

**MINUTES FROM A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE READING  
REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF READING  
HELD ON 8<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2018**

The Redevelopment Authority of the City of Reading held a meeting at 815 Washington Street, Room 2-53 in the City of Reading, County of Berks, and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, on 8<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2018.

The meeting was called to order at 3:01 p.m. by Mr. Heinly, Chairman and on roll call, the following were present:

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| Mr. Chris Heinly,    | Chairman |
| Mr. Melvyn Jacobson, | Member   |
| Mr. Juan Zabala,     | Member   |

**Absent:**

|                 |               |
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| Mr. Dan Luckey, | Vice-Chairman |
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**Also present were:**

Mr. Adam Mukerji, Executive Director  
Mr. Dennis Witwer, Executive Assistant  
Mr. Keith Money, Barley, Snyder

**Other attendees:**

Councilwoman Donna Reed  
Mr. Ernest Schlegel

Upon roll call, Mr. Witwer declared a quorum.

**3<sup>rd</sup> & Spruce storage building:**

Mr. Mukerji stated that it was brought to his attention that the building located at 301 Spruce Street is in need of roof and other structural repairs. He told the board that this building has been owned by the RRA for a better part of 30 years and is the storage building for old RRA files. It is also rented by the County Adult Probation office and the garage is used by the 3<sup>rd</sup> and Spruce rec. center.

Mr. Witwer told the board that for the last 5 years the city had been maintaining the building. Approximately 5 years ago, the front section of the building got a new roof put on, which the city handled. He stated that he had not been made aware of any other problems with the building since then, but he spoke with one of the county employees who works in the building who told him that anytime something in building needed to be repaired, they would contact the public works department and the repairs would be made.

Mr. Witwer also informed the board that two contractors are preparing estimates to submit to the board for work needed to be done to bring the building back up to code.

**615-R Kenhorst Blvd.**

Mr. Mukerji updated the board on the phase II environmental report from Liberty Environmental. He said that there were no findings. He stated that the buyer is still concerned about lead paint and asbestos inside the building.

Mr. Mukerji stated that there are two ways to handle the cleanup for the sale of the property. A) have an environmental cleanup company give estimate for the work and deducted the price from the sale price or B) the RRA have the cleanup done and then move forward with the sale.

The board discussed the options before them. They advised Mr. Mukerji to offer the options to the buyer and move forward with the sale.

**Letter to Administration:**

Chairman Heinly produced the following letter which he instructed Mr. Witwer to send to the administration in response to an e-mail request for a “forensic” audit of the RRA.

Dear Mr. Mayor:

The Redevelopment Authority (the “RRA”) received your undated correspondence, on or about February 15, 2018, offering to conduct an examination of the RRA practices and procedures. The RRA appreciates your offer and your concern.

However, after discussion regarding your offer, the RRA Board rejects your offer.

Your offer is rejected by the RRA because the offer fails to include any specifics and lacks a definitive scope. The offer fails to identify who will conduct the examination, what the examination will entail and who will bear the cost of said examination, among other things. In a portion of your letter you seem to imply that an audit should be performed. You may not be aware that the

RRA has an audit conducted annually and that audit is incorporated into the City of Reading's audit, so without further explanation of what it is you are seeking, the RRA Board does not see the utility in conducting another audit, outside of its annual audit.

The RRA respects and appreciates your offer, but is declining it for the reasons set forth above. In the event that you would like to revisit the topic, please feel free to expound upon your request for reconsideration. Thank you for your concern and interest in the affairs of the RRA as it continues to try and engage in projects which bring benefit to the City of Reading and its residents.

Sincerely,

Christopher Heinly  
Chairman of the Redevelopment  
Authority Board

**At this time, Mr. Ernest Schlegel asked if he could address the board regarding the matter at hand. His request was granted.**

**Mr. Schlegel talk to the board about the "forensic" audit that was supposedly done for the Reading Parking Authority, which was conducted by Baker Tilly. He stated that the audit was not in fact a forensic. He cited information from the actual audit which he had with him. He also stated that what was reported in the Reading Eagle on the audit was inaccurate information.**

**Mr. Schlegel suggested to the board that they have their own forensic audit done by the Pennsylvania Auditor General, so that the administration cannot spin a story from an audit they ordered as they did to the Parking Authority.**

**Lastly, Mr. Schlegel address the incident that happened to Mr. Witwer back on 22<sup>nd</sup> January, which has been making the papers, known as "Filegate". He stated that the 4<sup>th</sup> amendment of the US constitution is slowly disappearing and the board should not ignore what happened to Mr. Witwer and the illegal seizure of RRA files by the administration.**

**Board Member update:**

**Mr. Heinly informed the board that he had received the resignation letter from Mr. Dan Luckey. Mr. Jacobson and Mr. Zabala accepted the resignation. Mr. Mukerji reminded the board that this letter was a mere formality because Mr. Luckey's appointment to the board had expired in December 2017 and Mr. Luckey was not seeking re-appointment.**

Parcel 32:

Councilwoman Donna Reed asked the board if they had any projects slated for the parcel on Canal Street. She asked if the urban farm that had been planned several years ago, was still active.

Mr. Mukerji stated that the board is currently anticipating a skateboard park on Parcel 32. He offered the history of the urban farm project and the new skateboard project.

Ms. Reed stated that a skateboard park sounded like a very good idea for that area.

Executive Session:

At this time the board entered into executive session to discuss personnel matters.

Upon entering back into regular session, Mr. Mooney stated that on March 1<sup>st</sup> 2018 at 1:15 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. the board members held an executive session at the offices of L&H Signs. No action was taken at this meeting.

Mr. Zabala made a motion to appoint Mr. Jacobson as signer of the bank accounts which the RRA has for payroll and expenses. All members were in favor.

There being no further business to be brought before the board, Mr. Zabala made a motion to adjourn the meeting; all members were in favor.

Respectfully submitted by:

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Executive Assistant