

**REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM  
FEBRUARY 24, 2022**

DCED Conference Room (A100)  
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, February 24, 2022 at 5:00 P.M. This meeting occurred both in-person in the DCED Conference Room (A100) 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. The change in meeting location was posted at the advertised meeting location as well.

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

Earl Bethel  
Lea Grigsby (via GoToMeeting)  
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 Miller Karner, Deputy Director of Department of Community /  
Economic Development for City of Bethlehem  
Laura Collins, Director of Department of Community / Economic  
Development for City of Bethlehem  
Jack Spirk, Esq., Solicitor for City of Bethlehem  
Hillary Kwiatek, Bethlehem City Council Liaison to the Redevelopment  
Authority

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Ms. Oscavich made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 8, 2021 rescheduled regular meeting of the Redevelopment Authority. The minutes were emailed earlier to each member of the Board. Mr. Bethel seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously and the minutes of the December 8, 2021 rescheduled regular meeting of the Redevelopment Authority were approved.

**APPROVAL OF CASH REPORTS**

Mr. Bethel made a motion to approve the cash reports for the months ended October 31, 2021; November 30, 2021; and December 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 months ended October 31, 2021; November 30, 2021; and December 31, 2021 were approved.

**COURTESY OF THE FLOOR**

Since none of those present had any comments for the RDA Board, courtesy of the floor time was not required.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT**

Mr. Heckman turned the meeting over to Mr. Hanna for his Executive Director Report. Mr. Hanna provided the following updates to the Board and guests:

- 1) **Introductions** – Mr. Hanna introduced the guests present at the RDA meeting to the Board. These guests included Laura Collins, Director of the Department of Community and Economic Development for the City of Bethlehem; Alicia Miller Karner, Deputy Director of the Department of Community and Economic Development for the City of Bethlehem; Jack Spirk, Esq., Solicitor for the City of Bethlehem; and Hillary Kwiatek, Bethlehem City Council Liaison to the Redevelopment Authority.
- 2) **End of Tenure** – Mr. Hanna stated that he has enjoyed his tenure as the Executive Director of the Redevelopment Authority. He added that he will be slowly phasing out his role with the RDA as a new Executive Director will be assuming these duties. He noted that such a change in leadership was anticipated as part of the RDA transition plan which has been ongoing for some time.
- 3) **Bethlehem Armory** – Mr. Hanna thanked all who attended the open house event held at the Bethlehem Armory. He added that he is hoping that a tour of the Armory will be available for the RDA Board in the spring so any Board members who could not attend the open house can view the project. Mr. Hanna reported that there are prospective renters for the ‘drill hall’ area of the Armory and noted that the prospects are being reviewed and evaluated at this time.
- 4) **Moravian University Conduit Financing** – Mr. Hanna noted that the second portion of the RDA / Moravian University conduit financing, approved at the November 2021 RDA meeting, is scheduled to occur in March 2022. He added that an exact date / time will be scheduled with notification provided to those needing to sign on behalf of the RDA.

**RESOLUTION NUMBER 1495**

Mr. Heckman noted that the RDA Board has been asked to review and consider for approval Resolution Number 1495, which names Alicia Miller Karner, the current Deputy Director of the Department of Community and Economic Development for the City of Bethlehem, as the Executive Director of the RDA.

Mr. Heckman noted that he met with Ms. Karner and Ms. Collins, as well as spoke with Mr. Hanna, about this matter. He added that he is ok with the recommendation of Ms. Karner to be the new RDA Executive Director and is ready to vote on the matter.

As there was no other discussion and/or comments, Ms. Oscavich presented the following resolution and moved for its adoption by the Board.

**WHEREAS**, the CITY OF BETHLEHEM is a municipal corporation being a City of the Third-Class, subject to the Optional Third-Class City Charter Law, organized and existing under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, its constituent parts being split by law between Northampton County and Lehigh County, Pennsylvania with principal administrative offices at City Hall, 10 East Church Street, Bethlehem, PA 18018 (hereinafter referred to as “CITY”), and

**WHEREAS**, the REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM is a municipal authority organized and existing under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, with principal administrative offices at City Hall, 10 East Church Street, Bethlehem, PA 18018 (hereinafter referred to as the “RDA”); and

**WHEREAS**, the RDA was created pursuant to Resolution 4624 enacted on January 13, 1953 by the City Council of the City of Bethlehem to exercise powers authorized by the Urban Redevelopment Law. 35 PS §2701 et seq; and

**WHEREAS**, the RDA has completed many projects since its creation and continues to own and maintain certain improvements and performed certain actions authorized under the Urban Redevelopment Law; and

**WHEREAS**, the RDA has completed many projects since its creation and continues to own and maintain certain improvements and performed certain actions authorized under the Urban Redevelopment Law; and

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**WHEREAS**, the RDA is entering a phase under which its projects and resources are more limited in scope, but its value remains important; and

**WHEREAS**, the City and RDA recognize that a partnership between them is mutually valuable for the purpose of ensuring continuity in staffing and maintaining RDA operations with respect to the subjects and operations hereinafter identified; and

**WHEREAS**, the City wishes to provide continued executive leadership to the RDA following the retirement of former Executive Director, Tony Hanna.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that Alicia Miller Karner, currently serving as the Deputy Director of the Department of Community and Economic Development for the City will act as Executive Director for the RDA.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that Ms. Karner will serve for no additional compensation and without benefits until such time as she no longer serves as Deputy Director of the Department of Community and Economic Development or other arrangements are made by the RDA or the City.

(Resolution Number 1495)

Mr. Bethel seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously passed. As a result, the RDA Board approved the adoption of Resolution Number 1495.

**RESOLUTION NUMBER 1496**

Mr. Heckman noted that the RDA Board has been asked to review and consider for approval Resolution Number 1496, which extends the Consulting Agreement with Tony Hanna through December 31, 2022.

As there was no other discussion and/or comments, Mr. Bethel presented the following resolution and moved for its adoption by the Board.

**WHEREAS**, the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Bethlehem (RDA) approved an extension of the original consulting agreement, dated March 25, 2021 on December 8, 2021, extending the agreement until February 28, 2022; and

**WHEREAS**, copies of both the original agreement is appended as Exhibit A and the extension agreement as Exhibit B; and

**WHEREAS**, the RDA desires to extend the consulting agreement again, until December 31, 2022, on the same terms and conditions, except for the continued service of Tony Hanna (Consultant) as Executive Director of the RDA.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the RDA and Consultant agree to extend the consulting agreement as originally written, with modifications, for an additional 10 months, until December 31, 2022.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson, is authorized to execute this agreement on behalf of the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Bethlehem, same to be attested to by the Secretary.

(Resolution Number 1496)

Ms. Oscavich seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously passed. As a result, the RDA Board approved the adoption of Resolution Number 1496.

**EMERGENCY STABILIZATION**

Mr. Heckman noted that the RDA Board has been asked to review and consider for approval the Agreement between the RDA and the owner of 1218 Center Street to provide emergency stabilization assistance. The approval of this Agreement can be done via motion.

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Ms. Karner and Mr. Hanna provided additional information regarding the property located at 1218 Center Street for which this emergency stabilization is being considered. The following items were noted during that presentation:

1. The south wall of the property, located at 1218 Center Street, has deteriorated and is bowing out from building. Recently its condition has deteriorated even further with it now crumbling and a hole is in the structure.
2. After an engineer evaluation, this property was determined to be a clear and present danger of collapse and the owner were informed they could no longer reside there until the condition has been corrected. At this time, the property owners are living elsewhere but are anxious to return to their home.
2. The property is a twin structure making demolition of the 1218 Center Street difficult and noted that continued deterioration could damage the adjoining property should the structure collapse. In addition, due to the close proximity 1218 Center Street is to its non-adjoining neighboring property, a collapse could also damage the non-adjoining structure.
3. Proper repair of the bowing and deteriorated wall is estimated to cost approximately \$100,000 to \$150,000. It was also noted that if the property is not fixed it will continue to deteriorate and likely will become a blighted property for the RDA to address through the blighted remediation process.
4. RDA has funds available in the award received from the Commonwealth through the PHARE grant that is no longer needed for the blighted property originally identified in the grant application that can be applied to repair the condition of 1218 Center Street.
5. The total project would be completed in two (2) phases with the first being the emergency stabilization of the deteriorating wall. The stabilization will allow further deterioration to be prevented while covering the existing hole to prevent further weather damage and entrance of wildlife into the home.
6. The Agreement between the RDA and property owner being considered at this meeting was prepared by Mr. Riskin and allows the RDA to assume the role of property owner for the emergency stabilization work at the property.

Further discussion was held among the Board members regarding this matter with Ms. Karner, Mr. Hanna and Mr. Riskin reiterating the unique nature of this situation and the RDA not having done anything like this in the past. The Board expressed concerns about the justification in the use of public money to repair the condition of this property; how to protect the public interest in this property; terms of a potential mortgage and/or lien on the property; and if RDA could receive the funds back through regular repayments, upon sale / transfer of property, or under another method.

Mr. Spadoni expressed concerns of the owner gifting or selling the property after the repairs are done. Per an inquiry by Ms. Oscavich, Ms. Karner and Mr. Hanna confirmed that the repairs would be limited to addressing the stabilization and repairs of the bowing and deteriorated exterior wall. Mr. Bethel indicated that keeping the property secure and the neighborhood safe appeared to be the goals of the RDA assisting with this situation.

Mr. Riskin noted any liens filed on this property would be for the costs of design and construction costs and cautioned the RDA Board about expectations to recover any of the funding being put to repair this property situation. It was also noted that while the Board discussion has involved future project work, the Board is only being asked to consider for approval at this meeting the Agreement for the emergency stabilization work at the property. Any additional project would be presented, discussed and considered at a future RDA Board meeting.

Following this presentation and discussion, Mr. Spadoni made a motion to approve the Agreement between the RDA and the owner of 1218 Center Street to provide emergency stabilization assistance for the bowing and deteriorated exterior wall of the property. Mr. Bethel seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. As a result, the RDA Board unanimously approved the Agreement between the RDA and the owner of 1218 Center Street to provide emergency stabilization assistance for the bowing and deteriorated exterior wall of the property.

**RESOLUTION NUMBER 1497**

Mr. Heckman noted that the RDA Board has been asked to review and consider for approval Resolution Number 1497, which authorizes the RDA to accept the proposal from Coopersburg Construction Corp. to do emergency stabilization work at the property located at 1218 Center Street, Bethlehem.

Mr. Spadoni presented the following resolution to the Board and moved for its adoption by the Board:

**WHEREAS**, the property located at 1218 Center Street, Bethlehem, PA has sustained significant structural damage due to a deterioration of the property's north wall; and

**WHEREAS**, the wall deteriorated to such an extent that the property has become a safety hazard and declared unfit for occupancy; and

**WHEREAS**, the property is currently vacant and the wall requires extensive reconstruction to restore it to a safe condition; and

**WHEREAS**, an emergency situation exists and to prevent possible collapse of the structure, stabilization work on the wall is required, now; and

**WHEREAS**, the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Bethlehem (RDA) has been requested by the City of Bethlehem (City) to help remedy the situation utilizing blight remediation funding, provided to the RDA by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; and

**WHEREAS**, the RDA solicited proposals from contractors for the emergency work based on specifications prepared by Base Engineering; and

**WHEREAS**, the RDA received a proposal from Coopersburg Construction Corporation, attached; and

**WHEREAS**, the RDA agrees to enter into an agreement with Coopersburg Construction Corporation; and

**WHEREAS**, the RDA has been granted permission to do the work via agreement between the property owner and the RDA.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, be it resolved by the RDA that the proposal from Coopersburg Construction is accepted and the work as detailed is authorized to proceed.

(Resolution Number 1497)

Ms. Oscavich seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously passed. As a result, the RDA Board approved the adoption of Resolution Number 1497.

**RESOLUTION NUMBER 1498**

Mr. Heckman noted that the RDA Board has been asked to review and consider for approval Resolution Number 1498, which authorizes the RDA to enter into a Cooperation Agreement with Community Action Committee of the Lehigh Valley, Inc. (CACLV) to renovate the blight certified property located at 723 Broadway.

Ms. Oscavich noted the amount of time it took for the RDA to gain ownership of this property after it was certified as blighted. Ms. Karner explained that this property took a great deal of time due to attempting to work with the owner and identifying a party interested in purchasing it to renovate after the RDA acquired it. It was also noted that the development of the Cooperation Agreement was also time consuming from its drafting to the final form before the Board at this meeting.

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Following this discussion, Ms. Oscavich presented the following resolution and moved for its adoption by the Board.

**WHEREAS**, the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Bethlehem (“the RDA”) is the recipient of Blight Remediation Program grant funds from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, through the Commonwealth Financing Authority, with the RDA acting in the capacity of Grantee in receipt of these funds; and

**WHEREAS**, the RDA acquired a blight certified property, located at 723 Broadway, Bethlehem, PA 18015 (“Property”), through eminent domain with funds paid into court on January 20, 2021; and

**WHEREAS**, the RDA included renovations to the Property as a project site to utilize the Blight Remediation Program grant funds; and

**WHEREAS**, Community Action Committee of the Lehigh Valley, Inc. (“CACLV”) submitted a proposal to the RDA and City of Bethlehem on May 13, 2021 to renovate the Property; and

**WHEREAS**, CACLV possesses the qualifications to renovate the Property;

**WHEREAS**, the RDA wishes to engage CACLV to renovate the Property by utilizing a portion of the Blight Remediation Program grant funds; and

**WHEREAS**, the allocation of Blight Remediation Program grant funds towards the renovation of this Property is detailed in a Cooperation Agreement (“Agreement”) by and between CACLV.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:**

- A. The Redevelopment Authority of the City of Bethlehem accepts the proposal from Community Action Committee of the Lehigh Valley, Inc. to renovate 723 Broadway, Bethlehem.
- B. The Redevelopment Authority agrees to allocate a portion of Blight Remediation Program grant funds to support the renovation construction costs associated with this Property.
- C. The form and content of the Cooperation Agreement between the Redevelopment Authority and Community Action Committee is satisfactory and is approved.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Chairman, or Vice-Chairman, of the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Bethlehem is authorized to execute the Cooperation Agreement subject to the following: (1) approval by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, (2) approval and execution by Community Action Committee of the Lehigh Valley, Inc., and (3) approval of any modifications in terms or language by the Solicitor and the Executive Director of the RDA. Said agreement to be attested by Secretary.

(Resolution Number 1498)

Mr. Bethel seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously passed. As a result, the RDA Board approved the adoption of Resolution Number 1498.

**APPROVAL OF INVOICES – FEBRUARY 2022**

Mr. Heckman stated that the RDA Board has been asked to review and consider for approval the reimbursements as outlined on the February 2022 invoice summary.

Mr. Bethel made a motion to approve of the reimbursements as outlined on the February 2022 invoice summary. Mr. Spadoni seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved and the following reimbursements were approved:

- 1) \$3,788.60 represents reimbursement to the RDA from the Authority Fund account for various costs related to the Bethlehem Works / TIF District.

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**ANNUAL MEETING**

Chairman Heckman turned the meeting over to Mr. Riskin, who temporarily assumed the office of Chairman for the 2022 Annual Meeting and the election of officers.

Mr. Riskin reviewed the 2021 slate of officers for the RDA. Mr. Bethel made a motion to keep the slate of officers for 2022. Mr. Spadoni 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 2022.

<b>Redevelopment Authority of City of Bethlehem</b>	
<b>Slate of Officers – 2022</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. Spadoni made a motion to re-appoint Michael E. Riskin, Esq. as Solicitor for the Redevelopment Authority. Mr. Bethel seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved and Michael E. Riskin, Esq. was re-appointed Solicitor for the Redevelopment Authority.

**ADJOURNMENT**

As there was no further business, Mr. Bethel made a motion to adjourn the February 24, 2022 RDA Board meeting. Ms. Oscavich seconded the motion and the motion was unanimously carried. As a result, the meeting adjourned at 6:05 P.M.

Submitted by,

Heather M. Bambu-Weiss  
Board Secretary