Members Present:
Thomas Creed,
Patricia Duffy, Chairperson
Gladys Lebron-Martinez, Vice Chairperson
Maria Ferrer, Assistant Treasurer
Carl Eger, Jr., Member

Staff Present:
Marcos Marrero, Executive Director
John Dyjach, Assistant Director
Tessa Murphy-Romboletti, Development Specialist
Rosemary Simonich, Head Administrative Clerk

Others Present:
Angela Gerhard   Nancy Sachs
Kathy McKea   Samalid Hogan
Eric Taub   Joe Bosworth
Kathy McKea   Tom McQueen
Joseph Maliszewski
Steve Morissette

1. Call to Order
Chairperson, Patricia Duffy called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. and said the meeting was
being recorded and requested a roll call:

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2. Urban Renewal Plan – Projects and Updates
A. Property Updates
John Dyjach reviewed the property tracking sheet with the Board and gave updates on HRA
controlled property, which now includes eight parcels in URP Area One listed for acquisition.
Staff received the acquisition approval letter from the state earlier that day. He noted that work
that Tighe & Bond is working to developing demolition specifications at the Parson’s Paper site.

B. Legal Services Proposals
Marcos Marrero said that staff has been exploring options for legal services in order to develop
a protocol for acquisitions in the Urban Renewal Plan. He said that proposals for these services
were received from three law firms:
Mr. Marrero’s said that a review of the each firm’s background and experience working with Redevelopment Authority’s was done and that Koppelman & Paige appears to be the best fit for the HRA. He described some of their qualifications and their work with other Redevelopment Authority’s aligns with the HRA needs. Thomas Creed asked who will manage this work and Pat Duffy asked if the City Law Department has been involved. Marcos Marrero said that as Executive Director, he will manage whichever firm is selected and that they would be paid through the HRA budget. He added that the City’s Law Department has and will continue to be involved with this to establish the basic framework for HRA’s real estate transactions. He said the overall concept is to develop the framework so that we have the in-house capacity.

A motion was made by Carl Eger, Jr. and seconded by Thomas Creed that the Holyoke Redevelopment Authority contract with the firm of Koppleman and Paige, P.C. to provide legal support to the HRA for its continued execution of the Holyoke Urban Renewal Plan. In addition the Board requires that expenditures not exceed $10,000 for these legal services. A roll call vote followed:

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3. HEDIC/HRA Transition

Marcos Marrero informed the Board that staff, under direction of the Mayor, has revisited the conversations with the HEDIC Board about the concept of merging with the HRA. He said that in a recent meeting with HEDIC the options to do this were discussed and with input from the Law Department, it was determined that the most efficient way to do this is to dissolve HEDIC and to transfer all HEDIC assets and obligations to the HRA. The HEDIC Board directed staff to prepare a plan detailing the transition steps with specifics on HEDIC’s assets and obligations included. Mr. Marrero said that staff will prepare this over the next several weeks. He added that, as part of the transition, the HRA would have to consider accepting HEDIC’s assets and responsibilities.

Carl Eger noted that he has the unique position of being a member of each Board and serving as Chair of one, and that he understands the need to do this but the disadvantage is that City will lose the service of very talented people with the dissolution. Tom Creed added similar concerns over losing the input and expertise of the members of HEDIC. He added that if the dissolution proceeds we should find a way to maintain the HEDIC Board’s involvement and expertise. Tom Creed also said that HEDIC has extensive experience managing large projects and budgets and that the HRA needs to fully understand all that it would be taking on.

Marcos Marrero said there are many aspects of this transition that will have to be considered and that the intent would be to provide the plan to HEDIC, the HRA and the City Council. The Board discussed next steps and asked that staff consider Chairperson Patricia Duffy as the
HRA contact with the HEDIC Board as needed, and be updated regularly on the status of the transition plan and

4. OTHER BUSINESS

Chairperson Duffy asked if there were any questions from the public. Nancy Sachs of Paper City Studios on Race Street asked for an update on the Canalwalk Project and the building on the corner of Dwight and Main known as the Silvio Conte Building. Marcos said the Canalwalk is scheduled for completion by October, although the contract extends into 2016 if needed. He said the Conte building is privately owned and that staff has had contact with the owner but there is nothing concrete to report.

Marcos Marrero reported that the passenger rail platform project is on schedule to open in late summer. He said 22 parking spaces have been allotted for the platform and there is potential to expand parking down Main Street or Race Street.

Representative Aaron Vega asked if the HRA powers will expand given that HEDIC has powers that the HRA doesn’t have; for example, would it be possible for the HRA’s control to expand to a project like Lynch School. Mr. Marrero said the HRA’s scope is the entire city and already has the same powers HEDIC has, but adding this property to the URP will require obtaining approval from the Mayor, City Council and DHCD similar to HEDIC performing an Economic Development Plan.

5. Executive Session

Chairperson Patricia Duffy said that in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 30 Section 1(a) of the Open Meeting Law, the Holyoke Redevelopment Authority will enter into Executive Session at this time (being that an open session would be detrimental to the negotiating position of the Board) in order to pursue the purchase, exchange, lease or value or real property.

The Board entered into Executive Session at 5:50 p.m.

6. Adjournment

With no other business to discuss in Regular Session, a motion was made by Carl Eger, Jr. and seconded by Gladys Lebron-Martinez to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 7:16 p.m. A roll call vote followed:

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Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Duffy, Chairperson
Holyoke Redevelopment Authority