



West North Avenue Development Authority
2500 W North Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21216

Board Meeting Minutes

Monday, January 27, 2025
1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.

Attendees:

Board Members

- Dr. Anthony L. Jenkins, President, Coppin State University
- Kayla Williams (Governor Wes Moore), Maryland State, Office of the Governor (v)
- Justin Williams (Mayor Brandon Scott), Deputy Mayor, Community and Economic Development
- Antonio Hayes, Maryland State Senator (40th Legislative District) (v)
- Ian Genove (Marlon Amprey), House Delegate (v)
- Jawauna Greene (Paul Weidenfeld), Assistant Secretary, Public Affairs & Strategy Offices, Maryland Department of Transportation
- Tarek Bolden (Chris Ryer), Western District Planner, Baltimore City, Department of Planning
- Veronica McBeth, Baltimore City, Department of Transportation
- Destiny Simone-Ramjohn, Vice President of Community Health & Social Impact, CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield
- Minister Glenn Smith, Co-chair, Coppin Heights CDC
- JohnDre Jennings, Executive Director, Druid Heights CDC
- Larry Brown (Jacob Day), Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development
- Ira Crowler (Colin Tarbert), Baltimore Development Corporation
- Donny James (J. Thomas Sadowski), Maryland Economic Development Corporation
- Alice Kennedy, Commissioner, Baltimore City Department of Housing and Community Development
- Wendi Redfern, Deputy Commissioner DHCD

(v) - Virtual Attendance

Staff:

- Chad Williams, Executive Director
- Erich Lange, Transportation Development Officer

- Neala Crockwell, Executive Assistant
- Shaunte Roper, Chief Budget Officer
- Christy Turner, Policy & Research Analyst
- Keyonna Penick, Special Assistant
- Jared Jackson, Housing Development Officer
- Devin Shacklett, Arts & Culture Officer
- Tera Stephens, Public Affairs Director
- Selisa Jefferson, Economic Development Officer
- Lorra Toler, Neighborhood housing Officer
- Jasmin Torres, Assistant Attorney General (v)

Call to Order

Chair, Anthony Jenkins called the meeting called to order at 1:00 PM.

Approval of Agenda

Minister Glen made a motion to approve, seconded by Donny James. All in favor, the motion passed.

Approval of Minutes

Destiny Simone Ramjohn made a motion to approve January 27, 2025, minutes, seconded by Tarek Bolden. All in favor, the motion passed.

Public Affairs Report - Teresa Stephens, Public Affairs Development Officer

- Quarterly Newsletter Launch:
 - The quarterly electronic newsletter was successfully launched to provide streamlined updates on WNADA activities and news in West Baltimore. The newsletter's open rate is averaging 840, helping to shape public opinion, inform stakeholders, and inspire action.
- Media Coverage:
 - WNADA has been featured in over 20 articles across notable media outlets, including:
 - The Baltimore Sun
 - The Baltimore Banner
 - WBAL TV
 - Baltimore Fishbowl
 - Baltimore AFRO
 - WYPR
- Public Speaking Engagements:
 - The Executive Director served as keynote and panel speaker at more than five local events, collaborating with organizations such as:
 - Baltimore Development Corporation
 - Small Developers Collaborative
 - Black Wall Street's Annual Event
- Events:
 - November 4, 2025: City of Baltimore Tour – WNADA Footprint & Activity Update
 - November 7, 2024: Live Baltimore's Pro's in the Know – Reservoir Square Development
 - November 8, 2024: Inaugural WNADA Public Safety Collaboration Meeting
 - November 12, 2024: Baltimore Together Summit – "Unlocking Value in West Baltimore: WNADA's Strategic Investments"

- November 13, 2024: Public Safety Community Meeting (virtual)
- November 19, 2024: Governor's Minority and Small Business Outreach Summit
- January 4, 2025: The Black Wall Street 2025 New Year Empowerment Summit
- Community Engagement:
 - Successful coordination and promotion of events such as the Herbert St. Park activation and local elementary school engagement. The RFQ Pre-Submission meeting, Resident Coordinating Council, and Comprehensive Planning meetings exceeded expectations, with all 16 neighborhoods represented.
 - Marketing and Social Media:
 - Promotional materials were developed, including memes, posters, flyers, and presentations. These were used for WNADA's various campaigns like GoWest, Public Safety, RFQ and RFP promotions, and social media content. Social media engagement has significantly grown, boosting WNADA's online presence.

Policy Research & Development - Christy Turner, Policy Research Analyst

- Research Initiatives:
 - CHS Art Centered Development: A partnership with Art + Practice, supporting displaced children and transition-age foster youth in South LA.
 - Rebuild Foundation: Artist-led, community-based platform for art and cultural development in Chicago's South Side.
 - Project Row Houses: A cultural community organization in Houston using art to empower communities.
- Performance-Informed Budgeting:
 - Discussion on Maryland's Managing for Results (MFR) framework, which emphasizes strategic planning, resource use, and performance measurement for government programs.
- Conference Participation:
 - 4th International Placemaking Conference: Proposal submission for the "Restorative Justice with Food and You" session.
 - Baltimore Together Summit: Focus on "Unlocking Value and Highlighting Assets in West Baltimore."
 - WNADA Corridor Schools Analysis: Research on over 20 schools in the WNADA corridor to assess educational resources and opportunities.

Transportation Report - Erich Lange, Transportation Officer

- Comprehensive Plan Updates:
 - Significant changes were made to the WSPs draft to enhance focus on walkability, public realm, and improvements in roadway safety and transit.
- Smart Intersections & Penn North State TOD Application
- Led the interagency project to deploy smart city technology along West North Avenue. Drafted a State TOD application for Baltimore City and is awaiting BCDOT submission.
- McCulloh – Druid Hill Funding:

- The project received \$130k in funding from the Baltimore Community Foundation and MD DHCD to expand its scope.
- US DOT Technical Assistance:
 - Federal support was granted to analyze and evaluate the impact of unregulated trucking in Baltimore City, with the aim to promote regulatory parity.

Housing Development Report - Jared Jackson, Housing Development Officer

- Penn North TOD Application Assistance:
 - Continued assistance in the application process for the Penn North TOD.
- WNADA Pro Forma & Housing Development Repository:
 - Created a standardized WNADA pro forma for project evaluations, ensuring transparency and consistency in housing development decisions. Also launched a housing development repository to streamline processes and provide resources such as historical data, CDCs, DHCD resources, EV green programs, and neighborhood matrices.
- Development Resource Database:
 - A comprehensive collection of resources to aid housing development, including information on CDCs, DHCD, and TIF district details.
- Citywide TIF District Testimony:
 - Testified before the city council regarding the Citywide TIF District to advocate for standardized practices in evaluating single-family housing sales projects.
- Alice Kennedy asked, "what neighborhood map does WNADA use? Destiny Simone-Ramjohn asked, "how do you all attract home buyers on your site"? Chad Williams answered, 'we use the live near Baltimore web map" Jared answered, "we also post open houses on our social platforms." To answer Ms. Ramjohn question.

Economic Development Report - Selisa Jefferson, Economic Development Officer

- Small Business Grant:
 - Update on Small Business Grant initiatives, focusing on new opportunities for local entrepreneurs in West Baltimore.
- Executive Discretionary Funds:
 - Discussion on the allocation of funds to support community-driven business initiatives and projects in West Baltimore.
- Business & Property Inventory:
 - Detailed inventory of businesses and properties in the WNADA corridor, identifying areas for future development and economic growth.
- 3117 West North Avenue - The Vert Treatment Clinic:
 - A drug rehabilitation clinic is seeking to open a location at 3117 West North Avenue. WNADA has filed a written testimony in opposition to the request for a Conditional Use Permit for the 1st floor of the premises as an outpatient health care clinic.
 - The owners of the Vert Clinic testified on November 19th, 2024, for the Conditional Use Permit. WNADA educated the community on effective methods for testifying within legal parameters.
 - Appeal: WNADA has engaged Davis Agnor Rapaport Sklany to appeal the conditional use permit, stating that it does not align with WNADA's objectives or the community's comprehensive plan.
- Discussion on Business Support:
 - During the meeting, JohnDre inquired about ways to support businesses in the area that do not qualify for grants. Selisa Jefferson responded that these businesses are offered the opportunity to

participate in the *Go West* program. This program provides resources and guidance to businesses that did not qualify for grants, helping them develop the necessary tools and strategies to reapply and meet the qualifications in the future.

- Policy Discussion:
 - Just Williams raised the idea of implementing a policy to limit the number of drug treatment centers in the area.
- Community Input:
 - Alice Kennedy mentioned *Evergreen*, a cooperative that serves as an excellent model for business development in the community, highlighting its success and potential for replication.

Budget & Fiscal Management Report - Shaunte Roper, Chief Budget & Fiscal Officer

- Grant Invoices & FY Budget Updates:
 - All grant invoices were processed by June 30, 2024. The FY26 budget request spreadsheets were updated and submitted on time.
- FY24 Grants Paid:
 - As of April 2024: \$525,000
 - Total Grants Paid by June 30, 2024: \$9,137,000
- Finance Committee:
 - Held the first finance committee meeting in December. Shaunte was complimented by other agencies for the work submitted.

Procurement & Grants Management Report - Tiara Sykes, Procurement Officer

- RFQ Updates:
 - Tiara provided an update on the awaiting award decisions for RFQ FY24 and FY25, including SBR/MBE RFQs and GO West Technical Assistance RFQs.
 - MBE Goal Achievement: Exceeded the 31% MBE goal with a total of \$5,183,299 in FY2024 contracts.
- Business Development Program:
 - The Go WEST business development program launched in partnership with Economic Development Officer Selisa Jefferson, offering business seminars to RFQ applicants.
 - Chad Williams presents an example of the grant manual.
- Discussion on Loan Defaults and Grant Eligibility:
 - Destiny Simone Ramjohn raised a question regarding businesses that owe money from the Paycheck Protection (PP) Loan program. Chad Williams responded that, in such cases, WNADA requests the businesses' tax returns for the past three years to assess their financial status and eligibility in addition if the business is a not a non-profit, we ask for the principal status returns also.
- Grant Application Incentives:
 - Board members discussed incentive points for GO West participants and the grants manual as requested by the Joint Committee.

Maryland and Baltimore City Agency Updates

- Larry Brown stated **Department of Housing Community Development** had a total of 304 awards; currently drafting all grant agreements from the year 2024.

- Alice Kennedy stated **Baltimore City Department of Housing and Community Development**
- has already started our actions on the property acquisitions that were laid out. There were many vacant properties that were not in-rem eligible and to help achieve the outcomes necessary for home ownership needed to do the acquisitions. This will provide the ability to negotiate acquisitions to either buy or file condemnation.
- Veronica McBeth, **Baltimore City Department of Transportation**, advised that a lot of the transportation funding mechanisms, that were anticipating or expecting maybe slow or stalled. Also, certain agreements are on hold for the time being.
- Ira Crowler, **Baltimore Development Corporation**, has selected first round of commercial district assessment partner. Out of the ten districts, one is the 3200 block of West North Avenue, very excited to get started.
- Minster Glen Smith, **Coppin Heights CDC**, noted that there's some insufficient lighting along 2700-2900 block. Researching a short-term solution, but a long-term solution is needed as bad lighting is one of the factors contributing to low home sales. Veronica offered assistance and Dr. Jenkins mentioned there are plans in the works for long-term lighting solutions.
- JohnDre Jennings, **Druid Heights CDC**, thanked the board and team for the Etting Street funding support; currently moving forward with permit processes for the new street. After permit process, there will be a street mural and community event planned. JohnDre also noted that, the city allocated funding for Cab Calloway Park, however there is no funding. She advised there will be a request for funding request to the board for the park in the near future.
- Chad reminded the board of SB4/HB258 sponsored by Senator Hayes and Delegate Melissa Wells and provided details on how to submit letters of support for the legislation.

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 3:17 PM. Motion made by Jawauna Green.