

**MINUTES OF THE REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF  
THE CITY OF READING HELD ON 18<sup>th</sup> OF MAY 2023**

The Redevelopment Authority of the City of Reading held a Hybrid meeting via Zoom computer application and in the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor conference room located at City Hall, on the 18<sup>th</sup> day of May 2023.

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 p.m. by Chairman Miller, and on roll call, the following were present:

**Mr. John H. Miller Jr., Chairman  
Mr. Fred Thompson, Vice-Chairman  
Mr. Goslyn Fleming, Member**

**Excused:**

**Mr. Thomas McMahan, Treasurer/Secretary - Excused**

**Also present were:**

**Mr. Jamal Abodalo, Executive Director  
Ms. Rafaela Lopez, Asset Manager  
Ms. Melissa Krishock, Esq., Bingaman Hess  
Ms. Shannon Calluori, Hailstone Economic  
Mr. William Heim, City Managing Director  
Ms. Xiomara L. Guerrero  
BCTV, via Zoom**

**Consent Agenda Approval:**

Chairman Miller asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes from April. Mr. Thompson made the motion and Mr. Fleming seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**Public Comments:**

Ms. Xiomara Guerrero noticed the construction on the 800 block of Penn St. has stopped and would like an update. Chairman Miller informed Ms. Guerrero of RRA being the owner of the courtyard which includes sidewalk. The improvement work is carried through the city as part of a DCED grant to improve the courtyard. Ms. Guerrero expressed to the board the inconvenience of blocking the construction area resulting in using the sidewalk on 9<sup>th</sup> street to access the Berks Community Health Center. She isn't able to go through the front entrance due to the construction. Mr. Abodalo informed Ms. Guerrero of the project being pushed back due to an issue with the sidewalk elevation. The goal of this project is to provide better access for disabled constituents. He will reach out to Project Manager, Mr. David Anspach and provide an update to Ms. Guerrero.

18<sup>th</sup>, May 2023

**Mr. William Heim provided the board an update on 301 S 3<sup>rd</sup> St. On, May 22<sup>nd</sup>, council will be presented with two ordinances. One will authorize the purchase of 301 S 3<sup>rd</sup> St for the amount of \$150,000.00. The second ordinance will allocate \$500,000 towards funding of blighted properties. He is hoping this will help the board to reconsider their earlier decisions for evicting current tenant being the Reading Parks and Recreation Authority out of 301 S 3<sup>rd</sup> St.**

**Finance Report:**

**Chairman Miller stated as of April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023, the Customer's Bank balance is \$1,690,574.28 and the PA Invest balance is \$421,415.82.**

**Mr. Abodalo informed the board of 2022 audit being due. In the past, Ms. Yomary Castro handled this and he would like the board to extend her contract to process audit.**

**Approval of Bills Payable:**

**Chairman Miller asked for a motion to approve the bills in the amount of \$4,979.67. Mr. Thompson made the motion and Mr. Fleming seconded. Motion passed unanimously.**

**Property Update:**

**Mr. Abodalo informed the board of the City's offer of \$150,000.00 for 301 S 3<sup>rd</sup> St, as requested by the board. Two ordinances will be presented on Monday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>, as stated by Mr. Heim during public comment. A ten days grace period is given according to City's charter rules before the ordinances become effective. Things should go through as planned.**

**Mr. Abodalo informed the board of going through with the online auction with Bid4Assets as approved by the board. There's a lot of interest. Chairman Miller referred to the quote received from Reading Eagle of \$1,200.00 to have a banner placed on their website for one day. Currently there is a sale if you purchase one day, you receive the second for free. The board agreed the price is too high and will not move forward with purchasing banner. Chairman Miller confirmed asset manager reached out to the Berks County Association of Realtors and Real Estate Investors Association to get the word out about the auction.**

**Mr. Abodalo confirmed signs were manufactured and posted on each property being auctioned off by A1 Sign for the total cost of \$822.56.**

**Old Business**

**Mr. Abodalo informed the board of speaking to Mr. Ryan Spak. The title was ordered for the joint venture corporation between RRA and Spak Development. The**

corporation will do business as an LLC established in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania under the name of Fourth and Washington LLC. Once received the title, it'll be given to Ms. Krishock. On another update Spak has received three bids for architect and awaiting a fourth one from a local firm. They started process for financial qualification to a HUD loan mortgage 2021.

### New Business

As discussed during public session of the meeting, Mr. Abodalo will reach out to Project Manager, Mr. David Anspach regarding the 800 block of Penn. As for the 600 block of Penn, the contractor has acknowledged to being responsible for part of the issues of separation around the structural columns at 645 Penn St. The Contractor will go back and fix and repair the gaps due to construction work. Pictures provided by Chairman Miller regarding the issues at the 600 block of Penn St were forward to Mr. Anspach. Chairman Miller questioned who will maintain the flower beds and Mr. Heim had informed the Asset Manager prior to the meeting stating that the city will do so.

Mr. Abodalo would like to know if the board is not interested in using Home and/or CDBG funds, to let him know so he can free the funds for other organizations to benefit the Community. The Applications are due to Community Development by June 30<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Calluori would be able to oversee the application process.

Ms. Calluori thanked the board for approving Hailstone Economic's blight remediation plan. She would like to start with standard operating procedures but needs some guidance on where to begin. A Blight Remediation Plan form was given to each board member with priorities listed. Ms. Calluori requested for each board member to indicate which are considered high priority. This would be helpful for her to prepare for the workshop.

Board members agreed to hold their workshop on Monday, June 5<sup>th</sup>, 1:00pm to 3:00pm.

Mr. Abodalo informed board of needing a contractor to maintain their properties. Last year it was difficult to retain someone. Public Works can assist with bigger areas. Chairman Miller suggested they use the two contractors Property Maintenance is currently using, which are Stubbs and Hope Works. With eventually selling 638 & 640 Schuylkill St, 1404 Fairview St and 301 S 3<sup>rd</sup> St and Spak handling 301 Washington St and 124 N 4<sup>th</sup> St, it leaves RRA with not too many properties to maintain. Mr. Abodalo agreed to move forward with Chairman Miller's suggestion. Chairman Miller motioned authorizing Executive Director to work with Stubbs and Hope Works to maintain their properties throughout the end of 2023 and not exceed \$5,000.00. Mr. Thompson seconded motion and it passed unanimously.

Mr. Abodalo provided update regarding Penn Optical grant application through GRCA. The plans will soon be approved and will be sent to us after approval.

**Mr. Fleming asked if Berks County Redevelopment can be combined with theirs. They are very powerful financially and we aren't. Mr. Thompson said he has been sitting with Ms. Deb Millman and has discussed this. Chairman Miller added they are already working towards this by submitting the Penn Optical grant application.**

**Chairman Miller brought to the board's attention 405 Carpenter St and 411 S 3<sup>rd</sup> St. These lots are currently being leased to the Reading Parking Authority. He and Mr. Thompson both met with Mr. Nathan Matz, Executive Director of the RPA. Lots are almost at 100% capacity. The current amount we are leasing the lots for is too low. RRA would like to get out of the lease by selling the lots. RPA is working on having the lots appraised.**

**Executive Session at 6:20 p.m.**

**Regular Session at 7:45 p.m.**

**Chairman Miller asked for a motion to appoint Ms. Yomary Castro's to RRA as a financial officer assisting with the annual audit. The fees for her service is comparable to prior year in the amount of \$2,400.00. Mr. Thompson made the motion and Mr. Fleming second. Motion passed unanimously.**

**Chairman Miller asked for a motion to pay E.G. Stoltfus the amount of \$478,048.00. Mr. Thompson made the motion and Mr. Fleming seconded. Motion passed unanimously.**

**Chairman Miller asked for a motion to approve hiring HUD appraiser to have 405 Carpenter St and 411 S 3<sup>rd</sup> St appraised. Mr. Thompson made the motion and Mr. Fleming seconded. Motion passed unanimously.**

**Chairman Miller asked for a motion to stay any legal proceedings and to permit the Reading Recreation Commission occupying 301 S 3<sup>rd</sup> St. Motion will be pending council approval of ordinances being presented on May 22<sup>nd</sup>. Mr. Thompson made the motion and Mr. Fleming seconded. Motion passed unanimously.**

**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:**

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Asset Manager

18<sup>th</sup>, May 2023