

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

Virtual Meeting via GoToMeeting  
Bethlehem, PA 18018

**MINUTES**

The Board of the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Bethlehem met for a rescheduled, regular meeting on Thursday, January 28, 2021 at 5:00 P.M. 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:

Earl Bethel  
Lea B. Grigsby  
Christopher Spadoni

The Chairman called a quorum present.

Also present were:

Tony Hanna, Executive Director  
Michael E. Riskin, Esq., Solicitor  
Heather M. Bambu-Weiss, Board Secretary

RDA Board member, Tracy Oscavich, contacted the RDA office prior to the meeting and indicated she was unable to participate due to an injury.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Ms. Bethel made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 17, 2020 rescheduled, regular meeting of the Redevelopment Authority. The minutes were emailed earlier to each member of the Board. Ms. Oscavich noted a duplication of information which Ms. Bambu-Weiss indicated she would correct for the record. As there were no other changes notes, Ms. Oscavich seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously and the minutes of the December 17, 2020 rescheduled, 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 November 30, 2020. These cash reports were emailed earlier to each member of the Board. As there were no errors or changes reported, Mr. Bethel seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously and the cash reports for the month ended November 30, 2020 were approved.

**COURTESY OF THE FLOOR**

Due the Covid-19 situation, the RDA meeting was conducted virtually via GoToMeeting. To provide an opportunity for guests to share any thoughts about the RDA agenda items, or other Authority business, the virtual meeting information was posted on the RDA website prior to the meeting and included instructions to contact the RDA office if any members of the community had any thoughts about RDA business to share with the RDA Board during this meeting. The RDA phone line was available and monitored during the meeting by the Administrative Coordinator. No phone calls were received during meeting. In addition, no messages to be shared at the meeting were provided to the RDA prior to or during the meeting.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT**

Mr. Heckman turned the meeting over to Mr. Hanna for his Executive Director Report. Mr. Hanna provided updates to the RDA Board regarding the status of recent projects and issues the RDA has been involved.

- 1) **TIF Projects** – Mr. Hanna provided the Board with an update on the TIF 2020 Projects:
  - a. **Bethlehem Landing Visitor Center / Stock House** – Mr. Hanna reported that some of caulking, sealing and roof exterior work has been started and done at the Bethlehem Landing Visitor Center. He added that brick repointing will need to wait until the weather is warmer.
  - b. **Steel Stacks Campus – Additional Street / Crosswalk Works** – Mr. Hanna reported that the projected cost for two (2) additional crosswalks at the Steel Stacks Campus is less than anticipated. He noted that the costs is expected to cost approximately \$60,000 for these crosswalks, one of which will be an ADA compliant crosswalk. He added that the funds ‘left over’ from the budgeted cost for this work will be able to be used elsewhere on the campus.
  - c. **Hoover-Mason Trestle – Elevator** – Mr. Hanna noted that the RDA may do some work to the Hoover-Mason Trestle elevator to get it ready for a possible spring opening after being closed since last year due to the Covid pandemic. Mr. Hanna indicated he anticipates re-opening the Hoover-Mason Trestle when ArtsQuest becomes active on the campus again, possibly March / April 2021.
- 2) **Apollo Grill** – Mr. Hanna stated that he received a phone call from the Apollo Grill thanking the RDA for allowing them to use the RDA property located in the vicinity of the Sun Inn Courtyard during the Covid pandemic limited restaurant openings. He added that the agreement between the RDA and the Apollo allowing this land use ended December 31, 2020 and noted that he may recommend, at an upcoming RDA Board meeting, that this agreement be extended.

Mr. Spadoni asked if any there were any other businesses that could benefit from use of this RDA property before the RDA extends the existing agreement with the Apollo Grill. Mr. Hanna responded that the Sun Inn has their own exterior property to use in this area and that no other restaurants in this vicinity have expressed any interest in using this property. Mr. Hanna noted that this location works well for the Apollo Grill due to its kitchen back entrance located here and the side entrance providing easy access for the Apollo Grill wait staff who routinely use it for serving tables at the front of the restaurant already.

**APPROVAL OF INVOICES – JANUARY 2021**

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

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

- 1) \$5,493.45 represents costs associated with On-Going and Maintenance Costs and payment of such costs to be made from the Authority Fund.
- 2) \$24,755.63 represents reimbursement to the RDA from the Administrative Expense Fund for various administrative costs associated with overall / general TIF project work.
- 3) \$13,449.99 represents reimbursement to the RDA from the Authority Fund account for various costs related to the Bethlehem Works / TIF District.

**ANNUAL MEETING**

Chairman Heckman turned the meeting over to Mr. Riskin, who temporarily assumed the office of Chairman for the 2021 Annual Meeting and the election of officers.

Mr. Spadoni made a motion that the following be the 2021 slate officers for the RDA:

- Ronald Heckman – Chairman
- Earl Bethel – Vice-Chairman / Treasurer
- Christopher Spadoni – Assistant Treasurer
- Lea B. Grigsby – Assistant Secretary
- Tracy Oscavich – Assistant Treasurer / Assistant Secretary

Ms. Grigsby seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

As a result of this motion and the unanimous vote, the following slate of officers was created for the Redevelopment Authority for 2021.

<b>Redevelopment Authority of City of Bethlehem</b>	
<b>Slate of Officers – 2021</b>	
Chairman	Ronald Heckman
Vice-Chairman / Treasurer	Earl Bethel
Secretary	Heather M. Bambu Weiss
Assistant Secretary	Lea B. Grigsby
Assistant Treasurer	Christopher Spadoni
Assistant Secretary / Assistant Treasurer	Tracy Oscavich

Mr. Heckman resumed the meeting as Chairman and asked that the next item of business be the re-appointment of Michael E. Riskin, Esq. as Solicitor for the Redevelopment Authority. Mr. Heckman made a motion to re-appoint Michael E. Riskin, Esq. as Solicitor for the Redevelopment Authority. Ms. Grigsby seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved and Michael E. Riskin, Esq. was re-appointed Solicitor for the Redevelopment Authority.

**GENERAL DISCUSSION**

**RDA Changes for 2021** – Mr. Heckman reminded the RDA Board that the RDA will be going through some changes during the upcoming year. He expressed a desire that the RDA independence be considered and respected as well as be mindful of changes being acceptable to the RDA staff and Board. He noted that to date he is unclear what thoughts the City has regarding the RDA future and expressed interest in learning more about their thoughts as well.

Mr. Hanna stated that he has had discussions with all the Board members about his future plans and this transitional year for the RDA. Mr. Hanna noted his plans to retire at the end of March 2021 and staying with the RDA as a consultant for some time during 2021. He also indicated that he has been having discussions with the City about the future of the RDA.

Mr. Hanna noted that he is in the process of drafting a consultant agreement between himself and the RDA, similar to agreements which have been used in the past for City consultant services. He noted that he anticipates having the agreement available for review and consideration at an upcoming RDA meeting.

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Mr. Hanna expressed a desire to make sure arrangements for the future of RDA staff be acceptable regardless of if the RDA staff remains RDA employees or change and become City of Bethlehem employees. He added that he is hoping to have a lot resolved before the end of March so that the RDA can begin moving into a transition phase in April 2021.

Mr. Hanna also noted that the RDA needs to consider its assets especially those that require maintenance. He added that the RDA can either keep these assets or transfer them to the City; however, cautioned that if the RDA keeps the assets the City would likely have to provide support for maintenance costs and services. Mr. Hanna noted that while the RDA currently has funds available to provide some future support of the RDA and its obligations, there is a void in finances due to the loss of TIF revenue to reimburse the RDA for some administrative and project / maintenance costs. Mr. Hanna stated that he plans to discuss these issues at future meetings with the City Administration.

Mr. Spadoni expressed procedural concerns about the RDA as it is an independent authority as well as the RDA viability for the future. Mr. Hanna stated that the role the RDA has for blight remediation makes it an essential component of government as detailed in the Urban Redevelopment laws of the Commonwealth. He also noted that as the economy recovers and development begins again there may be possible future TIF opportunities and with its past experience in administering a TIF the RDA would be well positioned to manage any new TIFs established.

Mr. Heckman stated that there are a lot of questions concerning the RDA that still need to be answered and the RDA Board members agreed.

**ADJOURNMENT**

As there was no further business, Ms. Grigsby made a motion to adjourn this January 28, 2021 RDA Board meeting. Mr. Spadoni seconded the motion and the motion was unanimously carried. As a result, the meeting adjourned at 5:37 P.M.

Submitted by,

Heather M. Bambu-Weiss  
Board Secretary