

**REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM
JANUARY 23, 2025**

Town Hall
Bethlehem City Hall
10 East Church Street
Bethlehem, PA 18018

MINUTES

The Board of the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Bethlehem met for a regular meeting on Thursday, January 23, 2025 at 5:00 in Town Hall, at Bethlehem City Hall; 10 East Church Street, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. The place, the hour and the date duly noted for the holding of this meeting was publicized.

Because some Board members were unable to attend the meeting in person, a virtual option (Zoom) was provided for attending this meeting.

Chairperson Tracy Oscavich, who attended this meeting via Zoom, called the meeting to order and the following members were present:

Ali McDaniel (via Zoom)
Tracy Samuelson
Christopher Spadoni

The Chairperson called a quorum present.

Also present were: Sean Ziller, Executive Director
 Heather M. Bambu-Weiss, Board Secretary
 Michael E. Riskin, Esq., Solicitor

RDA Board member, Ronald Heckman, contacted the RDA office prior to the meeting and indicated he was unable to attend due to a medical issue.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Spadoni made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 26, 2024 regular meeting and the minutes of the December 27, 2024 special meeting of the Redevelopment Authority. These minutes were emailed earlier to each member of the Board. Ms. McDaniel seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously and the minutes of the September 26, 2024 regular meeting and the December 27, 2024 special meeting of the Redevelopment Authority were approved.

CASH REPORTS

Mr. Spadoni made a motion to approved the cash reports for the months ended September 30, 2024; October 31, 2024; November 30, 2024; and December 31, 2024. These cash reports were emailed earlier to each member of the Board. Ms. Samuelson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously and the cash reports for the months ended September 30, 2024; October 31, 2024; November 30, 2024; and December 31, 2024 were approved.

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

There were no comments during the Courtesy of the Floor portion of this meeting.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Ms. Oscavich turned the meeting over to Mr. Ziller who provided an Executive Director Report. Mr. Ziller indicated since this was the first meeting of 2025, he was going to provide a summary of the RDA accomplishments during 2024 and to provide an overview for 2025. Mr. Ziller noted the following items:

- **RDA Property Assets** – Mr. Ziller indicated that in addition to acquired blight certified properties, the RDA continues to own and maintain properties throughout the City of Bethlehem. He identified those properties located within the former Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) District (the Levitt Pavilion; the Hoover-Mason Trestle; the Bethlehem Landing Visitor Center) as well as parcels adjacent to Main Street. Mr. Ziller noted that during 2024 the RDA sold one of its Main Street parcels to the Hotel Bethlehem which was located in the parking lot of the hotel.
 - **Blight Certified Properties** – Mr. Ziller indicated that the RDA made significant progress with the blight certified properties, located at 401-403 East Fourth Street / 405 East Fourth Street and at 723 Broadway, which were acquired through eminent domain. Mr. Ziller noted the following:
 - **723 Broadway** – Mr. Ziller reminded the Board that the RDA partnered with Community Action Lehigh Valley (CALV) to renovate 723 Broadway with grant funds the RDA was awarded from the state Blight Remediation Program. Mr. Ziller shared photos of the newly renovated property with the Board and he anticipates this property being sold to a low to moderate income individual or family during 2025.
 - **401-403 East Fourth Street / 405 East Fourth Street** – Mr. Ziller reminded the Board that the RDA gained possession of this property in November 2023. He stated that during 2024 the RDA was awarded grant funds to renovate this property and applied for additional grant financing to be used for this project.
- Mr. Ziller noted that since one of the recent grant applications required architectural drawings be provided, the RDA engaged a local architect for these services. Mr. Ziller shared the drawings that were prepared for the reuse of this property and highlighted the following:
- Reuse would be mixed-use with commercial units on ground floor and residential units on the upper floors;
 - Ground Floor commercial space has been designed to provide a restaurant in the 401-403 East Fourth Street portion of the building and office space (800 sq. ft) in the 405 East Fourth Street portion of the building;
 - Second and Third Floors would provide residential rental units in sizes ranging from approximately 739 sq. ft to 960 sq. ft.;
 - The residential rental units will vary in size and are planned to include (1) one-bedroom unit; (1) two-bedroom unit; and (2) three-bedroom units;
 - The third floor also includes common area space; and
 - The architectural style of the property was maintained in the drawings and reuse of the property.
- **Other Actions** – Mr. Ziller highlighted additional actions the RDA approved during 2024, including conduit financing with Moravian University; multiple Use Permit authorization for RDA owned property in the Sun Inn Courtyard; transition of garden maintenance of the Hoover-Mason Trestle to a new service provider; review and acceptance of the RDA audit for the 2022-2023 fiscal period as well as review and approval of a new auditor for the RDA audit for the 2023-2024 fiscal period; and execution of other agreements involving the RDA in various matters.
 - **2025 Projections** – Mr. Ziller concluded his presentation with a brief overview of some projected activities for 2025, including continuing to monitor and discuss the RDA finances; exploring strategic planning, grant and financing opportunities and continuing to partners with the City of Bethlehem, non-profits and others in the community.

USE PERMIT AGREEMENT – CHRISTMAS CITY VILLAGE

Ms. Oscavich indicated that the RDA Board has been asked to reaffirm its email vote which authorized the RDA to enter into a Use Permit Agreement with the Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce, by and through its Downtown Bethlehem Association, for the use of the RDA portion of the Sun Inn Courtyard for the Christmas City Village. It was noted that this event occurred during the period of October 28, 2024 through January 3, 2025.

Mr. Spadoni made a motion to reaffirm the email vote which authorized the RDA to enter into a Use Permit Agreement with the Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce, by and through its Downtown Bethlehem Association, for the use of the RDA portion of the Sun Inn Courtyard for the Christmas City Village event during the period of October 28, 2024 through January 3, 2025.

Ms. Samuelson seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

As a result, the RDA Board reaffirmed the email vote which authorized the RDA to enter into a Use Permit Agreement with the Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce, by and through its Downtown Bethlehem Association, for the use of the RDA portion of the Sun Inn Courtyard for the Christmas City Village event during the period of October 28, 2024 through January 3, 2025.

COOPERATION AGREEMENT – STEELWORKERS VETERANS, MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

Ms. Oscavich indicated that the RDA Board has been asked to reaffirm its email vote which authorized the RDA to enter into a Cooperation Agreement with the Steelworkers Veterans, Memorial Association, Inc. pertaining to the expansion of the Steelworkers Veterans Memorial and the use of Local Share Account (LSA) funds, which the RDA applied for on behalf of this project.

Mr. Ziller indicated that he has been meeting regularly with the Steelworkers Veterans about this project. He stated that the project has been progressing and noted that the work specifications are currently being bid. Mr. Ziller added that it is the goal of the Steelworkers Veterans to have this expansion completed in time for Veterans Day 2025.

After this project update, Mr. Spadoni made a motion to reaffirm the email vote which authorized the RDA to enter into a Cooperation Agreement with the Steelworkers Veterans, Memorial Association, Inc. pertaining to the expansion of the Steelworkers Veterans Memorial and the use of Local Share Account (LSA) funds, which the RDA applied for on behalf of this project.

Ms. Samuelson seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

As a result, the RDA Board reaffirmed the email vote which authorized the RDA to enter into a Cooperation Agreement with the Steelworkers Veterans, Memorial Association, Inc. pertaining to the expansion of the Steelworkers Veterans Memorial and the use of Local Share Account (LSA) funds, which the RDA applied for on behalf of this project.

PROPOSAL – ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES

Ms. Oscavich indicated that the RDA Board has been asked to reaffirm its email vote which authorized the RDA to accept a proposal from East Spruce, LLC for schematic architectural drawings of the renovation plans for 401-403 East Fourth Street / 405 East Fourth Street. It was noted that this is a blight certified property and these drawings were required to accompany a grant application submitted by the RDA to the Commonwealth Finance Agency to assist with financing these renovation costs.

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Mr. Spadoni made a motion to reaffirm the email vote which authorized the RDA to accept a proposal from East Spruce, LLC for schematic architectural drawings of the renovation plans for 401-403 East Fourth Street / 405 East Fourth Street.

Ms. Samuelson seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

As a result, the RDA Board reaffirmed the email vote which authorized the RDA to accept a proposal from East Spruce, LLC for schematic architectural drawings of the renovation plans for 401-403 East Fourth Street / 405 East Fourth Street.

BLIGHTED PROPERTY REVIEW COMMITTEE (BPRC)

Ms. Oscavich indicated that the RDA Board has been asked to select a Board member to represent the RDA on the BPRC. She explained that this individual will replace the prior RDA representative who is no longer a Board member. Ms. Oscavich noted that the BPRC evaluates properties to determine if their condition meets the criteria of being certified as vacant and blighted. She also stated that all properties, which required RDA involvement, have been certified by the BPRC. Ms. Oscavich added that the BPRC meetings are scheduled for 4:00 PM on the third (3rd) Tuesday of each month; however, meetings only occur when properties are identified for evaluation. It was noted that this action can be done via motion.

The RDA Board discussed this request with both Ms. McDaniel and Mr. Spadoni indicating they would prefer not to be selected as the RDA representative on the BPRC at this time.

Ms. Bambu explained that while the BPRC meeting schedule is 4:00 PM on the third (3rd) Tuesday of each month, meetings only occur when there are properties to consider. She provided some background information such as the number of meetings which have occurred over the past few years as well as details about the amount of notice that typically is provided for anticipated and upcoming meetings.

Ms. Samuelson suggested that since Mr. Heckman was unable to attend this meeting, this agenda item should be tabled and discussed at the next, or future, RDA meeting when all members can be in attendance and all participate in the discussion and selection process for this representative. All the RDA Board members in attendance agreed to table the selection of a Board member to represent the RDA on the BPRC until the next, or future, meeting when all members are in attendance.

As a result, the selection of a Board member to represent the RDA on the Blighted Property Review Committee (BPRC) was tabled and will be included as an agenda item for the next, or future, RDA Board meeting.

BANK SIGNATURE CARDS

Ms. Oscavich stated that the RDA is in the process of updating its signature cards for the RDA accounts maintained at Fulton Bank. It was noted that Fulton Bank has requested the updating of these signatures be authorized by the RDA Board and requires a copy of such authorization be provided when signature cards are updated. The authorization to update these signature cards can be done via motion, as has occurred in the past when such updates have been made.

Mr. Spadoni made a motion authorizing the RDA to update its signature cards for the RDA accounts maintained at Fulton Bank. Ms. McDaniel seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. As a result, the RDA Board authorized the updating of the signature cards for the RDA accounts maintained at Fulton Bank.

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ANNUAL MEETING

Chairperson Oscavich turned the meeting over to Mr. Riskin, who temporarily assumed the office of Chairman for the 2025 Annual Meeting and the election of officers.

Mr. Riskin reviewed the 2024 slate of officers for the RDA. Mr. Spadoni made a motion that the current slate of officers remain the same for 2025 with two updates: (1) Ms. Samuelson assume the currently vacant offices of Vice-Chairman / Treasurer and (2) Ms. McDaniel assume the Assistant Secretary position currently held by Ms. Samuelson. Ms. Samuelson seconded the motion. As there were no other nominations for officers of the RDA, the nominations were closed. As there were no other motions made a vote of RDA Board members was taken. The RDA Board unanimously approved the slate of officers for 2025.

As a result of this motion and the unanimous vote, the following slate of officers was created for the Redevelopment Authority for 2025.

| Redevelopment Authority of City of Bethlehem | |
|---|------------------------|
| Slate of Officers – 2025 | |
| Chairperson | Tracy Oscavich |
| Vice-Chairman / Treasurer | Tracy Samuelson |
| Secretary | Heather M. Bambu Weiss |
| Assistant Secretary | Ali McDaniel |
| Assistant Treasurer | Christopher Spadoni |
| Assistant Secretary / Assistant Treasurer | Ronald Heckman |

Ms. Oscavich resumed the meeting as Chairperson and asked that the next item of business be the re-appointment of Michael E. Riskin, Esq. as Solicitor for the Redevelopment Authority. Mr. Spadoni made a motion to re-appoint Michael E. Riskin, Esq. as Solicitor for the Redevelopment Authority. Ms. McDaniel seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved and Michael E. Riskin, Esq. was re-appointed Solicitor for the Redevelopment Authority.

Ms. Oscavich asked that the last item of business for the annual meeting be the confirmation of the RDA meeting schedule for 2025. Mr. Spadoni made a motion to confirm the RDA 2025 Board meetings to occur at 5:00 PM on the fourth (4th) Thursday of each month January through October and the third (3rd) Thursday of November and December in Town Hall. Ms. Samuelson seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. As a result, the RDA Board confirmed its 2025 meetings to occur at 5:00 PM on the fourth (4th) Thursday of each month January through October and the third (3rd) Thursday of November and December in Town Hall.

ADJOURNMENT

As there was no further business, Mr. Spadoni made a motion to adjourn the January 23, 2025 RDA Board meeting. Ms. Samuelson seconded the motion and the motion was unanimously carried. As a result, the meeting adjourned at 5:35 P.M.

Submitted by,

Heather M. Bambu-Weiss
Board Secretary