would relieve the Mayor of the task of having to review time cards for people in Planning, Economic Development, and Environmental Services. Mayor Dyster stated that this was probably not the best way for the Mayor to spend his time.

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Mayor Dyster stated the total salary proposed will be in about the same range as the last Department Head we appointed, which was the Director of Community Development who was hired at approximately \$70,000. Mayor Dyster stated that he hoped that at some point the Urban Renewal Agency would approve this stipend so one person could fulfill all the functions of Acting Director of Economic Development, NFC Executive Director, NFURA Executive Director and Senior Business Development Director, at a total salary commensurate with the responsibilities.

Mayor Dyster stated that he shared a grave concern as to what will happen through the end of this year and next year in the absence of casino revenues. If you look at this proposal in economic development, at the end of this process we would have pared down the salary for the Economic Development Department Head. At the beginning of the administration, the Director had a six figure salary. The proposal combines positions and will save tens of thousands of dollars without any kind of drastic diminution of the capability of the department. It is important to maintain our ability to administer casino revenues appropriately. That is where we hope to head with this at some point in the future. We will try to get others member of the URA together to try and address this. In the meantime I am pulling number #4.

Old Business:

Mayor Dyster stated that one of the reasons he would like to have a Director of Urban Renewal is for the Agency to become more active. Mr. Zucco has petitioned the State to be relieved of our responsibility to do some of the financial reporting for the past couple of years based upon our inactivity.

Mr. Zucco stated that request was based on the Agency's inactivity; however, if the Agency becomes more active there would be no basis for requesting a waiver and we will have to be prepared to do the full reporting.

The Mayor stated it is be important to have a Director in place in order for the Agency to become more active in economic development. We will need the Director to coordinate the full set of reporting going forward.

No other old business was brought before the Board.

New Business:

No new business was brought before the Board.

There being no further business, a motion for adjournment was made by Ms. O'Connor, second made by Council Member Walker. Unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.