

**REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
OF THE CITY OF ALLENTOWN  
Wednesday, July 2, 2025 – 2:00PM  
Council Chambers**

**MINUTES**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting of the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Allentown was held on July 2, 2025, at Allentown City Hall, located at 435 Hamilton Street, Allentown, PA. This was a hybrid meeting of in-person and virtual attendance using Microsoft Teams. The meeting, having met the requirements of a quorum, was called to order by the Chair, Christopher Raad at 10:03 AM.

**Attendees**

Board Members: Alan Jennings Jessica Ortiz, Christopher Raad and Daniel Schmidt

Staff: Josh Gildea (Solicitor) Kelly Grogg, Mark Hartney, Vicky Kistler, Ellen Price and Kevin McNulty

**Public/Guests**

Jennifer Cruverkibi – Maher Dussel

Jason Addy Lehigh Valley News

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

**MOTION:** Jessica Ortiz moved that the board approve the minutes of the May 14, 2025, meeting. Alan Jennings seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

N/A

**DRAFT AUDIT REPORT**

Jennifer Cruverkibi from Maher Dussel presented the audit report, stating that there were no material weaknesses. However, she recommended a few minor modifications to back-office procedures to improve operations moving forward.

**MOTION:** Mrs. Ortiz made a motion to approve the Draft Audit report as presented. Mr. Jennings seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Vicky Kistler asked Ellen Price if she had any concerns to share regarding the audit. Ms. Price expressed concern about being the sole individual responsible for cutting and paying bills, which became a challenge during her

medical leave in June. She also noted that, as a best practice, it would be beneficial to have someone other than internal staff review her cash receipts and bank activity.

## **ANNUAL BOARD MEETING – ELECTION OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Mr. Raad stated that this meeting serves as the Annual Meeting for the election of Board positions.

**MOTION:** Mrs. Ortiz motioned that the members remain in their current positions, Dan Schmit seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

## **STAFF FINANCIAL REPORT**

Chairman Raad deferred the report for staff presentation.

Ms. Price reviewed the financial statements, noting that everything remains consistent with previous months. She confirmed that the Authority can now begin billing for the 2024 CDBG expenses and is currently preparing the invoices for reimbursement. Additionally, she mentioned that accounts with minor cent discrepancies can be cleaned up following the audit, resolving those issues. She also noted that language clarification is needed on the budget line-item for property management, which will be corrected.

**MOTION:** Mr. Jennings moved that the Board approves the financial statement. Seconded by Mrs. Ortiz, the motion passed, which was unanimously approved.

## **INVOICES FOR PAYMENT**

The Authority had 24 invoices totaling \$31,403.02. Ms. Price reviewed the invoices for the Board to approve.

**MOTION:** Mrs. Ortiz moved that the Board approves the payment of invoices as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Jennings and passed unanimously.

## **INVENTORY UPDATES**

Ms. Grogg reviewed the Authority's inventory.

**802 Walnut** – This property needs a skylight repair, which a quote was received and will be fixed.

**323 N 9<sup>th</sup>** – The kitchen repair was completed, and it was found that the water issue was from the previous contractor installing the microwave and drilled screws into the sewer pipe.

Ms. Grogg informed the board that Apartment #1 is now ready for rental. In an effort to promote transparency and strengthen community partnerships, she proposed collaborating with Valley Youth House through their rental assistance initiative, The Landlord Collective. This program subsidizes rent for participants selected by Valley Youth House, covering both the security deposit and a portion of the monthly rent.

Under this arrangement, the Authority would retain the right to screen and approve the proposed tenant. A lease would be created between the Authority and the approved occupant, and a separate contract would be established with Valley Youth House outlining the terms of the program. The Authority will remain responsible for managing the lease and ensuring compliance with its terms.

**MOTION:** Mr. Jennings moved to follow through with the rental program to find an occupant. The motion was seconded by Mr. Jennings and passed unanimously.

## **NEW BUISNESS HOMEOWNERSHIP PROGRAM**

Mark Hartney presented to the board a proposed partnership between the Authority and Peoples Security to apply for funding through the Federal Home Loan Bank (FHLB) Grant Fund. This opportunity includes up to \$1.5 million in funding, combining FHLB and Secondary Purchase Program (SPP) tax credit sources, with up to \$1 million designated specifically for the rehabilitation of 10 blighted homes. Each property would have a rehabilitation cap of \$150,000, with the option to supplement up to an additional \$250,000 in costs using Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds.

Upon completion, the homes would be offered to qualified occupants earning at or below 80% of the area's median income. A deed restriction would be placed on each property for a period of 20 to 30 years to ensure long-term affordability. The selected contractor would not seek profit but instead aim only to recover costs. The rehabilitation work would prioritize durability, ensuring that major systems are updated to reduce the likelihood of future replacements for the occupant.

The grant application, which is evaluated through a competitive scoring system, is due in August. The related SPP tax credit application is expected to be submitted during the first quarter of the following year.

**MOTION:** Ms. Ortiz moved to follow through with partnership to Work with Peoples Security to apply for the "Homeownership" grant. The motion was seconded by Mr. Schmidt and passed unanimously.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Executive session was called to discuss real estate transactions of the Authority.

## **REGUULAR MEETING**

Chairman Raad called the regular meeting went back into session at 11:38am

## **ACQUISITION**

Real Estate transactions were discussed in Executive session and the Board wishes to make a motion.

**MOTION:** Ms. Ortiz moves to allow staff to acquire properties that have officially been “Certified” blighted by the City of Allentown, or any property that the owners approach the Authority for acquisition of a risk property as long as it follows the Housing Strategic plan. This approval is for the use of only CDBG funds and must stay within the approved budget for the year. If non CCDBG Funds or a property does not meet the specific criteria a special meeting will be held for proper approvals. The motion was seconded by Mr. Schmidt and passed unanimously.

## **FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER**

Mr. Hartney made a request from the Allentown Housing Authority that they would like to host a housing fair and use the VACANT lot located on 332 Front Street owned by the Authority. The Board suggested that RACA also be present at this fair. They would sign all documents releasing the Authority as a liability.

**MOTION:** Ms. Ortiz made a motion for the Board to approve the Allentown Housing Authority pending proper paperwork. The motion was seconded by Mr. Schmidt and passed unanimously.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 11:42 AM.

**NEXT MEETING:** Wednesday, June 11th, 2025, at 2 PM in Allentown City Hall, 435 Hamilton St., Allentown, PA.