

**REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM
OCTOBER 28, 2021**

Town Hall
10 East Church Street
Bethlehem, PA 18018
and via GoToMeeting

MINUTES

The Board of the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Bethlehem met for a regular meeting on Thursday, October 28, 2021 at 5:00 P.M. This meeting occurred both in-person in Town Hall at Bethlehem City Hall; 10 East Church Street, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania as well as via GoToMeeting. The place, the hour and the date duly noted for the holding of this meeting was publicized.

Chairman Ronald Heckman called the meeting to order and the following members were present:

Lea Grigsby
Tracy Oscavich
Christopher Spadoni

The Chairman called a quorum present.

Also present were:

Tony Hanna, Executive Director (via GoToMeeting)
Michael E. Riskin, Esq., Solicitor
Heather M. Bambu-Weiss, Board Secretary
Alicia Karner, Director of Department of Community / Economic
Development for City of Bethlehem

RDA Board Member, Earl Bethel, contacted the RDA office and indicated she would not be able to participate in the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Oscavich made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 23, 2021 regular meeting of the Redevelopment Authority. The minutes were emailed earlier to each member of the Board. Ms. Grigsby seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously and the minutes of the September 23, 2021 regular meeting of the Redevelopment Authority were approved.

APPROVAL OF CASH REPORTS

Ms. Grigsby made a motion to approve the cash reports for the month ended August 31, 2021. These cash reports were emailed earlier to each member of the Board. As there were no errors or changes reported, Ms. Oscavich seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously and the cash reports for the month ended August 31, 2021 were approved.

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

There were no guests present at Town Hall or via GoToMeeting. As a result, there were no comments during Courtesy of the Floor and the Chairman moved onto the next agenda item for the RDA meeting.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Mr. Heckman turned the meeting over to Mr. Hanna for his Executive Director Report. Mr. Hanna provided updates to the Board regarding RDA activities.

- 1) **Skyline West Project** – Mr. Hanna stated that due to design updates, this project is being submitted for review by the City of Bethlehem Historic Architectural Review Board and the Planning Commission. He also indicated he anticipates the developers to update the RDA Board on these updates as well. Mr. Hanna explained that the number of units have been changed to condominiums rather than apartments, resulting in fewer units. Mr. Hanna noted that this new design will result in a shorter building, with more spread, allowing for better visibility of the historic sites of the downtown. Mr. Hanna added that the parking will be underground for the residents of these units.

Mr. Spadoni asked if the World Heritage has had an input on these revised plans as it appeared to have concerns with the initial project plans. Mr. Hanna indicated that the World Heritage, Historic Bethlehem and other architects and engineers have all been consulted as this project has been modified. Mr. Spadoni inquired as to the approach that will be used to access the underground parking garage. Mr. Hanna explained that the parking garage will be approached from West Broad Street and noted that there will not be any access to it from Conestoga Street. Mr. Hanna also indicated that the project is attempting to keep as many trees as possible from the existing landscape.

- 2) **Conduit Financing – Moravian University** – Mr. Hanna indicated that he has been approached by Moravian University regarding a conduit financing opportunity with Moravian. Mr. Hanna explained that Moravian is interested refinancing old debt to take advantage of the current low interest rates and that they anticipate borrowing approximately \$26-million. Mr. Hanna added that the RDA will be receiving a fee for providing this service, just as the RDA has received from past conduit financing opportunities. Mr. Hanna indicated he anticipates this fee could be approximately \$52,000 to the RDA. Mr. Hanna explained that a Public Hearing, known as a TEFRA Hearing, will occur prior to the next RDA Board meeting, allowing an opportunity for public comments and discussion about this conduit financing. Mr. Hanna reported that he anticipates this TEFRA Hearing to occur in November with the RDA Board considering the conduit financing request during its November 2021 meeting.
- 3) **401-403 and 405 East Fourth Street** – Mr. Hanna reported that on October 27, 2021, RDA Solicitor Riskin, Ms. Bambu-Weiss and the City of Bethlehem Chief Building Inspector went to Northampton County Court for the final step in the eminent domain process to acquire the blight certified properties located at 401-403 and 405 East Fourth Street.

Mr. Riskin explained that the opposing Counsel filed a petition with the Court to prevent the RDA from proceeding with the payment of monies into Court to acquire this property. Mr. Riskin reported that he received notification that the Judge made a ruling on this matter with the opposition petition being denied and the RDA petition to pay monies into Court to acquire this property being accepted. Mr. Riskin explained that this decision is subject to appeal by the opposing party and noted they have 30-days to file such an appeal. Mr. Riskin added that if no appeals are filed, the RDA will pay the money into Court for the property, allowing the lienholders to be paid-off from the distribution of these funds.

Mr. Heckman noted the amount of time the RDA and City have given this property owner to renovate the property for it to be code compliant. Mr. Riskin indicated that this property was certified as vacant and blighted in 2017. He noted that the owner has had 4-years of working with the RDA since the certification to correct the condition of the property.

COOPERATION AGREEMENT

Mr. Heckman noted that the RDA has been asked to review and consider for approval a Cooperation Agreement between the RDA and the National Museum of Industrial History (NMIH). He explained that this agreement pertains to the Local Share Account (LSA) grant the RDA applied for, and received, on behalf of the NMIH to be used toward the costs associated with the relocation of the Steelworkers Veterans Memorial to become part of the NMIH Artifact Yard.

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COOPERATION AGREEMENT (Continued)

Ms. Oscavich asked if any match was required for these LSA funds. Mr. Hanna indicated that the LSA financing did require matching funds and noted the funds received from multiple sources for this project.

Following this discussion, Ms. Grigsby made a motion to approve the Cooperation Agreement between the RDA and NMIH as it pertains to the Local Share Account (LSA) grant the RDA applied for, and received, on behalf of the NMIH to be used toward the costs associated with the relocation of the Steelworkers Veterans Memorial to become part of the NMIH Artifact Park. Ms. Oscavich seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by the RDA Board.

As a result, the RDA unanimously approved and adopted the Cooperation Agreement between the RDA and NMIH pertaining to the Local Share Account (LSA) grant the RDA applied for, and received, on behalf of the NMIH to be used toward the costs associated with the relocation of the Steelworkers Veterans Memorial to become part of the NMIH Artifact Park.

APPROVAL OF INVOICES – OCTOBER 2021

Mr. Heckman stated that the RDA Board has been asked to review and consider for approval the invoices and reimbursements as detailed on the invoice summary for October 2021.

Ms. Oscavich made a motion to approve of the payments / invoices as outlined on the October 2021 invoice summary. Mr. Spadoni seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved and the following payments were approved:

- 1) \$3,308.79 represents reimbursement to the RDA from the Authority Fund account for various costs related to the Bethlehem Works / TIF District.

OHER BUSINESS

Upcoming RDA Meetings – November 2021 and December 2021 – Mr. Hanna indicated that because the RDA meetings are scheduled to occur on the 4th Thursday of each month there is a conflict with the November meeting as it is scheduled to occur on Thanksgiving. Mr. Hanna explained that it appears a November meeting will be necessary and requested the RDA Board consider an alternative date for this meeting. After some discussion, the RDA Board unanimously selected to have the next RDA Meeting at 5:00 PM on Monday, November 15, 2021. This meeting date will be publicly advertised, as required, prior to the meeting.

In addition, the Board reviewed the scheduled date for the December 2021 meeting due and noted it was scheduled to occur on December 23, 2021. With it being so near the Christmas holiday, the RDA Board indicated a desire to select another date. After some discussion, the RDA Board unanimously selected the December 2021 RDA meeting to occur at 5:00 PM on Thursday, December 8, 2021. This meeting date will be publicly advertised, as required, prior to the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

As there was no further business, Mr. Grigsby made a motion to adjourn this October 28, 2021 RDA Board meeting. Mr. Spadoni seconded the motion and the motion was unanimously carried. As a result, the meeting adjourned at 5:45 P.M.

Submitted by,

Heather M. Bambu-Weiss
Board Secretary