

South Meadows Transition Committee
November 1, 2023
Meeting Minutes

A Regular Meeting of the South Meadows Transition Committee of the MIRA Dissolution Authority was held on November 1, 2023. Present either in-person or via video or audio conferencing were:

Directors Present: William Beccaro (Committee Chairman)
Bert Hunter
John Fonfara
Matthew Dayton
Rachel Taylor
David Steuber
Joseph DeNicola

Members Present: William DiBella
Frank Dellaripa
Sarah McCoy
Thomas Swarr

MIRA Staff Present: Mark Daley, President and CFO
Roger Guzowski, Supply Chain Manager
Christopher Shepard, Environmental Compliance Manager
Cheryl Kaminsky, Comptroller
Ann Catino (Halloran & Sage), General Counsel

CT-DEEP Staff Present: Jade Barber
Claire Quinn

TRC Environmental Corp. Staff Present: Carl Stopper

Others Present: Judy Allen
James Desantos, CGB
(860) 241-7700 (call-in via Zoom)
(860) 573-5203 (call-in via Zoom)

This meeting was recorded via ZOOM conferencing and is posted on the Authority's website at:
<https://www.ctmira.org/mira-dissolution-authority-south-meadows-transition-committee>

1. Call to Order; Chair’s Welcome

Committee Chairman Beccaro called the meeting to order at 11:03 a.m.

2. Public Comment (3 minutes per speaker)

Committee Chairman Beccaro invited members of the public to address the Committee. There were no public comments, and Chairman Beccaro proceeded with the next agenda item.

3. Approval of Minutes of the October 11, 2023 Regular Committee Meeting

Chairperson Beccaro requested a motion to approve the minutes of the October 11, 2023 Regular Committee Meeting. The motion was made by Director Dayton and seconded by Director Fonfara. The motion was approved unanimously as indicated below:

Director	Raised	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstain
Chairperson Beccaro			X		
Bert Hunter			X		
Matthew Dayton			X		
Rachel Taylor			X		
John Fonfara		X	X		
Dave Steuber	X		X		

4. Discussion of Full Draft Request for Proposals to Conduct the South Meadows Redevelopment Considerations Study

Mr. Daley referred to the “red-line” version of the updated draft RFP background and scope, and noted that the following primary updates have been made based on the discussions during the October 11, 2023 meeting of this Committee: the background information has been trimmed down; comments from Frank Dellaripa/Greater Hartford Flood Commission have been incorporated as a separate element of the scope of work; and language has been added to clarify that the goal of this study is not to identify the future use of the property – it is to assess immediate environmental needs and requirements for alternative future uses that may be identified.

Director Fonfara and Director Beccaro asked about property owner responsibilities and liabilities associated with the flood control dike. Mr. Daley noted that the study documents that will result from the RFP will provide a road map for the responsibilities of each party (i.e., the Authority, the Greater Hartford Flood Commission, the Army Corps of Engineers) through the dissolution of the MIRA Dissolution Authority and after DAS succeeds the Authority as the property owner.

Member Swarr raised questions regarding the number of redevelopment options being considered, noting that there are only two remediation standards: residential and

industrial/commercial. Director Taylor and Mr. Daley noted that evaluation of utilizing the existing buildings or demolishing the existing buildings during the property redevelopment also add a couple of layers to the redevelopment options. Member Swarr also expressed concern about evaluating a conceptual future use for waste management, stating that Hartford does not want this site to be used for waste management in the future. Director Beccaro stated that we should not limit the study to exclude potential future uses for waste management, and Director Taylor noted that there will be community outreach and public participation in the study.

Director Dayton stated that he envisioned the study as being a starting point for the redevelopment, and that there is no expectation of a redevelopment plan with drawings being drafted by those conducting the study. Mr. Daley noted that the draft revised RFP scope states in bold, capitalized type that “the Authority does not seek a recommended redevelopment option for the South Meadows site as a result of this RFP and study.”

There was also discussion regarding potential subdivision of the site for redevelopment, and it was generally agreed that the study should not limit redevelopment options to the site as a whole. Director Taylor and Director Beccaro suggested that it may be better to remove the draft bullet point regarding a potential “subdivision plan” and make it a sub-bullet under each of the other redevelopment concepts (i.e., is there a portion of the site that makes sense for residential redevelopment? Is there a portion of the site that makes sense for industrial/commercial redevelopment?). It was noted that the speed, cost and ease of redevelopment will likely vary across different segments of the property.

Director Fonfara stated that this property is owned by the State, and that the State should not be agnostic to the ultimate redevelopment that occurs. He stated that the study should determine costs to get to the highest and best use, presumed to be residential, and present those costs with “no however’s” for consideration by future decision-makers.

Director Steuber asked if the consultant performing the study was going to be conducting additional soil testing as part of the scope, noting that there was additional contamination discovered by Eversource in 2018/2019, after it was believed that all on-site contamination was known. Mr. Daley stated that additional soil testing is not expected as part of this study, but that the consultant will be expected to review all known site conditions and identify any “data gaps” where additional data would need to be generated in order to inform each proposed redevelopment concept. Mr. Shepard noted that the investigation that has been completed to date has been guided by the CT-DEEP’s Site Characterization Guidance Document, but that changes in the site’s use could trigger the need for additional site characterization and remediation to meet that

new use. The current, revised draft version of the RFP calls for the consultant to identify any such data gaps, and also to draft a plan to address any such data gaps. Ms. Catino noted that the site environmental investigation that has been completed goes back to the site's development as a coal-fired power plant; the investigation was not limited to just those years that the plant was owned and operated by CRRRA/MIRA. Director Steuber requested that some additional details be added to the RFP scope regarding data gaps, such as a discussion of examples, to better inform the potential proposers and the public who may review the RFP.

Member DiBella and Member Dellaripa asked if the Authority has had any involvement with planning of Eversource's upcoming underground transmission line replacement project that will include work at the South Meadow Station site. Mr. Shepard said that he is not aware of the transmission line replacement project, and Member Dellaripa said that he will forward to Mr. Shepard and Mr. Daley a presentation that he received from his contact at Eversource regarding the project. Mr. Shepard noted that Eversource is listed in the draft RFP as a stakeholder in the study, and that Eversource will therefore be consulted by the consultant that completes this study.

Director Beccaro noted that this meeting is scheduled to end soon, and he requested that the meeting participants identify the action items to be completed in order to get the next/last iteration of the RFP drafted for presentation to the full Board. Director Hunter asked if a timeline for completion of the study and its presentation has been established, noting that it may be appropriate to try to align it with the 2025 CT Legislative session for potential presentations to the relevant Legislative committees. Director Hunter also asked that we consider attaching the proposed Contract to the RFP, and that we consider shortening the period to sign the contract after award from 90 days to something shorter, like 45 days. Director Beccaro agreed that these three points should be incorporated, noting that the 2025 legislative session would begin the first Wednesday after the first Monday in January, so a January 1, 2025 target date should be considered. Director Hunter indicated that we should not constrain ourselves prematurely with an artificial timeline, to which Director Beccaro suggested that a March/April timeframe would probably realistically be the latest submission date if any Legislative action was going to be requested. Director Steuber noted that there is no legislatively-mandated deadline. Mr. Daley noted that proposers are supposed to provide their project schedule and approach as part of their response to the RFP, and that the Authority will include that schedule as part of the proposal evaluation criteria.

Director Beccaro suggested that the RFP should also include some benchmarking or project updating provisions, and Director Taylor agreed that timelines and progress reports should be part of the project. Director Hunter noted that we may be guided by the responses to the RFP in terms of negotiating the final timeline for the study report.

Director Fonfara affirmed that this study is the most important task to be undertaken, and that we should ask proposers to provide their proposed timelines with an explanation of “why;” and the details of each proposer’s response will aide in our evaluation of the proposals.

Director Steuber asked if we have reviewed other, similar RFPs in developing this RFP. Mr. Daley noted that there is flexibility in the consultants’ responses to the RFP, and that we also request proposers to cite examples of similar projects that they have completed. Mr. Daley also noted that the Brainard Airport RFP is the only similar RFP that we have reviewed.

In response to Director Hunter’s earlier inquiry, Mr. Daley confirmed that a copy of the Authority’s engineering services agreement template has been provided to Ann Catino (General Counsel) as a starting point for consideration and modification, if necessary, to include as the Agreement template in this RFP when it is published.

Mr. Daley also noted that we may need to start looking to the Authority’s South Meadows Transition Reserve account to start funding some of the work going forward on this RFP and the study.

Mr. Daley also suggested that this Committee may want to discuss the “advertising plan” for this RFP to ensure that the best available consultants are aware of the RFP. Mr. Daley noted that the Authority intends to publish notice of the RFP on the DAS web-site; directly email the RFP notice to consultants that we are aware of; and publish the notice in trade publication(s). Mr. Daley noted that this draft RFP has been developed in the context of the overall dissolution process, which presents a huge opportunity to the consultant community in general. Mr. Daley said that the “advertising plan” would be brought before this Committee for discussion before the RFP is issued.

5. Other Items Brought Before Committee

Committee Chairman Beccaro inquired if there were additional items to be brought before the Committee. There were none.

6. Adjournment

Director Beccaro requested a motion to adjourn, and the meeting was adjourned at 12:30 pm.