



The Metropolitan District
water supply · environmental services · geographic information

**RIVERFRONT RECAPTURE SUBCOMMITTEE
OF THE BOARD OF FINANCE
SPECIAL MEETING
MONDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2020
12:00 PM**

**IN ACCORDANCE WITH GOVERNOR LAMONT'S EXECUTIVE ORDER #7B
THIS MEETING WILL INCLUDE TELEPHONIC ATTENDANCE**

Dial in #: (415)-655-0001
Access Code: 43808661#

The general public is welcome to call into the meeting. Everyone present on the conference call should mute their phone to limit background noise.

Location

Board Room
District Headquarters
555 Main Street, Hartford

Commissioners

Adil	Hoffman
Currey	Salemi
DiBella (Ex-Officio)	Sweezy

Quorum: 3

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1. CALL TO ORDER
 2. ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON
 3. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRPERSON
 4. PUBLIC COMMENTS RELATIVE TO AGENDA ITEMS
 5. DISCUSSION RE: FUNDING FOR RIVERFRONT RECAPTURE INC.
 6. OPPORTUNITY FOR GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS
 7. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS & QUESTIONS
 8. ADJOURNMENT

RIVERFRONT RECAPTURE & THE MDC

WHAT IS RIVERFRONT RECAPTURE?

Riverfront Recapture is the non-profit organization founded in 1981 to reconnect the capitol region with the Connecticut River. Riverfront Recapture manages and maintains four public parks in Hartford and East Hartford and is expanding the Riverwalk project that will connect to the town of Windsor.

RIVERFRONT RECAPTURE & THE MDC

The partnership between Riverfront Recapture and the MDC began in 1997 when the General Assembly of the State of Connecticut adopted Public Act 97-227. It gave the MDC the authority to take on some riverfront management responsibilities and increase the water rate to pay for daily park maintenance and park rangers.

For almost twenty years, the MDC provided maintenance for the four Riverfront parks with their personnel. Starting in 2013, the MDC began slowly transferring the work responsibilities to outside contractors and Riverfront to reduce the annual park maintenance costs.

In 2017, the MDC signed a contract with Riverfront Recapture that gave Riverfront Recapture full responsibility for park maintenance, and in exchange, the MDC would provide annual funding. This allowed Riverfront Recapture to prioritize projects and leverage their park management experience while the MDC fulfilled their responsibility to maintain the watershed.

In December 2018, the MDC Board passed a resolution that outlined a plan to reduce funding for Riverfront Recapture. The 2019 contribution of \$1,250,000 was to decrease each year incrementally, reducing it to \$600,000 in 2024. In December of 2019, the MDC Board voted to cut the 2020 contribution to \$600,000.

RIVERFRONT RECAPTURE FUNDING SOURCES

Riverfront Recapture's funding comes from corporations, government, foundations and individuals, the MDC, and earned income.

2020 Total Organization Funding Sources (projected):

Corporations, Government, Foundations & Individuals:	\$1,102,858
MDC Contribution:	\$600,000
Earned Income:	\$235,908

WHAT DOES THE MDC CONTRIBUTION PAY FOR?

The contribution from the MDC is used exclusively for the care and upkeep of our four riverfront parks. It funds park maintenance staff and contracted services, park rangers, equipment, and capital improvements and repairs.

2020 PARK OPERATIONS

Projected Park Operations Expenses*	\$926,657
MDC Contribution:	\$600,000
Boat Launch Fees:	\$18,421
Shortfall:	\$308,236

*Numerous maintenance items, capital projects and equipment purchases had to be deferred in 2020.

How did Riverfront Recapture cover the shortfall?

- Use of operating reserves
- One-time emergency funding from HFPG allocated to park operations

In order to reduce the overall organization deficit, other steps were taken to reduce costs including layoffs of eight employees, salary reductions for remaining staff, and a PPP Loan.

Riverfront Recapture's parks are busier, and more essential than ever. However, as park usage increases, our budget continues to decrease.

The MDC Board's decision to cut our funds and the inability to raise earned income due to the restrictions on events during the pandemic are devastating. We need a sustainable source of community funding for our regional parks system. The MDC was then, and is now, a logical regional partner for Riverfront Recapture.



Parks are essential to the community, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. The value of outdoor recreation and enjoyment has never been clearer, and Riverfront Recapture's priority to provide all visitors with clean, safe, and well-maintained parks and connect people to the river is more important than ever.



68%

INCREASE IN TRAIL USE

Trail use is monitored by UConn and the Connecticut Trail Census. Through September of 2020, trail use has increased by 68%.

Totals through September:

2019: 169,974

2020: 249,931



In June of 2019 trail counters recorded 26,011 uses. The count for June 2020 was 40,882, without any traffic attributable to public events.

19%

INCREASE IN BOAT LAUNCHES

Riverfront Rangers inspect each boat that launches from our parks to ensure that all boaters are licensed and operating safely.

2019: 1,482 launches

2020: 1,768 launches

