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FALL RIVER REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

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Fall River Redevelopment Authority meeting held pursuant to the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law, M.G.L.c. 30A, 18-25, on Wednesday, May 8, 2019, transcribed by Jeanne M. Bramanti, Registered Professional Reporter and Notary Public in and for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

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P R O C E E D I N G S 2

1 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: This is an open
2 meeting law. Any person may make an audio or video
3 recording of this public meeting or may transmit the
4 meeting through any medium. Attendees are, therefore,
5 advised that such recordings or transmissions are being
6 made whether perceived or unperceived by those present
7 and are deemed acknowledged and permissible.
8 And with that we will get -- wait, two things.
9 We're going to go a little out of order, so we are
10 going to get the financial update. So we're going to
11 get the financial update from you, Mike.
12 MR. MICHAEL DION: Oh, you want do that first?
13 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: Do that first.
14 MR. MICHAEL DION: The first report that you
15 have is marked 6A-1 which is your income statement from
16 your operating account. As you can see there was only
17 bank interest as deposits this month, and there was
18 some disbursements that were on previous warrants. The
19 ending balance for the month is \$2,115,720.54.
20 If you keep going to the next 6B-1, this is
21 your -- this was classified as, like, the parking
22 garage account. As you can see there was a large
23 deposit which was parking garage receipts for 17,400.
24

1 I don't know why at one point BBP stopped paying the 3
2 RDA. That 17,400 is actually four months worth of
3 revenue. You guys get \$4350 per month, and a small
4 amount of bank interest in that account for a balance
5 of 183,859.40.
6 The next report is the warrant for the month,
7 6C. On No. 1 there is four bills on the warrant, and I
8 don't know what you want me to do. There was a couple
9 of bills that came in later that we usually pay in that
10 month which are attorney fees. I can add it onto the
11 warrant and get it to you. I think it's about three or
12 \$4,000. That's your determination if you want to just
13 keep the warrant the way it is or if you want to change
14 that.
15 There are two bills on there for a group
16 insurance commission which is health insurance and
17 dental insurance for people who have retired, and you
18 have two tax bills for parcels that are actually in the
19 town of Freetown that we get on a yearly basis.
20 The other report that you have which is marked
21 6D is your accounts payable register. You have five
22 bills on that, five invoices. Fall River Retirement
23 Board is your annual appropriation. That doesn't have
24 to be paid until October. Three bills for Harriam. I

1 am working on that account. I've put those bills on 4
2 hold because there are some discrepancies in the
3 accounting.
4 And then there is that last income for Jobs
5 for Fall River. I've contacted Mr. Fiola twice this
6 month in emails requesting that we get backup for that
7 bill. As of today I still haven't gotten the backup,
8 so I'm just waiting on that to go through that.
9 And your last financial report is something
10 that I put together concerning what we've talked about
11 in the past of taking some of your money and putting it
12 into certificates of deposit. Right now your bank
13 balances as of 4/15 total 2.2 million almost \$2.3
14 million.
15 What I suggest is in the future getting rid of
16 that parking garage account and merging this all into
17 one account and then transferring out maybe \$1.2
18 million which would give you a cash balance of about
19 1,099,579. Take that 1.2 million and put that into a
20 certificate of deposit which would earn you more
21 interest.
22 Currently, right now on your smaller account,
23 the parking garage account you're earning .10 percent
24 which is bringing you in about \$14.80 a month.

1 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: Getting rich. 5
2 MR. MICHAEL DION: On your other account it's
3 at .85 percent bringing you in about \$1542. So monthly
4 you're bringing in about \$1557, and your ten month
5 total is 15,573.40. You probably ask me why did I
6 choose a ten month total?
7 Most of the CDs that I looked at, different
8 banks, had a 10 month, 12 month special, so if you did
9 the 1.2 million at ten months at 2.47 which is an APY
10 of 2.50 that's right now current interest at BayCoast,
11 that would bring you in on that CD \$2,471.80. And then
12 if you left the remaining money in your high earning
13 checking account at .85 percent you would bring in
14 another \$775.85.
15 So you would bring in a total of \$3,247.65
16 monthly instead of what you're currently bringing in
17 which is \$1557.34. So you would be earning another
18 1600, almost \$1700 in interest by doing that change,
19 and over a yearly basis with that new make up you would
20 be bringing in 32,731.61 instead of 15,573.40, so you
21 would be earning almost an additional \$17,158 by moving
22 it.
23 I picked the BayCoast bank one for the only
24 reason that you already have all your accounts at

1 BayCoast. A lot of the -- if you were to move it into⁶
2 other banks they require you to open up savings
3 accounts and stuff, so, you know, you don't want to
4 open up a lot more accounts.
5 The only issue that you still have is that the
6 money is only insured up to \$250,000. So it's up to
7 you what you want to do. I just figured I would give
8 that out to you and figure out what you want to do with
9 the future.
10 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: Great.
11 MR. OLIVEIRA: Why don't we just make a motion
12 to execute that plan.
13 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: I think so. I mean,
14 we've been talking about it for a few months now. We
15 might as well earn a little bit more money.
16 MR. ROBERT SMITH: The other thing that
17 concerns all of us, leaving all of that money that's
18 not insured with the same bank, does it make sense to
19 split it up a little to -- the chances are that nothing
20 is going to happen, but it's happened before.
21 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: Well, right now the
22 money has been with the same bank, sitting in the same,
23 non interest checking account for years and years --
24 MR. ROBERT SMITH: No, I agree.

1 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: -- so I'm not quite⁷
2 sure.
3 MR. MICHAEL DION: The chances of a BayCoast
4 Bank which is probably over a billion dollars now I
5 think of having financial difficulties, God will strike
6 me down, is probably nil, do you know what I mean? So,
7 I mean, there is some risk, I'm not going to say that,
8 you probably would be written up in an audit, but if
9 that -- if you want to have eight or nine different
10 banks to the 250 -- we can also probably speak to
11 BayCoast to see if they would -- sometimes you can take
12 additional security on your money in the bank, so they
13 might be able to offer --
14 MR. ROBERT SMITH: You don't have to do that.
15 I'm fine with whatever.
16 MR. OLIVEIRA: I'm ready to make a motion to
17 execute the plan as described by Mike. I'm comfortable
18 with the numbers. I think it's a no brainer.
19 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: I second that.
20 All in favor?
21 MS. DIONNE: Aye.
22 MR. OLIVEIRA: Aye.
23 MS. TAYLOR BRANCO: Aye.
24 MR. SMITH: Aye.

1 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: If you could move⁸
2 forward on that.
3 MR. MICHAEL DION: Yeah. It's something that
4 I'm going to need your assistance on, so I will be in
5 contact with you.
6 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: I'll come down and
7 meet you. Great. Thank you.
8 I think that -- did you want us to vote on the
9 warrant because I would make a motion to accept the
10 warrant as scheduled and to add in those couple of late
11 ones that came in for conference.
12 MS. DIONNE: I would second that.
13 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: All in favor.
14 MS. TAYLOR BRANCO: Aye.
15 MR. OLIVEIRA: Aye.
16 MS. DIONNE: Aye.
17 MR. SMITH: Aye.
18 MR. MICHAEL DION: I'll add them in and get
19 the warrant to you tomorrow.
20 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: Great. Thank you very
21 much.
22 The next item on our agenda is the economic
23 development director position, and I believe that
24 Caroline Wells is here, so if you could please come sit

1 next to Cathy Ann. I'm very excited to have you, so⁹
2 thank you for coming.
3 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: Thanks.
4 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: All the board members
5 have received your resume and all of your references,
6 and, obviously, the subcommittee did recommend that you
7 come forward. So we're going to operate, basically, in
8 the same manner. I'm going to ask you the questions
9 that the subcommittee asked, and then when we're done
10 you can tell us a little bit more about yourself that
11 you feel that we didn't cover here, and then if any
12 board members do have any questions.
13 So if you would please tell us about your
14 background and why you feel you're well suited for this
15 position.
16 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: Okay. So I am at a point
17 in my career right now where I've done a lot of things
18 over the last 20 years, and I'm kind of going back to
19 the things I enjoy most. And I started in
20 redevelopment right out of graduate school. I went to
21 Chapel Hill.
22 I was, actually, before that studied
23 archeology, and at that point at which I graduated
24 there was -- there were no jobs in archeology, none

1 that paid particularly well, and I felt like I needed¹⁰
2 some different skills. And I was working in historic
3 preservation at that point working in some adaptive
4 reuse projects, and I was interning at the city of
5 Greensboro while getting my master's degree in regional
6 planning, and I was really lucky then.
7 They put me through a lot of different
8 education modules on finance, development finance,
9 different types of grant courses, community development
10 block grants, and working with the community, working
11 with dispute resolution, conflict negotiations, so I
12 was -- it was a very fortunate time for me, and I
13 enjoyed the work that I was doing such that I didn't
14 really ever want to go back into preservation or
15 archeology, I just wanted to move forward with
16 planning.
17 So I worked there up until about 2005. My
18 husband at that point got a job as the planner in
19 Barrington, Rhode Island. We -- his family has a house
20 in Maine, and we would drive through this area on the
21 way up to Maine, and my parents are from Massachusetts.
22 They're actually from the Berkshires.
23 So we liked the New England coast, and we
24 decided to move up here. So I -- actually, I had a

1 hard time finding a job for a while. I also had a¹¹
2 small daughter at that point. The recession was kind
3 of -- the housing bubble was sort of moving in, and I
4 didn't have a network up here, so you'll see a little
5 bit of starts and stops in my resume at that point.
6 But my daughter was still pretty small, too, so I
7 wasn't really kind of full in on the working full time
8 at that point.
9 But I had a lot of great experiences working
10 on some really great projects around the state,
11 learning about planning up here. I eventually landed
12 in Warren, Rhode Island, and I worked there for --
13 let's see, from 2008 to 2015.
14 So it's quite a long period of time in which I
15 did Brownfield remediation in parks, a lot of
16 infrastructure planning, bike paths, kayak trails,
17 green infrastructure projects on Water Street which is
18 where the park meets the town beach, and economic
19 development projects.
20 I worked for the Hope & Main culinary business
21 incubator essentially from beginning to end. I had a
22 person come in my office interested in finding space.
23 I showed her a town-owned building that had been
24 abandoned for a few years, and we just worked together.

1 It was not a known type of business structure to¹²
2 actually have an incubator devoted to people who want
3 to start food businesses, so we had a lot of educating
4 of other people and ourselves to do.
5 But we eventually amassed quite a following
6 such that when the project went to public referendum
7 which it had to do in order to dispose of a public
8 building, publicly owned building we had 500 people
9 show up and almost unanimously vote to sell the
10 building, and the incubator now is working, it has
11 markets every week or so now, and it's graduated about
12 170 businesses. So that was a great experience.
13 I was also doing development plan review which
14 is something that I had not had experience before, so
15 in my redevelopment role I was sort of acting as a
16 developer going before planning and zoning boards with
17 potential projects. This time I was on the other side,
18 I was on the permitting side, so I actually understood
19 the planner's perspective as a project goes through the
20 permitting process, and that's the role I have now and
21 have had since.
22 But it doesn't -- it kind of takes me away
23 from what I really like which is to see projects from
24 inception through design through execution, and then to

1 see them sort of go off on their own and become their¹³
2 own things. This week I actually went back and looked
3 up some of my old projects in Greensboro like South Elm
4 Street which is where I wrote a \$2 million grant
5 application and an EPA Brownfield application.
6 It was just a blown out mill surrounded by
7 blighted land at that point, about ten acres of
8 blighted land, and, you know, here we are what is it
9 10, 15 years later, and a developer, a condo developer
10 just is investing \$27 million now in that to build
11 condos.
12 So it can be done, these industrial corridors,
13 these places where people just think are forgotten and
14 lost and there is no hope, but there is hope, you just
15 have to have that long vision for it. So anyway,
16 that's how I got here.
17 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: Thank you. Describe
18 your experience in the field of economic development
19 specifically with job creation and job retention.
20 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: So mostly it has to do
21 with my work in Warren. So with the incubator we were
22 dealing with all kinds of new business people. Some of
23 them were Johnson & Wales graduates with businesses of
24 their own that just needed a place to go, some people

1 just literally didn't know how to start a business, 14
2 didn't know the legal foundations, the accounting.
3 So what we had to do is create a program from
4 soup to nuts for people of various knowledge basis and
5 various timeframes, many times this was a second or
6 third job for some people, and have it so that it was
7 really building a business from the ground up.
8 So that took a lot of design work by me, by a
9 lot of the board of directors for Hope & Main. They
10 have a boot camp, and they try to keep everything as
11 low cost as they can. That gives everybody sort of
12 that ground level knowledge.
13 We worked with Rhode Island's Commerce
14 department to -- we got grants, and I also got
15 community development block grants to help with
16 business assistance like inventory sort of -- things
17 like that, grant assistance, because most of these
18 people were also not high income, and so it was really
19 understanding the particular type of clientele, what
20 their needs were, and then designing programs around
21 that. So that's the core of it.
22 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: Describe your
23 experience with compliance and statistical reporting
24 requirements associated with government programs.

1 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: So from redevelopment on 15
2 I've always worked with community development block
3 grants, home funds, we've worked with bond funds, and
4 each of them have their own requirements for reporting
5 and their own budget development, all of the federal
6 strings attached.
7 So I've been literally in class educated on
8 that and have worked with that throughout my career,
9 and there is reporting statistics for each one of those
10 types of funding. So that's just part and parcel of
11 working with developable property.
12 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: Tell us about your
13 responsibilities with budgeting, how many employees
14 have you supervised at any one time, and describe your
15 managerial style.
16 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: The most I have
17 supervised is about 15. I think I've always had
18 somebody to supervise. I mean, there may have been
19 periods where I was in between employees, but I have
20 always had a supervisory position right out of the
21 gate.
22 My approach is -- I think anybody will say is
23 collaborative, and I think I said that in my screening.
24 I just really like to work on teams, and I like to hear

1 all of the ideas. If there is a decision that needs to 16
2 be made and everybody is on the fence I'm happy to make
3 it, but I like to -- I like to have all ideas out on
4 the table and start kind of weeding through and getting
5 priorities and making decisions that way.
6 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: Describe your
7 activities during your first day and your first week on
8 the job.
9 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: So as I had said I think
10 the first day I would as much as possible like to amass
11 all of the information that I need and contact lists,
12 kind of map out what it is I need to know and
13 prioritize what I need to know when.
14 I probably would love to take a ride out to
15 some places and get a closer look if that's possible on
16 a first day, certainly a first week, and then by the
17 end of the first couple of days certainly I would like
18 to have a calendar filled with people that I need to
19 know, people I need to meet with. That first day and
20 that first week is really when you start building that
21 framework that you're going to start moving the
22 operation into.
23 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: What do you consider
24 to be your biggest strength and your biggest weakness?

1 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: My biggest strength I 17
2 think is that I am a good communicator, and I can
3 communicate on a broad base of media, speaking, and
4 creating media, web pages, print media, keeping people
5 up to date, keeping people informed. I'm pretty
6 accessible. I think I am easy to find if people have
7 questions.
8 So I think just keeping that circulation of
9 information not just to a board but to the public is
10 probably my strength, biggest strength, I think. My
11 weakness is that I tend to be -- I tend to be very
12 impatient, particularly when things are not meeting
13 deadlines that were previously set.
14 And I think particularly in projects like
15 redevelopment projects that happens a lot, so you have
16 to have a pretty good accounting of where delays are
17 and why things aren't moving forward and maybe is it,
18 was it your perceptions of what you thought was wrong
19 or is it somebody's performance on the other end as
20 well.
21 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: Why do you want to
22 leave your current position?
23 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: So there are -- well,
24 when I applied for this job I think I was really ready

1 to make that change away from permitting and planning¹⁸
2 from the development permitting side back to the
3 development side, but I'm -- you know, it's not
4 something that I want to talk in the open about because
5 it's public information, and so that's still an ongoing
6 situation.
7 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: What are your salary
8 expectations, and when would you be available to start
9 this position?
10 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: My salary expectation is
11 about 115 which is I think is a healthy but fair step
12 away from my current salary, and I'm ready to start
13 whenever, whenever anybody is ready.
14 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: So at this time I am
15 going to open up to any board members if any board
16 members have any questions for her.
17 MS. DIONNE: I do.
18 MR. SMITH: I do when you're done.
19 MS. DIONNE: Go ahead, you can go first.
20 MR. SMITH: Are you sure?
21 MS. DIONNE: Yeah.
22 MR. SMITH: I've got one question, and I think
23 you're perfect for the job, okay? And I did a fair
24 amount of research, as much as I could on you, and I'm

1 sure you researched us. I know that there was one of¹⁹
2 your past employments that you left on not the best of
3 terms, and I'm wondering if you would be willing just
4 very, very briefly to get it out there so that it's out
5 there.
6 Would you be able to do that? I don't want to
7 intrude on your privacy, but I think sometimes it's
8 just better to get it out there rather than -- now
9 rather than later.
10 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: Yeah. Well, let me say
11 it in a way that I think is the best way I can, how is
12 that? I was in a situation where I was working,
13 everything was fine, I was questioning pay grades that
14 people were being hired into with questions about
15 gender, and I didn't get any answers, and -- but I did
16 get retaliation.
17 MR. SMITH: I understand it was successful.
18 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: Well, it's not successful
19 because we settled, and so it's not necessarily a
20 victory, it's a draw, but it's a draw that, yeah, I
21 came away with satisfied, and I assume they did, too.
22 MR. SMITH: Enough said. I appreciate you
23 explaining that.
24 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: It's an important issue.

1 MR. SMITH: I'm sure you've noticed the²⁰
2 situation where we've been on a bit of a roller coaster
3 the last six months.
4 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: Sure.
5 MR. SMITH: And so there are certain factions
6 that may say this or that, we didn't really vet her
7 well enough, and now it's out there.
8 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: Yeah.
9 MR. SMITH: It's fine, and that's my only
10 question.
11 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: And the country is
12 battling it every day.
13 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: In deed.
14 MR. SMITH: Michelle.
15 MS. DIONNE: I would like to preface my
16 comments and questions just by stating that from the
17 time that I was appointed to this board one of the
18 things that I basically have demanded is open, honest
19 discussion and disclosure, so I'm very happy you were
20 able to address that because I believe that we owe the
21 community that. If we're going to have any trust and
22 if we're going to move forward that's what we need so,
23 again, I appreciate your candidness.
24 I think you basically have, but I would just

1 like a little more -- you've obviously had many²¹
2 positions in many areas, so if you could just go a
3 little further into why there were so many changes. I
4 think they were -- by looking at your resume which I
5 think is incredible and I think you're a perfect fit
6 for Fall River I think you're what we need and you have
7 the Brownfield experience, you have grant writing
8 experience, you have had economic development. I mean,
9 you're just so well-rounded, but --
10 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: Thanks.
11 MS. DIONNE: But, again, in full disclosure,
12 just because, again, people are going to say -- ask
13 questions, so --
14 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: Right. And, you know,
15 the days of people being at their jobs for decades,
16 especially in the current job market, so when I -- and
17 I think I sort of alluded to this, when I came to Rhode
18 Island I didn't have a network. My network was in
19 North Carolina. I knew nobody here, and my daughter
20 was young, and so I wasn't really ready to commit to
21 the 40-hour job at that point, and there wasn't really
22 good, adequate child care at that point, so I had some
23 decisions to make.
24 And then when we hit the housing bubble there

1 just weren't jobs, at least not with my particular 22
2 experience for what I was working for. So I was
3 opening myself up to other experiences not just to get
4 that experience but because that's what was available,
5 and so I'm somebody who is very interested in
6 everything which has been fortunate for me.
7 I mean, if it's tax revenue analysis, you
8 know, love it. If it's land disposition, love that,
9 too. There are a few things that bore me, but I would
10 say that much of my job selection and mobility thus far
11 has been out of necessity. So I moved up here, I had a
12 small child, went through a divorce, so my financial
13 situation was constantly changing, but my network was
14 building, so I've been moving on up, and I'm glad.
15 MS. DIONNE: I've also noticed in your
16 experience that you were a principal planner for the
17 state of Rhode Island in long range transportation.
18 Which supposedly, we've been hearing this for a long
19 time, the Governor is going to assist us in finally,
20 perhaps finally getting a rail system, transportation
21 to Boston.
22 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: I heard.
23 MS. DIONNE: So that experience obviously is
24 going to fit in with that. How do you think that you

1 could enhance that perhaps? 23
2 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: So I think that places
3 like Fall River are optimally positioned to take
4 advantage of some of the trends that are unfortunate in
5 some ways like climate change, we're looking at a lot
6 of transit oriented development projects and creating
7 new projects ground up that are on transit station
8 lines and keep our jobs and our housing and our
9 transportation close together.
10 That was the core of the LRTP, the long range
11 transportation plan that I was working on, and it's a
12 goal of Rhode Island, I'm sure it's a goal of
13 Massachusetts, as well, because with climate change
14 everybody in cars all the time is just not working. So
15 we have to think about making transportation publicly
16 accessible to as many people as possible as affordably
17 as possible, and as close to proximity to jobs and
18 housing as we can.
19 So Fall River has some of these components,
20 you know, assuming that the line comes in, assuming
21 that it's a robust line and not just a connection
22 that's not particularly well-funded or the ridership
23 isn't supported, I think you have a lot of the pieces
24 in place. You know, you have the potential for a

1 really vibrant downtown, you have the potential for 24
2 housing, you have the potential for job location, and
3 this line, I mean, that's the recipe. That's a recipe
4 for a lot of places going forward that maybe had a
5 harsh industrial past, but that's where the future is.
6 MS. DIONNE: Now, another concern I have is we
7 have a large population that is older, very small fixed
8 incomes, obviously any time a city moves forward it
9 becomes more expensive. How would they fit? What
10 would we do to ensure that the two components can work
11 together?
12 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: Well, I think that they
13 need -- they need special attention. They probably
14 need their own planning effort because people on fixed
15 incomes regardless of age are going to be at the
16 unfortunate end of that unless consideration is built
17 in on the front end.
18 But I also think that and I feel pretty
19 confident that you have leadership within the city
20 itself that you can convene to hash out, okay, what are
21 our opportunities, what are our threats, how are we
22 going to build viability so that people can age in
23 place and can age in Fall River and do so comfortably.
24 But I think that's a planning effort that needs to

1 happen. 25
2 MS. DIONNE: Excellent. And my last question
3 would be, I'm sure you're very well -- obviously,
4 you're very well aware of our waterfront and downtown
5 urban renewal plans that are on the horizon and you've
6 had expertise in that. What is your vision for Fall
7 River within that?
8 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: Well --
9 MS. DIONNE: If you have one. That might not
10 even be a fair question at this point.
11 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: It could be a little
12 early.
13 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: Yeah, it's not that I
14 have a vision, it's more that I want to hear everybody
15 else's vision. I mean, there are people who have spent
16 their entire lives here who are generational residence
17 of this place.
18 So I live in Barrington, and I grew up in
19 Florida, so I mean, while I can help you from the
20 technical perspective that is your vision, not mine.
21 MS. DIONNE: Excellent. Thank you.
22 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: Loriann.
23 MS. TAYLOR BRANCO: Yeah, I just have one
24 question. Michelle brought up your past experience and

1 how you, basically, moved up the ladder. What can we²⁶
2 expect or what type of commitment can we expect from
3 you at this point in your life? And I might be a
4 little unfair because no one knows the future, but
5 would you consider long term?
6 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: Yes. As long as we're
7 all happy, you're happy with me and I'm happy with you
8 then there is no reason why the relationship can't
9 continue.
10 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: Joe.
11 MR. OLIVEIRA: So I did look through the
12 resume letter that you provided Kara and the reference
13 letters. I was extremely impressed with all of that.
14 I have one question and one question only. What type
15 of resources do you need to be successful managing all
16 of these projects that we have open? So I'm certain
17 that you looked in the job posting that has all the
18 essential functions, and there are, I believe, ten
19 bullet items.
20 You also are fully aware of the urban renewal
21 plans that we have, downtown waterfront, city pier, and
22 also a little bit over 90 acres of land that we have at
23 the biotech park that is in desperate need of
24 development, so a lot of projects, reasonably big

1 projects.²⁷
2 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: Right.
3 MR. OLIVEIRA: And I believe that the feeling
4 here or the mood in the city is that we are stalling
5 some of these projects from going into execution mode,
6 so we need someone to come in here kind of running and
7 get these projects going. What type of resources will
8 you need because you fully understand that you will be
9 the only staff member on the redevelopment authority
10 committee?
11 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: Yes.
12 MR. OLIVEIRA: So I struggle a little bit with
13 that. I fully understand that under Mass. General Law
14 you can tap into city resources, and I hope that you
15 will, I hope that we will tap into those resources
16 because we need to work together in this city to make
17 these projects come to fruition. So can you just tell
18 us a little bit about how you will tackle these
19 projects, how you will manage them, how you will get
20 the resources that you need to be successful.
21 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: Yeah, so that, that
22 description, the job description, it's a lot. And I
23 think that part of it is that we have to be as open as
24 we can about prioritizing. I mean, what is most

1 important to you because I'm not going to sit here and²⁸
2 promise you that I can achieve all of these things
3 tomorrow.
4 We can set our priorities, and we can try to
5 achieve them as you want to see them fulfilled, and
6 part of that is communicating why things are not. I
7 mean, people often in government they assume if they
8 haven't heard from you then you must be doing nothing,
9 and that's not -- when you work in government of course
10 your day is so full of so many things that
11 communication sometimes falls on the wayside even when
12 it shouldn't.
13 So I think keeping it before the public if
14 something looks like it's delayed it's not or it
15 shouldn't be because something is not happening. It
16 may be that you're waiting on some tests to come in or
17 you're waiting on a contract to be executed. There
18 should be good reasons why people, things aren't moving
19 forward.
20 But to get to your point on resources, this
21 sounds like if you really want to achieve everything in
22 that job description it's an all hands-on deck kind of
23 thing, and understanding in the first couple of weeks
24 who those resources are, where the gaps are, that maybe

1 some resources are not there that we need, that will²⁹
2 be -- I think the biggest point of order is creating
3 the prioritized list of what's the most important
4 things to get done and what could maybe wait a little
5 bit longer because that's just how it's going to get
6 done.
7 MR. OLIVEIRA: Thank you. I fully understand
8 that priority is key, but we have many people that want
9 everything to happen.
10 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: I know. Yeah, you can't
11 please everybody.
12 MR. OLIVEIRA: I understand.
13 MR. SMITH: Can I ask one more question, a
14 follow-up?
15 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: Sure.
16 MR. SMITH: Because Joe brought up an
17 unbelievably critical point, I think. In the past jobs
18 that you've had or that you have now what kind of
19 resources did you have as far as clerical staff, office
20 staff? Because as Joe said we've got a very, very thin
21 operation, and it's somewhat -- and I guess since he
22 brought it up I guess I have the same concern. There
23 is nobody to call back in the office and say do this
24 and do that and do that. You're kind of going to be it

1 from the outset. 30
2 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: Yeah.
3 MR. SMITH: And I think you probably just got
4 to --
5 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: I've more or less done
6 that before though, just not quite on this scale. I
7 will admit that this is a much bigger scale than in the
8 past. So I've often been, like, I've had a clerk or
9 I've had a community development block grant person who
10 is a little more specialized but doesn't really do
11 planning, and so even when you have staff they have
12 their own roles, you can't just throw anything at them.
13 MR. SMITH: Right.
14 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: So in the past what has
15 helped me I think is having an understanding of whose
16 strengths are where, and that isn't always about the
17 position, it's often about the person. Some people are
18 just really good negotiators, and some people are just
19 really good at fostering good student work or fostering
20 good nonprofit work so that they can at least maybe
21 think up some promotive design work and get a project
22 or get a grant based on that.
23 It's kind of the conducting, being the
24 conductor of a symphony of people who each have their

1 own sort of talents and niches, and you're just trying³¹
2 to make it all work together. I've had do that before,
3 but just not -- this will be on a completely new level.
4 MR. SMITH: Right. I think the way I
5 understand it, at least from the outset, you'll go into
6 your office and you close the door, there is nobody
7 else around, it's you, you know, to get it done, and I
8 just want to make sure you understand that.
9 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: Oh, I understand that.
10 MR. SMITH: Okay.
11 MS. DIONNE: At least in the beginning.
12 MR. SMITH: Yeah, at least in the beginning.
13 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: At least in the
14 beginning.
15 I just have one more, one final question. Do
16 you have one, Joe, before?
17 MR. OLIVEIRA: I just want to make one quick
18 comment, if I could. So the way that I see this model,
19 and, again, this is very new to us, and I'm going to be
20 hesitant looking optimistic, trying to be optimistic
21 about it, but the way that I see it is in order for
22 this model to work for you to be successful there has
23 to be a true partnership with the city, with the
24 administration, with the resources that the city has to

1 offer. And, again, are you willing to give it all and³²
2 to work with the city to do what we need to do to make
3 these projects come to fruition.
4 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: Yeah. I mean, they --
5 that's the blood and the veins. I mean, it's not going
6 to work if you don't have your full government on
7 board, so absolutely.
8 MR. OLIVEIRA: Thank you.
9 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: I wouldn't try without
10 it.
11 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: I think he stresses
12 that and says that with concerns because of our
13 history.
14 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: Yeah. Yeah.
15 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: Not necessarily
16 anything moving forward, but maybe from the past
17 history.
18 And my question for you, right now the economy
19 is good, people are expanding, people are putting
20 additions, we've got people coming in, job creation,
21 job retention. Do you see yourself as that person when
22 and if we look at the cyclical, seven-year cycle, we're
23 not far off from where maybe we might dip into that
24 recession mode and fall back where people aren't

1 spending any money. 33
2 Are you confident enough in your abilities and
3 do you as a person because we don't know you, are you
4 still going to be out there pounding the pavement on
5 behalf of the redevelopment authority and still
6 knocking on the doors even when there is not much out
7 there?
8 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: Yes, but I might want to
9 re-strategize for a new economic climate and figure out
10 which doors are better to be knocked on than others.
11 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: You can bring that to
12 the table.
13 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: Yes.
14 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: But at least you feel
15 confident enough that you can forge through the good
16 and the bad.
17 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: Yeah. Yeah. I mean, we
18 all have to.
19 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: But some people might
20 not want to pound the pavement and keep at it when
21 everybody as a government wants to see results.
22 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: Yeah, I understand. And
23 you know, it's hard, there is no question, when a
24 recession hits -- well, God knows, hopefully it won't

1 hit like the one we just had, but, you know, people are³⁴
2 just pessimistic, and it's getting people to look past
3 it which is the hardest thing, but it's also the most
4 important thing. This, too, shall pass, let's think
5 beyond this. But I will.
6 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: I think I don't have
7 any further questions. Does the board?
8 MR. SMITH: No.
9 MS. DIONNE: I'm good.
10 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: Thank you very much
11 for coming in and speaking with us and joining us this
12 evening.
13 MS. CAROLINE WELLS: Thank you.
14 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: I have one thing that
15 I'm going to kind of skip to because we're then going
16 to go into executive session and then coming out, but
17 one thing on old business is Foth has done preliminary
18 surveying out there, and so we were thinking they're
19 not quite ready to present anything to the full board,
20 but they just wanted to sit down maybe with a couple of
21 members and talk about some depths that they found, and
22 so I didn't know if we wanted to form a subcommittee to
23 meet initially with Foth a couple of times to talk
24 about the city pier. Some of it had to do with the

1 water, they found some objects in the water. ³⁵
2 MR. SMITH: Yeah. They sent me some things
3 that -- they found quite a bit of sunken debris.
4 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: Yeah, debris, so I
5 know that we're all busy. I would be more than happy
6 to sit on it if another member --
7 MR. SMITH: I would be glad to.
8 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: Bob.
9 MR. OLIVEIRA: I can team up with Bob as long
10 as it isn't a weekend.
11 MR. SMITH: I can do whatever is convenient
12 for you.
13 MR. OLIVEIRA: Okay.
14 MR. SMITH: Perfect.
15 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: All right.
16 MR. COUGHLIN: We only need two.
17 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: We only need two. All
18 right. So I'll be backup just in case one of you can't
19 make it.
20 MR. SMITH: Fine.
21 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: So we'll do a
22 subcommittee to sit with Foth a couple of times prior
23 to them giving us the full presentation to the board.
24 Or if I can attend and not say anything, right?

1 MR. COUGHLIN: Yeah. We'll talk about that. ³⁶
2 MR. SMITH: Will Foth be available on
3 weekends?
4 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: I'm not really sure
5 Foth will be available on weekends.
6 MR. OLIVEIRA: Kara, if you want to be part of
7 the subcommittee I'll exit.
8 MR. COUGHLIN: Kara, how many meetings do you
9 expect, just one or two?
10 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: Just one or two,
11 right?
12 MR. MICHAEL DION: Yeah, just preliminary
13 plans. When I spoke to him, some preliminary ideas on
14 paper, and he said it works better instead of doing it
15 all-encompassing with the entire board to have a
16 subcommittee. So, I mean, I'm assuming that he would
17 be willing to get together any time.
18 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: Okay. Would it be
19 weekends? Would they be --
20 MR. MICHAEL DION: I don't see a problem with
21 maybe a Saturday or something like that.
22 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: So why don't we find
23 the answer to that, and then we'll see, Joe, either you
24 or I.

1 MR. MICHAEL DION: We can definitely ask. ³⁷
2 MR. COUGHLIN: So just schedule a meeting,
3 check with Kara, and we'll send a couple of board
4 members.
5 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: Do we need a motion to
6 that?
7 MR. COUGHLIN: I don't think that you need to
8 create a formal subcommittee.
9 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: Right. Okay. So
10 you'll reach out to him.
11 MR. MICHAEL DION: I'll reach out to him and
12 get some dates.
13 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: And see who is
14 available out of the three of us.
15 The next item on the agenda is proposed
16 executive session to conduct strategy sessions in
17 preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel
18 and/or conduct contract negotiations with nonunion
19 personnel to the economic development director position
20 pursuant to Mass. General Law C 30A and 21A 2. And can
21 I also incorporate --
22 MR. COUGHLIN: Yeah, we might as well do the
23 other two, and we'll go into one executive session for
24 all three items.

1 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: To review and approve 38
2 executive session minutes for April 10, 2019, pursuant
3 to Mass. General Law 30A, 21A 7 and to review and
4 respond to open meeting law complaint pursuant to Mass.
5 General Law 30A, 21A 1 filed by Patrick Higgins.
6 MR. COUGHLIN: So on those three we need a
7 roll call vote and we need a determination that we're
8 going to return to open session.
9 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: We will return, yes.
10 MR. COUGHLIN: And that there is no findings
11 on those three, just a roll call vote.
12 MS. CATHY ANN VIVEIROS: Okay. Kara
13 O'Connell.
14 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: Yes.
15 MS. CATHY ANN VIVEIROS: Robert smith.
16 MR. SMITH: Yes.
17 MS. CATHY ANN VIVEIROS: Michelle Dionne.
18 MS. DIONNE: Yes.
19 MS. CATHY ANN VIVEIROS: Loriann Branco.
20 MS. TAYLOR BRANCO: Yes.
21 MS. CATHY ANN VIVEIROS: And Joe Oliveira.
22 MR. OLIVEIRA: Yes.
23 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: And do we need a roll
24 call vote to return to open session?

1 MR. COUGHLIN: We'll do that in executive 39
2 session.
3 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: Okay.
4 (Executive session.)
5
6 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: Are we ready? And
7 with that being said, do I have a motion to adjourn?
8 MR. SMITH: Yes, I make a motion to adjourn.
9 MR. OLIVEIRA: I second that motion.
10 CHAIRPERSON O'CONNELL: All in favor.
11 MS. DIONNE: Aye.
12 MR. SMITH: Aye.
13 MS. TAYLOR BRANCO: Aye.
14 MR. OLIVEIRA: Aye.
15 (Meeting adjourned.)
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1 CERTIFICATE 40
2
3 COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS)
4 COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX) SS.
5
6 I, Jeanne M. Bramanti, Registered
7 Professional Reporter and Notary Public within and for
8 the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, do hereby certify
9 that the foregoing transcript is true and accurate to
10 the best of my skill and ability.
11
12 I further certify that I am not related to
13 any of the parties in this matter by blood or marriage,
14 and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of
15 this matter.
16
17 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my
18 hand and seal this ____ day of _____, 2019.
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23 Notary Public
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