

**MASSACHUSETTS DEVELOPMENT FINANCE AGENCY
Meeting of the Board of Directors
Thursday, October 13, 2022
11:30 a.m. (Devens Community Session)**

MINUTES

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Ashley Stolba, Under Secretary of Housing & Economic
Development, Acting Chair
Brian Kavogian, Vice Chair
Jessica Andors
Joan Corey
Julie Thurlow

DIRECTORS ABSENT: Mark Attia, Designee for Secretary of Administration &
Finance
Gary Campbell
James Chisholm
Juan Carlos Morales
Kristina Spillane

Agency Staff: Dan Rivera, President and CEO
Theresa Park, Deputy Director and SEVP
Ricks Frazier, General Counsel and Secretary
Simon Gerlin, Chief Financial Officer
Laura Canter, EVP, Finance Programs
Tania Hartford, EVP, Real Estate
Meg Delorier, Acting EVP, Devens
David Abdoo, Chief of Staff
Victoria Stratton, Recording Secretary
Hilary Andrews
Mika Brewer
Graeme Brown
Rob Carley
Jennifer Cohen
Karen Davis
Deputy Chief Jamie Desautels, Devens Fire Department
Roy Herzig
Michael Ray Jefferies
Robert Jenkins
Chief Timothy Kelly, Devens Fire Department
John Marc-Aurele
Shane Malone
Matthew Mogavero
Jim Moore
Tom Pope

Gary Walker
Amanda Wall

Guests:

Neil Angus, Devens Enterprise Commission (“DEC”)
Maureen Babcock, Devens Education Advisory Committee
 (“DEAC”)
Lt. Reid Bagley, Massachusetts State Police
Cindy Carter, Devens resident
Tracy Clark, Devens resident; President, Devens
Committee
Lt. Col. Trent Colestock, Ft. Devens Reserve Forces
Training Area (“RFTA”)
Phil Fama, Devens resident
Melissa Fetterhoff, Nashoba Valley Chamber of Commerce
Susan Gabriel, Devens resident
Robert W. Gordon, Jr., DEC
Keith Jackson, Ft. Devens RFTA
John Katter, Devens resident
David King, Fort Devens Museum
Peter Lowitt, DEC
Dona Neely, Devens Eco-Efficiency Center
Charles Olvar, Harvard Select Board
John Osborn, Harvard Press
Ruth Rhonemus, Ayer Historical Commission
Deb Seeley, DEC, Shirley
Ashley Stolba, Designee for Secretary of Housing &
Economic Development
Beth Seudmeyer, DEC

Following the morning session and a short break, the meeting of the Board of Directors of Massachusetts Development Finance Agency (“MassDevelopment” or the “Agency”) resumed at 11:34 a.m.

Ms. Delorier welcomed everyone to the Devens Community portion of the annual MassDevelopment Board of Directors’ meeting in Devens. She advised that several attendees wished to make comments today and she introduced the first speaker.

Maureen Babcock, DEAC Chair and Member and a Devens resident for twenty years, reminded everyone that MassDevelopment’s Board acts in place of a Board of Education for Devens students. She presented DEAC’s “Update to the MassDevelopment Board of Directors – October 2022,” a copy of which is attached and part of the minutes of this meeting. She noted a focus on the students in this year’s Update and gave a brief bio of each of the photographic subjects, all students from Devens.

Ms. Babcock informed everyone that there are currently 97 Devens students (54 in elementary school and 43 in middle/high school) being educated under a contract with the Harvard Public Schools. This is the fourteenth year that Devens students have officially been attending Harvard's Hildreth Elementary School (K – 5) and the sixteenth year Devens students have been attending Harvard's Bromfield School (middle/high school), which continues to rank highly in educational achievement. On behalf of the students and DEAC, Ms. Babcock thanked the Board and MassDevelopment for its continued support, as always, in providing excellent opportunities for the students in Devens.

Next, Tracy Clark, a Devens resident for ten years and founder of MagneMotion on Barnum Road, thanked everyone for the opportunity to speak today. He praised recent commercial development projects (Commonwealth Fusion Systems and King Street/Pathway, in particular), as well as the new water facilities. He said the recent food truck festivities have been a great success and he and many others hope they will become annual events. Mr. Clark then spoke about Vicksburg Square, noting the efforts to revitalize that project seem to have been placed on the back burner, and residents are concerned. Vicksburg Square is an important part of the community and the region and he said the residents believe that MassDevelopment is an important component in this equation. There are also deep concerns, Mr. Clark said, over the Agency's abrupt departure from the Devens Jurisdiction Framework Committee ("DJFC"), noting the importance of the work of this Committee to the area's regional success. Mr. Clark asked MassDevelopment's leadership to consider turning the process around and re-engaging in the DJFC. He then commended Jessica Strunkin, the former EVP of Devens, and noted appreciation for Meg Delorier stepping in, but he opined that MassDevelopment is missing a vital role here and expressed concerns that more urgency has not been given to filling that role.

The current commander in chief of the Ft. Devens RFTA, Lt. Col. Trent Colestock, spoke next. Cmdr. Colestock commented on the great relationship(s) between all the parties in the Devens community and he reported no concerns. He is grateful for the partnership and rapport with MassDevelopment and could not be more appreciative of everyone involved in the huge success of Ft. Devens Day. Noting that Ft. Devens is "small but mighty," with about 450 soldiers on site during the week, he commented that community relationships matter.

David King, President of the Fort Devens Museum Board of Directors, was introduced to speak next. But, first, Ms. Delorier acknowledged and introduced Ruth Rhonemus, another Museum Board member, whom she has known for many years, and Ms. Rhonemus thanked everyone and explained that the Museum's Executive Director could not be present today and she was attending in her absence. Noting that Ft. Devens was created in 1917 and continued to operate for the next 79 years, Mr. King advised that the Fort Devens Museum is an active Museum that has vast archives and materials, and it continues to acquire more while it searches for a new permanent home. He thanked MassDevelopment and others for continued support and encouraged everyone to visit, noting Museum hours including every Tuesday and Friday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Melissa Fetterhoff, President/CEO, Nashoba Valley Chamber of Commerce, spoke briefly next. Ms. Fetterhoff said she likes to remind people that the Nashoba Valley Chamber was the last tenant at Vicksburg Square, and she would love to see those buildings brought back to life. She complimented the great relationship(s) among all the community parties, citing a recent, successful Job Fair, and invited everyone to the Chamber's next event, on October 24, at the Devens Commons Center. Ms. Fetterhoff stated that one-on-one meetings with community members, which began during the pandemic by videoconference and are now conducted in person, continue to be impactful and she noted the Chamber's office hours. She called attention to the need to fill a seat on the Chamber's Board of Directors, arising from Jessica Strunkin's departure. In closing, she noted that the Chamber will host an event next Tuesday evening – the introduction of a new Principal at Parker Charter School – and all are welcome to attend.

Next, Ms. Delorier invited John Katter to speak, and Mr. Katter noted briefly that he is a Devens resident and member of the DJFC. He said Devens is a great place to live and MassDevelopment must continue to make sure the residents are heard.

Ms. Delorier acknowledged those present that make Devens Operations possible – Lt. Reid Bagley, Massachusetts State Police; Chief Tim Kelly, Devens Fire Department; Deputy Chief Jim Desautels, Devens Fire Department; Shane Malone, DPW, MassDevelopment; Hillary Andrews, Recreation, MassDevelopment; Karen Davis, Executive Assistant, MassDevelopment; Roy Herzig, Engineer, MassDevelopment; Rob Carley, counsel, MassDevelopment; and Jim Moore, Utilities, MassDevelopment – and each introduced him- or herself and/or made very brief comments.

Peter Lowitt, Director of the DEC, made comments next regarding his presentation entitled, “Devens Project Updates; September 2021 through July 2022,” a copy of which is attached and made a part of these minutes. Mr. Lowitt advised that the DEC has been busy during COVID and, despite approaching a development cap, construction projects are ongoing. He called attention to the following projects, in particular: Commonwealth Fusion Systems (11 and 117 Hospital Road) – a 45 acre fusion energy research and development campus; Bristol Myers Squibb (Phase 3 / 38 Jackson Road) – a new 240,000 square foot cell therapy facility; Scannell Properties (16 Bulge Road) – a 150,800+ square foot pharmaceutical manufacturing facility at the former Davao Circle housing area; Seqens (67 Buena Vista) – retrofitting an existing building; King Street Properties/Pathway (Jackson Road) – development of a 42 acre multi-phase biomanufacturing campus; and more. Mr. Lowitt encouraged Board members and others to take a drive around Devens. He said new houses have been constructed along Grant Road that face a lovely park across the street, and Little Leaf Farms is looking to expand yet again. He thanked Roy Herzig for assistance with soil relocation in connection with Red Tail Golf Course and acknowledged and thanked Jim Moore for the permanent fixes to the Devens wells associated with PFAS issues. He reminded everyone that the DEC also serves as the Board of Health for Devens and he recognized this summer's successful farmers market(s). Finally, Mr. Lowitt stated that the DEC shares the general concerns regarding Vicksburg Square, noting, “We've got to do something,” and suggesting that “40(b) remains an option.”

Ms. Delorier then acknowledged the Agency's Real Estate Team, including (those present): Tania Hartford, EVP, Real Estate; Mika Brewer, SVP, Real Estate Sales; Tom Pope, Asset Manager; Robert Jenkins, SVP, Development; as well as John Marc-Aurele, Director of Engineering; among others.

Ms. Delorier then introduced Dona Neely, Executive Director of the Devens Eco-Efficiency Center – a non-profit organization established in 2007 with the mission of promoting and assisting with sustainability initiatives that help firms make more efficient use of the region's material, human, economic, and environmental resources. Ms. Neely, who has been with the Center since its inception, praised several years of sustainable business practices and growth in Devens. She made two presentations – “Devens Eco-Efficiency Center's 2021 Summary” and “Devens Eco-Efficiency Center's 2022 Highlights,” copies of which are attached and made a part of the minutes of this meeting – enthusiastically sharing details of each.

Ms. Neely pointed out that when The Great Exchange program began in 2009, it offered 29 products; it now offers nearly 800 products (including classroom resources, creative materials, janitorial and kitchen products, health/safety resources, office supplies, furniture and fixtures, packaging/shipping supplies, storage containers and shelves, specialty gifts and seasonal items) and enjoyed a record-breaking year, including 350 visits by shoppers from 132 organizations. As a result, the Center has entered into partnerships with several groups, including, Fresh Start, Urban Missionaries, Tufts Animal Hospital, National Grid, Mass. DEP, and others. Recently, The Great Exchange partnered with Worcester's now shuttered Becker College and took in over 5,500 lbs. of materials. An article in *USA Today* and coverage on CBS/WBZ's “This Morning” program offered great exposure, as well as opportunities to hear customer perspectives and raise awareness.

In closing, Ms. Neely reminded everyone that without the Devens Eco Efficiency Center and The Great Exchange Program, all the materials described above would have been discarded and ended up in local landfills. She thanked MassDevelopment, as always, for its ongoing support.

Mr. Rivera then took a moment to apologize about comments he made recently that may have been misconstrued. He advised that MassDevelopment takes its role very seriously with respect to Devens' future. He acknowledged, “These are peoples' lives and homes, jobs and livelihoods.” He said the Agency also takes the redevelopment of Vicksburg Square very seriously and is proceeding thoughtfully in this regard. He stated that MassDevelopment is not rushing these matters or being careless, nor is he or the Agency “taking sides.” Mr. Rivera made clear that he reports to a Board of Directors and the Baker Administration, so any decisions regarding Devens and what happens in Devens are simply not his or MassDevelopment's to make. He said there is lots to do and this is the beginning of a long conversation whereby the community must determine where it wants to go. Meanwhile, staff is dedicated and focused on the Devens Reuse Plan, as well as matters involving public safety, such as Lovell Bridge. When asked for specifics about replacing the former Devens EVP, Mr. Rivera advised that staffing issues are being addressed, including finding new leadership for Devens.

*Approved:
November 10, 2022*

The floor was then opened to questions and/or additional comments from the attendees. There were none.

In conclusion, Mr. Rivera, Agency staff, and the Board member(s) present expressed gratitude to everyone for attending today's meeting.

This meeting of the MassDevelopment Board of Directors adjourned at 12:38 p.m.