

MINUTES FROM THE BETHLEHEM REVITALIZATION AND IMPROVEMENT AUTHORITY (BRIA)

July 18, 2024
3:30 p.m.

1.0 Call to Order

A meeting of the **Bethlehem Revitalization and Improvement Authority (BRIA)** was held at 3:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 18, 2024 at Town Hall located at 10 East Church Street, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

Ms. Collins called the meeting to order.

2.0 Roll was taken as follows:

Authority: Laura Collins
Donna Taggart
John Filipos - Absent
Mark Jobes

Solicitor: Edward Andres

Staff in attendance: Sean Ziller
Christopher Jones
Denise Rider

3.0 Reorganization

3.1 Appointment of Chairperson

Mr. Andres opened the floor for nominations for Chairperson. A motion was made by Ms. Taggart and seconded by Mr. Jobes to appoint Ms. Collins as Chairperson. With no additional nominations or comments, Ms. Collins was unanimously appointed Chairperson. Mr. Andres then turned the meeting over to Ms. Collins.

3.2 Appointment of Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Secretaries, Solicitor, and Financial Assistant

Ms. Collins presented a slate for nominations as follows:

Vice Chairperson – Mark Jobes

Secretary – Donna Taggart

Treasurer – John Filipos

Assistant Secretaries – Mark Jobes and John Filipos

Solicitor – Edward Andres

Executive Director – will remain open

Financial Assistant – Christopher Jones

The nominations were seconded by Mr. Jobes. Being no further discussion; the nominations were unanimously approved 3-0.

4.0 Public Comment

None

5.0 Approval of Minutes dated December 21, 2023

A motion was made by Mr. Jobes and seconded by Ms. Taggart to approve the minutes. Being; no further discussion, the minutes were approved 3-0.

6.0 Treasurer's Report

Christopher Jones, Financial Assistant, delivered the Treasurer's Report in Mr. Filipos' absence. He stated that the BRIA has approximately \$11,000 surplus from interest earnings a little over \$17,000 within the first six (6) months of the year. The only expense this year was the audit fee of approx. \$6,300. The biggest change is the grant that the BRIA gets every November 1st. This amount shows up in last year's figures and won't be reflected until the last quarter of this year. There was a net cash decrease of approximately \$228,000 due to the disbursement of \$239,000 approved by the BRIA to go to the Polk St garage, offset by the interest earnings for this year. Mr. Jones also went over the activity in the Fidelity Clearing and Primary accounts. Mr. Jones stated that he is working on a \$30,000 cash transfer of accumulated interest from the Clearing account to the Primary account and reimbursing the Primary account for allowable state-related expenses. The \$500,000 borrowed and paid back last year is available for approved projects this year. Being no questions from the BRIA; Ms. Collins requested a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report. The motion was made by Ms. Taggart and seconded by Mr. Jobes. The motion was approved 3-0.

7.0 Old Business

Mr. Jobes asked if there were any updates on Martin Tower. Ms. Collins noted that construction started on the 2 medical buildings. The BRIA has also worked with the state to coordinate CRIZ and RACP funding eligibility on the property. Financing will likely be seen at an upcoming meeting. Mr. Jobes then asked if there were any projects in the works for the \$500,000 Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) mentioned by Mr. Jones in the Treasurer's Report. Ms. Collins noted that the RLF guidelines have not been finalized yet. The plan is to finalize the guidelines and start advertising within the next few months. There are no projects yet for the program. Ms. Taggart noted that she saw the Annex building being cleaned out so she assumed the funding went through. Ms. Collins noted that Industrial Site Reuse Program (IRSP) and Local Share Account (LSA) grants have been awarded. The Authority has been working with Peron and Mr. Andres regarding the reimbursement process and agreements. Mr. Andres noted that the sub-grant agreements for the LSA and the IRSP are close to being ready. Both must be sent to the state for approval. BRIA is the grantee recipient and the developer is the sub-grantee. The time period for the grant window has started so some of the eligible expenses could be incurred. John Callahan, Director of

Development of Peron Development, was in the room and noted that the East Annex has an ARPA grant independent of the IRSP and LSA monies. It expires at the end of this year. Peron Development expects the work to take approximately 6 months. Ms. Collins noted that Governor Shapiro was in town on July 17th and announced, in front of the Steel General Office (SGO) building, that \$500 million was secured in the budget for the PA Sites program.

8.0 New Business

8.1 Bethworks Greenway Partial Property Decertification

Ms. Collins noted that this request is for partial decertification of the Six 10 Flats project. This property has 3 separate ID parcels. Ms. Collins stated that Resolution 2024-2 in the packet had been renamed 2024-01. The plan is for BRIA to review the request, decertify, and vote on Resolution 2024-01. Ms. Collins turned the floor over to Mr. Callahan of Peron Development to discuss their request for decertification. Mr. Callahan stated that Peron Development is asking that unit 2 and the common area be decertified allowing the acreage to be used for a future project. Mr. Jobs asked if we have to bank the parcel for them or is it banked for other CRIZ projects. Ms. Collins noted that she does not believe we need to take official action on how we are banking it. Mr. Callahan mentioned that the intent is to be able to use the decertified acreage for a future project, though a specific project has not been identified yet. Mr. Andres stated BRIA is not obligated to bank the acreage specifically for Peron Development but, if the BRIA weren't going to bank it for them, they wouldn't be asking for it to be decertified. Mr. Andres noted that BRIA will have input on whatever gets recertified. There was discussion regarding properties currently decertified and if any are in reserve for a specific developer. Ms. Collins noted that when the Parking Authority decertified there was an understanding that it would not go back to them. Ms. Collins recalled that in 2020 Wind Creek decertified one of the ruins lots and then transferred it immediately to the hotel expansion. Some properties are banked with the understanding they are for Majestic. Mr. Andres confirmed that the action being voted on does not set a precedence. Mr. Andres noted that Resolution 2024-02 in the packet shall now be renamed 2024-01. Being no questions from the BRIA; Ms. Collins requested a motion to approve Resolution 2024-01. The motion was made by Mr. Jobs and seconded by Ms. Taggart. Mr. Jobs noted that he has a business relationship with the entity requesting this. Mr. Andres stated Mr. Jobs could participate in the discussion but should not vote. Ms. Taggart made the motion, Ms. Collins seconded it, and Mr. Jobs abstained. Being no further discussion; the motion was approved 2-0-1.

8.2 Bethworks Greenway Financing Application

Ms. Collins noted that this is a request for financing for the fit-out of one of the retail spaces on the first floor of Six 10 Flat. Peron Development is hoping to use that acreage for another project. Mr. Callahan referred to a letter from Attorney Tipton requesting financing for debt service on a private loan. The retail space will be leased and operated by a Wingstop franchise. Mr. Callahan stated they are confident that the sales will cover the debt service. Mr. Jobs noted that he did not see Schedule C regarding anticipated financial information. Mr. Andres indicated that it was not included in the packet because it is confidential information. Mr. Jobs asked if the figures were validated. Mr. Andres stated that an assessment was made and believed to be a fair representation. Mr. Andres noted that Resolution 2024-01 in the packet had been renamed 2024-02. The Resolution is to authorize the officers of the BRIA to execute the loan documents. Being no further questions from the BRIA; Ms. Collins requested a motion to pass Resolution 2024-02. Ms. Taggart made the motion, Ms. Collins seconded it, and Mr. Jobs abstained. Being no further discussion; the motion was approved 2-0-1.

8.3 Authorize bank signatures

Ms. Collins turned the meeting over to Christopher Jones, Financial Assistant. Mr. Jones provided the history of authorized signers. Since there has been turnover, we currently only have 2 BRIA members that have signing authority. Mr. Jones requested a motion to authorize all four (4) current Board Members to act as authorized signers on both BRIA accounts, Clearing and Primary, with Fidelity Bank. A motion was made by Mr. Jobs and seconded by Ms. Taggart. Ms. Taggart asked Mr. Jobs if that was a conflict for him. He stated that it is not because there are dual signers and he does not have control over the account. Mr. Andres noted that Mr. Jobs is not voting but executing anything that would have been previously approved. Being no further discussion; the motion was approved 3-0.

Ms. Collins turned the meeting back over to Mr. Jones. He noted that grants are coming from the state from LSA and IRSP programs and that the ISRP requires us to have a separate bank account. He requested a motion to authorize staff to open one (1) new account at Fidelity Bank for the purpose of tracking anticipated State grants from the ISRP and LSA programs and that all four (4) current Board Members shall be recognized as authorized signers. A motion was made by Ms. Taggart and seconded by Ms. Collins. Mr. Jobs asked if this would be a conflict since the account is being opened at his employer. Mr. Andres does not believe it is but Mr. Jobs can abstain if preferred. Mr. Jobs decided to abstain. Being no further discussion; the motion was approved 2-0-1.

9.0 Solicitor's Report

Mr. Andres stated that the sub-grant documents have already been authorized.

Once the signature is in final form and the work starts the grant dollars will start flowing along with reimbursement.

10.0 Chairperson's Report

Ms. Collins stated that in addition to the money running through BRIA for the SGO project, there is ARPA money coming through the City of Bethlehem and LSA money coming through BEDCO (Bethlehem Economic Development Corporation).

11.0 Next Meeting Date

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 1, 2024.

12.0 Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the BRIA, a motion was made by Ms. Taggart and seconded by Mr. Jobs to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 4:37 p.m.

Signed by: Donna M. Taggart
Print Name: Donna Taggart
Print Title: Secretary

