

**MINUTES OF THE REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF
THE CITY OF READING HELD ON 19th OF JANUARY 2023**

The Redevelopment Authority of the City of Reading held a Hybrid meeting via Zoom computer application and in the 3rd floor conference room located at City Hall, on the 19TH day of January 2023.

The meeting was called to order at 5:04 p.m. by Chairman Miller, and on roll call, the following were present:

**Mr. John H. Miller Jr., Chairman
Mr. Thomas McMahon, Treasurer/Secretary
Mr. Fred Thompson, Vice-Chairman
Mr. Goslyn Fleming, Member**

Also present were:

**Mr. Jamal Abodalo, Executive Director
Rafaela Lopez, Asset Manager
Ms. Melissa Krishock, Esq., Bingaman Hess
Ms. Shannon Calluori, Hailstone Economic, Via Zoom
Tim Daley, Habitat of Humanity
Ryan Spak, Spak Group, via Zoom
Nate Rivera, via Zoom
BCTV, via Zoom
Evelyn Morrison**

Consent Agenda Approval:

Mr. McMahon made the motion to approve minutes from November. Mr. Fleming seconded and motion passed unanimously.

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Finance Report:

Chairman Miller stated the Customer's Bank balance is \$17,090.99 and the PA Invest balance is \$440,088.77.

Approval of Bills Payable:

Chairman Miller reviewed the bills and suggested an additional \$100 be made towards the Met Ed bill to avoid late charges. Mr. Abodalo suggested to reach out to Med Ed and ask to change the due date.

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Chairman Miller asked for a motion to approve the bills in the amount of \$3,432.75. Mr. Thompson made the motion and Mr. Fleming seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Miller stated when contacting Solicitor Krishock, all board members should be copied to avoid multiple emails regarding the same topic.

Property Update

Mr. Abodalo informed the board the tree removal project at 124 Schuylkill Ave has been completed and paid. Chairman Miller doesn't recall approving the final payment to Nolde Pines and will confirm.

Mr. Abodalo addressed 1103 Spruce St, 1404 Fairview St, 638 and 640 Schuylkill Ave. He was not present at the December meeting but was informed about the board requesting to auction off these properties. We have reached out to a couple of auctioneers but have not heard back. He wants confirmation from the board on this matter. Mr. Thompson didn't attend December's meeting and wasn't part of the discussion. Mr. McMahon said 1404 Fairview St was discussed to give to Habitat. He believes properties can't go up for auction without being presented to the Planning Committee. Ms. Krishock said this should be discussed during executive session. Chairman Miller agreed.

Mr. Abodalo informed the board of Managing Director touring 301 S 3rd St on January 18th. The City will be purchasing the property for \$150,000.

New Business

Mr. Abodalo informed the board about the RACP application being very competitive. Typically The City or RRA process the application so Albright College can apply. This RACP is for an addition to their Science center and Electronic studio. Albright reached out to us about two weeks ago asking if RRA would do it. With the last RACP, Albright paid Hailstone Economic instead of RRA. Mr. Thompson asked, how Albright contributes to the community. Mr. Abodalo said with the last RACP, Albright added a Holocaust & Black history section to their library. Chairman Miller stated there's a time frame so a decision needs to be made today. Mr. McMahon asked if Hailstone has a proposal for the preparation of the RACP. Ms. Calluori replied, Hailstone didn't have a proposal but are happy to provide one. Mr. McMahon is in agreement with moving forward with the RACP. Ms. Calluori stated Redevelopment Authorities usually assist the city with RACP's. Mr. Thompson and Chairman Miller are not in agreement with the RACP. Mr. McMahon said if they have Hailstone to do it, they should move forward with it. Chairman Miller asked for a motion to authorize Hailstone to assist with the preparation of the RACP. Mr. McMahon made the motion and Mr. Fleming seconded. Mr. Thompson added he wants information on the grant before they vote. Ms. Krishock asked for a motion to table until we get more information. Chairman Miller said there is a timeframe. Mr. Thompson withdrew

amendment. Mr. Fleming and Mr. McMahon are in agreement with the RACP. Mr. Thompson and Chairman Miller were not in agreement. RRA will not be moving forward with Albright's RACP.

Mr. Abodalo informed the board of Glen Worgan contacting him regarding the board wanting to be the facilitator of the loan with Federal Home bank. Ms. Krishock said RRA would get a loan and them forward to ??. Chairman Miller questioned if the properties are still under RRA. Ms. Krishock confirmed that they are. Mr. Abodalo said there is movement but it's not complete. They did a great job and is serving the community by housing 42 units with maximum rent of \$1,100 for a 3 bedroom. Developer started project with previous administration and some things are missing. Mr. Abodalo asked Tom Daley if he was dealt with Federal Home Bank. Mr. Daley said application process is long and money flows within 3 to 4 years. If you get approved, the chances of having another application approved are better. The money comes at the completion of the project. Mr. Fleming said with knowing what we know, it makes him question if they should go through with this. Mr. Abodalo said the land where the Double Tree Hotel is was contaminated and RRA owned it. Where we are and where we want to be is a very big gap. He would move forward with ??. Mr. Thompson asked would RRA be on the hook if they default. Project was already complete. Mr. Worgan can speak to board to answer their questions or have him participate at February's meeting. Mr. Thompson made a motion to table this.

Ms. Krishock informed the board DCED is requesting for additional information regarding the IRSP grant. They proposed that we request a waiver due to contractor already working on this project. Chairman Miller motioned to approve Resolution 1-2023, authorizing Executive Director to request a waiver from the PA DCED to the competitive procurement process requirement for the environmental consultant for the Gateway West project. Mr. Thompson seconded and motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Abodalo informed the board CDBG funds of \$25,000 received for the blight study was awarded to Hailstone. Draft was discussed with the board. We need to finalize this because deadline was December 31st, 2022 and reimbursed. Chairman Miller asked if study is flexible even after it's voted upon. Ms. Calluori replied yes. Mr. Thompson made the motion to approve Resolution 2-2023 approving the RRA Blight remediation plan. Mr. Fleming seconded and motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Abodalo would need to amend agenda to add item. He informs board that Mr. Juan Ruiz, City Fiscal Officer is comfortable with taking on Ms. Castro's part with the RRA. Mr. Abodalo delayed in bringing Mr. Ruiz because he was overwhelmed with all the work. Mr. Thompson asked if the City Fiscal Officer was posted as requested in public comment. Mr. Abodalo replied it was posted internally and then to the public. Chairman Miller requested a motion to authorize the City's Fiscal Officer to handle RRA finances. Mr. Fleming would like information on Mr. Ruiz. Mr. Abodalo said Mr. Ruiz is very organized and took a program he knew nothing about and is thriving. Mr. McMahon would like to continue using Ms.

Yomary Castro. Mr. Fleming would like to know his credentials and meet him. Mr. Abodalo suggested for the board to meet with him individually in February. Chairman Miller motioned to table moving forward with Mr. Ruiz. Mr. Thompson seconded and motion passed unanimously. Mr. Thompson requested information on Mr. Ruiz's qualifications. Ms. Lopez will forward Mr. Ruiz's resume to the board.

Mr. Abodalo informed the board of Ms. Tami Reinhart, City Purchasing Coordinator regarding the city assets being liquidated and forming a Purchase Pursuit Committee of five people. The current members are Tami Reinhart, Fred Lachat, Chris Geltz and Brandy Davis. Mr. Abodalo would like the fifth member to be a RRA board member. Mr. Thompson expressed interest in being a member of the committee. Chairman Miller is in agreement and made a motion to authorize Mr. Thompson to be the fifth member of the Purchase Pursuit Committee. Mr. Fleming seconded and motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Miller would like one board member on the Blighted Committee but their meeting is held at 5:00pm, like RRA. Keeping RRA meetings at 5:00pm, like agreed upon would put us at risk of not having quorum if one member can't make it. Mr. McMahon will look into having the Blight Committee change their meeting time to be able to attend both. He would like to join the committee.

Executive session at 6:50pm

Regular session at 7:35pm

Mr. Thompson asked for a motion to approve moving forward with the operating agreement with Spak Group. Mr. Fleming made the motion and Mr. McMahon seconded. Chairman Miller was opposed to making a decision at the moment with not having enough time to review numbers provided earlier in the day by Spak. Motion passed with three yah and one no.

Chairman Miller motioned to adjourn. Mr. Fleming seconded. Mr. Thompson amended motion to allow Ms. Morrison to speak. Mr. McMahon seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Morrison asked about 1103 Spruce St. She specifically wanted to know what the protocol is when purchasing a property. She will provide documents at next meeting which specify what she is referring to. Ms. Krishock informed Ms. Morrison of board approval needed prior to purchasing a property. Ms. Morrison mentioned the documents at recorder of deeds not being accurate.

Adjournment

There being no further business to be brought before the Board, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made, and all members were in favor.

Respectfully submitted by:

Asset Manager

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