

Connecticut Municipal Redevelopment Authority (MRDA)

Board of Directors Meeting

Connecticut State Capitol Building

210 Capitol Ave (Old Appropriations Room 310)

Hartford, CT 06106

Thursday, July 11, 2024

11:00am – In-person meeting

Board Members Present: Chairperson Felix Reyes; Vice Chairperson Seila Mosquera-Bruno; Karen DuBois-Walton; Alexandra Daum; Jessica Vonashek; Kiley Gosselin; Gary Anderson;; Sara Amato; Daniel O’Keefe; Laoise King; Danté Bartolomeo; Emma Cimino; Manisha Juthani; Paul Hinsch; Jack Benjamin; Laura Francis

Board Members Absent: None

MRDA Staff Present: David Kooris

Guests: Governor Ned Lamont, Governor Chief of Staff Matt Brokman, Governor Director of Media Relations and Chief Spokesperson Julia Bergman, DECD Deputy Commissioner Matthew Pugliese, DECD Chief Administrative Officer Kyle Abercrombie; DECD Director of Government Affairs Katie Stargardter

Chairperson Reyes called the meeting to order at 11:06 AM.

Welcome by the Chair

Chairperson Reyes gave welcoming remarks, thanked Governor Lamont for his appointment and leadership, and shared that MRDA is a quasi-public entity that is responsible for assisting municipalities in spurring transit-oriented development with a focus on house, as well as other services to help municipalities meet their economic development goals.

Roll Call and Introductions

Attendance was taken and members were given an opportunity to introduce themselves.

Chairperson Reyes acknowledged Matt Pugliese, Mike Freimuth, Matt Brokman, Tom Scanlon, Julia Bergman, and Kyle Abercrombie to thank them for their efforts to establish MRDA.

Comments from Governor Lamont

Governor Lamont thanked the MRDA Chairperson and made comments about the need for housing, economic growth in Connecticut, and keeping momentum going. The Governor shared his preference for a “bottom-up” approach and the need to municipalities to come

forward with ideas. The Governor discussed the importance of workforce housing and supportive housing and how this group should prioritize.

The Governor then administered the oath of office for all Board Members:

Do you solemnly swear or solemnly and sincerely affirm, as the case may be, that you will faithfully discharge, according to law, your duties as a member of the board of the Connecticut Municipal Redevelopment Authority to the best of your abilities; so help you God or upon penalty of perjury?

All members stood, raised their right hand, and swore, "I do."

MRDA Overview and Intent

Governor's Chief of Staff Matt Brokman gave an overview of MRDA and explained its intent. Mr. Brokman explained MRDA will facilitate quicker ability for the state to engage with cities and towns by identifying markets and zones that can be "fast tracked" for development. Mr. Brokman explained that MRDA's first task will be to reach out to cities and towns and get them to join MRDA, provide them the technical support to restructure zoning, promote this opportunity to developers, and potentially provide the capital to fill any gaps in financing.

Appointment of Executive Committee

Alexandra Daum made a motion to nominate Commissioner Mosquera-Bruno to serve as the Vice Chair for a term of one year for MRDA ending June 30, 2025. The motion was seconded by Danté Bartolomeo. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Alexandra Daum made a motion to nominate Jessica Vonashek, Laura Francis, and Daniel O'Keefe to serve on the Executive Committee for MRDA for a term of one year ending on June 30, 2025. The motion was seconded by Manisha Juthani. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Action on Authorization of MOU between MRDA/DECD

Alexandra Daum made a motion to approve the authorization of the Memorandum of Understanding between MRDA and DECD. Chairperson Reyes explained that this established the relationship between DECD and MRDA needed to operate. The motion was seconded by Karen DuBois-Walton. Daniel O'Keefe abstained as a signatory of the document. The motion was approved unanimously.

Action on Appointment of Executive Director

Chairperson Reyes provided an introduction of David Kooris, explaining his background and accolades in housing and development across the state. Alexandra Daum made a motion that the MRDA Board of Directors appoint the position and title of Executive Director to David Kooris at a yearly salary of \$240,000, and that the MRDA Board further authorize the execution

of an employment agreement and any other documents necessary and incidental to effectuating said contract. The motion was seconded by Daniel O'Keefe. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Director Kooris introduced himself and made brief remarks about the goals and objectives of MRDA, sharing his gratitude for the opportunity.

Adoption of FY25 Regular Meeting Schedule

Chairperson Reyes explained the meeting schedule and ability to meet hybrid, with a quarterly in-person meeting. Alexandra Daum made a motion to adopt a regular meeting schedule, as provided in the board materials:

Aug 15 – Hybrid

Sept 19 – Hybrid

Oct 17 – Hybrid

Nov 21 – In-Person

Dec 19 – Hybrid

Jan 16 – Hybrid

Feb 20 – In-Person

March 20 – Hybrid

April 17 – Hybrid

May 15 – Hybrid

June 12 – In-Person (Juneteenth is June 19, need to schedule to June 12)

The motion was seconded by Paul Hinsch. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Chairperson Reyes gave closing remarks. Governor Lamont gave remarks in support of the appointment of David Kooris.

Karen DuBois-Walton made a motion to adjourn. Kiley Gosselin seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion to adjourn was approved unanimously.

The board adjourned at 11:31 AM.