

Redevelopment Authority of the City of Allentown
Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes
May 8, 2024
2:00 PM

Agenda Item
2.0

Call to Order

The monthly meeting of the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Allentown was held on May 8, 2024, at City Hall Located at 435 Hamilton Street Allentown, PA 18101. 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 Daniel Schmidt.

Board in Attendance

Daniel Schmidt, Chair
Jessica Ortiz, Vice Chair Via Teams at 2:33pm
Alan Jennings, Treasurer
Tyrone Russell, Secretary

Staff in Attendance

Joshua Gildea, Solicitor
Vicky Kistler, Director, DECD
Mark Hartney, Deputy Director, DCED
Kelly McElroy, Enforcement Manager
Ellen Price, Senior Grant Accountant
Nancy Hicks, City Clerk

Public in Attendance:

Andrew Joseph (Teams)
Peter Secoda (Teams)
Sara Vigneri (In Person)

Approval of Meeting Minutes

With a determination of a quorum, the meeting was called to order on May 8th, at 2:03 pm. The minutes from the previous meeting on April 10, 2024 motioned to be approved by Mr. Russell seconded by Mr. Jennings with ALL approved.

Public Comment:

Andrew Joseph, via teams, stated that he has been trying to get in contact with Megan and Kelly, but had no response. He was interested in 802 Walnut and wanted to know the process for acquiring this property. The RFP process was explained, and his name was placed on the distribution list, Update: his name was added to the list with email confirmation.

Introduction of New Member on the Board, Christopher Raad and then an introduction was completed of all board and city staff.

Treasurer's Report:

Audit:

Mr. Hartney explained in the packet was a proposal from Maher Duessel, who is the City's 3rd party auditor. They submitted a proposal of \$22,900 to perform the annual audit for RACA. City staff recommends approving them to complete the 2024 Audit. RKL was also contacted but they stated they didn't have capacity to complete the Audit at this time. Mr. Hartney stated that this process should start much earlier next year and it would be a full RFP Process. The authority's Audit has to get rolled into the city audit and the contractor would need to be selected much earlier. *Mr. Jennings made a*

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2:00 PM

motion to approve the proposal from Maher Duessel and Mr. Russell Seconded. The motion passed unanimously 5-0.

Invoices for Payment:

Mr. Hartney reviewed a spreadsheet containing 8 invoices for payment totaling \$8,136.91. Mr. Raad made a motion to pay the invoices and Mr. Jennings seconded then all in favor.

Property Updates:

323 N 9th Street – This is a rental that the authority has in its inventory. Ms. McEllroy will be coordinating with the tenant and also completing a walk-through and documenting any issues. Mr. Hartney stated there is a leaky roof and expired permits that need to be inspected and closed out. This will also need a rental license and an inspection. A discussion was started by Mr. Hartney of how the board wishes to handle situations like repairs to occupied properties. The discussion offered ways to correct occupied unit issues, as a bid of a threshold. Mr. Gildea asked if a member wanted to make a motion to allow staff to complete repairs up to \$10,00 on emergencies. *Chris Raad made the motion and 2nd By Mr. Russel.* The motion unanimously passed 5-0.

Mr. Jennings wished to motion to allow the staff to have a different Threshold on non-occupied properties. Mr. Hartney expressed that the city would handle those types of emergencies as they would be a public Nuisance. The City would be able to address the situation and then bill the Authority.

Mr. Gildea asked if the staff had an issue with anything that they need assistance from the board to act on? Mr. Hartney responded that he thought the staff was ok at the moment, it was just this occupied property that needed urgent attention.

Old Business

411 Ridge Avenue – Mr. Hartney informed the board that there was a draft agreement of sale, and he will send that over on behalf of the Redevelopment Authority. He expressed that there will be a deed restriction that the lot may only be used for parking.

428 N 6th Street Mr. Hartney reported that he spoke to Fred Banuelos and there is an executed Site control agreement. The next steps would be for an agreement of sale and a developer's agreement. Mr. Hartney wanted to complete an internal audit of that property see what CDBG amounts were put into the property and if anything could be paid back.

540 Hamilton Street – Mr. Hartney stated that the RFP was not advertised due to the attention required on RACA;s financials and the audit . He stated that after we have a handle on that we can issue the RFP. Mr. Russel asked how long the RFP would remain advertised. The answer was around 60 days, Mr. Hartney suggested RFPs should remain active for 6 to 8 weeks to allow for a completed submission. Mrs. Kistler asked Mr. Gildea if there were issues on this property with the previous owner.

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2:00 PM

Mr. Gildea stated that the previous owner contested the taking, but the petition that was filed is still under review for additional money owed to the Water Authority. He went on to explain the process of the Eminent Domain and the statute of limitations of that. Mrs. Kistler stated that the previous owner's son had reached out to the city council for permission to enter the building. The Authority is not inclined to do so until the previous owner's file a legal petition. Mrs. Ortiz asked if we could hold off on the RFP process until we have these situations under control, so the new owner doesn't have these issues. Mr. Gildea clarified that we have a free and clear title and we can pass that along to a new owner. A judgement to pay more just compensation for a taking would be the responsibility of RACA and not the new property owner.

332 Front Street

Mr. Hartney stated that this Property is progressing, but some issues will be discussed in the Executive session. The team is working on an Agreement with the developer.

A request of strategic plan was requested by Alan Jennings, Mr. Russel and Mrs. Ortiz also wished for the topic to be discussed

New Business

Mr. Jennings, Mr. Russel and Mrs. Ortiz wanted to discuss the topic of strategic planning for RACA. Ms. Kistler suggested that the board wait for a draft of the City's Housing Needs Analysis and Strategic Plan to be available to inform RACA's discussion. All agreed.

Mrs. Kistler gave the board an update on the Recompete Grant Application.

Executive Session – The Board announced that they will be going into Executive Session to discuss the sale of real estate.

Adjournment

3:32 pm