

**CITY OF BUFFALO URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY
BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

April 22, 2021

REMOTE MEETING VIA WEBEX CONFERENCE CALL

<https://cityofbuffalourbanrenewalagency.my.webex.com/cityofbuffalourbanrenewalagency.my/j.php?MTID=madc4a042c36f8177858e53cda0df1842>

MEETING DATE: April 22, 2021

MEMBERS PRESENT: Brendan R. Mehaffy, BURA Vice Chairman
Council President Darius Pridgen
Commissioner Donna Estrich
Timothy Ball, Corporation Counsel
Council Member Joseph Golombek
Council Member Christopher Scanlon

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Mayor Byron Brown, BURA Chairman

SECRETARY: Scott C. Billman

OTHERS PRESENT: Yvonne McCray, BURA Director of Housing, Jenna Bichler, BURA Director of Operations, Tracy Cooley, BURA Deputy Director of FCA, Jessica Brown, Director of Administration & Finance, Dana Harris, Maria Melchiorre, Tony Chestnut, Leslie Vishwanath, Pam Walker-Jarmon, Evelyn Rodriguez, Anthony Sheppard, Crystal Middleton, LaDonna Clements, Nate Newman, Malika Lee, Gina Granville, Theresa Farrell, Joanne Kearns, Ty Eubanks

1. Mr. Mehaffy called the meeting to order at 9:40 am.
2. Commissioner Donna Estrich made the motion to waive the reading of the minutes of the March 25, 2021 meeting, seconded by Corporation Counsel Timothy Ball and carried unanimously.
3. **BURA FISCAL UPDATE REPORT (INFORMATIONAL)**
 - 3a. Ms. Cooley, Director of Financial Control of Agencies provided a Divisional report to the Board.
4. **CDBG (ACTION)**
 - 4a. **AUTHORITY TO CONTRACT WITH PURSUIT (F/K/A NEW YORK BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION) FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LOAN FUND MANAGER**

Agency Members approved a request to enter into a contract, a one (1) year agreement (with an option to renew for an additional one (1) year term), with Pursuit (f/k/a - New York Business Development Corporation (“NYBDC”) for an amount not to exceed \$40,000.00 for the purpose of acting as the Economic Development Loan Fund Manager for the City of Buffalo Urban Renewal Agency (“BURA” and/or “Agency”) The Agency solicited proposals to obtain the services of an Economic Development Loan Fund Manager to manage the City of Buffalo Economic Development Program (“Program”) in April 2017 and has contracted with NYBDC (n/k/a – Pursuit) for these services for the past three (3) years. The Economic Development Loan Fund Manager will be responsible for performing the required administrative duties for this program, as prescribed in a written agreement executed by the parties. Further, the Economic Development Loan Fund Manager will be required to prepare and submit to BURA in a timely manner all reports and data as required for the City’s Program administered through BURA.

The Economic Development Loan Fund Manager will be an independent contractor of BURA and will report to the applicable staff of the Agency. The duties will include but are not limited to the following:

- Evaluate the products that could be used to meet the program intent;
- Review and recommend refinements, as appropriate, to the BURA's current loan program guidelines, including but not limited to assistance to micro business enterprises;
- Prepare and utilize, subject to BURA approval, CDBG compliant program forms, contracts, agreements, and any other such documents as may be necessary to administer the program including but not limited to assistance to micro business enterprises;
- Conduct all program activities in conformance with BURA's approved program guidelines;
- Conduct loan underwriting on potential economic development loans and prepare underwriting reports for the Agency;
- Provide other needed support and technical assistance to ensure accomplishment of BURA's programs;
- Work with local agencies, neighborhood organizations etc. to coordinate appropriate counseling and training classes for eligible applicants;
- Maintain complete project files to allow monitoring of the program by BURA officials;
- Provide guidance to BURA staff as it relates to any applicable Federal or State regulations; and
- Provide for ongoing Technical Assistance.

Motion made by Commissioner Estrich to approve Item 4a, seconded by Corporation Counsel Timothy Ball and carried unanimously.

5. PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION (ACTION)

5a. APPROVAL TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH FISHER ASSOCIATES FOR THE RIVER ROCK CONNECTIONS PLAN

Agency Members approved a request to enter into a contract with Fisher Associates for an amount not to exceed \$98,790 for the River Rock Connections Plan for the creation of a plan and supporting urban design, engineering, and environmental work to improve existing connections, establish new connections, and develop specific plans for strategic locations that will foster the overall connectivity to and between waterfront, open space assets, and various strategic locations in the Black Rock and Riverside neighborhoods of the City of Buffalo (City). A review committee with representatives from BURA, the Office of Strategic Planning and the Department of Public Works, Division of Parks evaluated ten responses to the RFP and determined that the team proposed by Fisher Associates would best provide services to allow for the well planned but quick implementation to improve access for neighborhood residents. The Fisher Team includes of Joy Kuebler Landscape Architect a WBE and DBE and Mustard Seed Consulting a MWBE. The scope of work includes public engagement designed with public safety in mind, plans for connections including complete streets and infrastructure improvements, and cost estimates for the implementation of the plan.

Motion made by Council Member Golombek to approve Item 5a, seconded by Council President Pridgen and carried unanimously.

6. OPERATIONS UPDATE (INFORMATIONAL)

6a. BURA OPERATIONAL UPDATE

Jenna Bichler, Director of Operations, provided an update to the Board.

7. CARES ACT FUNDING (INFORMATIONAL)

7a. CARES ACT FUNDING UPDATE

Leslie Vishwanath, Director of Program Management, provided an update to the Board.

7b. RENT ASSISTANCE/ EVICTION PREVENTION PROGRAM UPDATE

Malika Lee, Project Manager, provided an update to the Board.

8. AGENCY UPDATES (INFORMATIONAL)

8a. COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

Dana Harris, Communications Manager, provided an update to the Board.

9. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Commissioner Estrich made the motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Council Member Scanlon and carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 10:05 am.

Scott C. Billman

Scott C. Billman, BURA Secretary

Reported By: Risë Geller