

## Minutes of the Board Meeting of UREC for May 20, 2025

Attendance: Matt Kirk, Cecilia Archer, Peter Gaback, Joan Rogers, Nancy Delaine, Yvonne Abunaw, Mary Liz Stewart, Paul Stewart, Darius Shahinfar

Lacey Wilson, Carol Durant and Amelia Paul

Matt opened the meeting. The minutes were read and reviewed. Joan moved to approve and Yvonne seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Peter Gaback was present for the first time. He introduced himself. He outlined his depth of experience with non-profit work and fund raising. Darius moved and Joan seconded to approve him as a board member. All voted in favor.

The financial report was presented by Paul. He reviewed the profit and loss statement and the balance sheet. The presentation was comparing 2024 and 2025. Also a big concern was the federal funding cuts. As of the time of the meeting UREC had received a termination of its IMLS grant and a cancelling of its EPA and NEH grants. The last two especially affected our planned construction project.

Maryliz presented the Executive Director's Report. She provided a written report and asked if there were any questions. Matt asked when the stairs would be put in. Maryliz outlined how the National Grid staff had indicated 4-6 weeks before they would move the gas line that was in the way of the steps construction. It seems we had another 4 weeks and then we could get the steps contractor back to finish the steps. Matt suggested contacting the Public Service commission to help speed things up. Maryliz explained about the community conversations meetings on the Interpretive Center. They are planned for June 18, July 16 and August 20<sup>th</sup>. There was discussion of the Handel's Messiah program being in process – a fund raiser to be held at the NYS Museum in conjunction with the Voices and Votes exhibit in December. Work on the Museum studies Teen Program was noted with grant applications being prepared for submission to the Bender Foundation, to Assemblymember Romero and to Albany County. The Over the Edge fundraiser is planned presently for April of 2026. The Founders Tour is a new offering at \$100 per person. There is a Juneteenth program to be offered on June 14<sup>th</sup>. The July 4<sup>th</sup> Oration will feature Lavada Nahon, the state Interpreter of African American culture. Underground Railroad Consortium of NYS (URCNYS) is doing a 3-year program around the 1827 Emancipation in NYS. A Board Orientation is planned for the June board meeting. There is a June 7<sup>th</sup> 2025 program at St. Paul's Church in Troy with the Albany Symphony Orchestra using the Liberty Minstrel Songs.

It was on the agenda to approve Andrea Hyary to the board but since she was not available for this meeting the final vote was put off until the next meeting. Paul presented papers for

accepting the Buffalo Law firm of Cannon, Heyman and Weiss for our New Markets Tax Credits effort. It was moved by Peter to accept the law firm and seconded by Nancy and all approved.

There was discussion of a reserve policy. A statement was presented and some edits were suggested. It was moved and seconded to be accepted but the final version would be left to staff to put in writing with the executive committee giving a final review before sending it out to funders.

Peter had created a board survey which all board members were encouraged to complete and it will be used in connection with the sustainability committee.

It was moved by Nancy to adjourn and seconded by Paul. All were in favor.

Minutes by Paul Stewart