

MINUTES FROM THE BETHLEHEM REVITALIZATION AND IMPROVEMENT AUTHORITY (BRIA)

May 19, 2022
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, May 19, 2022 at Town Hall located at 10 East Church Street, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

Mr. Kelly called the meeting to order.

2.0 Roll was taken as follows:

Authority: Joseph Kelly
Ann McHale
Donna Taggart - Absent
John Filipos - Absent
Mark Jobses – Attended virtually

Solicitor: Edward Andres

Staff in attendance: Alicia Miller Karner
Christopher Jones
Denise Rider
Asher Schiavone

3.0 Public Comment

None

4.0 Approval of Minutes dated March 3, 2022

There are no additions or corrections. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Jobses and seconded by Mr. Kelly. Ms. McHale abstained from voting as she was not in attendance at the March 3, 2022 meeting. Being no further discussion, the minutes were approved as presented.

5.0 Treasurer's Report

In Mr. Filipos absence, Mr. Jones provided an update. The BRIA has \$109,000 in the bank which was accumulated in last five to six years. The only income for 2022 were fees from loan modifications on two current projects.

6.0 Old Business

6.1 Historic Hotel Bethlehem Resolution

Ms. Karner noted that the BRIA entered into an agreement with Christmas City Hotel, LLC in 2018. It was then extended twice and expired in April

of 2022. Today, the BRIA is presenting a resolution to commit approximately 1.1 acres necessary for the expansion of Historic Hotel Bethlehem. Conditions in the document included land development approval, Historic Conservation Commission (HCC) approval, and easement. Ms. Karner turned the floor over to Mr. Haines, Managing Partner of Christmas City Hotel, LLC, for a project update.

Mr. Haines noted that they are about to start seeking partners or successor entities and it will take some time to find the right fit. This will be a new business entity. An obstacle in 2019 was Wind Creek announcing a major expansion of rooms and meeting space. The Christmas City Hotel, LLC project is for the same undertaking as well.

Mr. Haines stated that he needs to make sure they have the designation assigned to the property along with the contingent item of getting the easement for traffic. The easement consists of traffic to go out of the new garage behind the hotel, to the right of the industrial quarter and out to Union Boulevard. He stated that the easement is not relevant to the BRIA but must go through City Council. He is aware that it will not happen unless the project goes forward. Ms. Karner clarified that the easement is a City of Bethlehem and Redevelopment Authority issue, not an issue for the BRIA.

Mr. Kelly indicated that he believes the most important thing is that the projects bring value to the downtown and was one of the reasons he initially supported the project. Mr. Kelly mentioned that as Mr. Haines finds partners, BRIA/City of Bethlehem will be part of the process

Ms. McHale expressed concerns about the flooding that occurs in the industrial quarter. Mr. Haines noted that he has been working with the City of Bethlehem and surveyors regarding the flooding. The road may flood and he believes it has been known with no way around the issue.

Mr. Kelly requested a motion to adopt resolution 2022-4. A motion was made by Ms. McHale and seconded by Mr. Jobes. Being no further discussion, the resolution was approved as presented

6.2 SGO East Annex State Grant Authorization

Ms. Karner reminded the BRIA that they are working with the current owners (SGO East Annex LLC) to rehabilitate the SGO East Annex. They are asking for authorization to apply for a grant related to COVID-19 RFF funding through the Commonwealth. Ms. Karner asked if there were any questions. Mr. Jobes questioned if there have been any updates since the last meeting with regards to assigning tenants. Ms Karner stated that there is nothing to announce publicly.

Ms. Karner noted that Mr. Andres (BRIA solicitor) has been a partner on this project and authorized the transfer previously of the property because ownership at times is requirement of our funding sources. This will continue and be a part of the application for the funding source.

Mr. Kelly requested a motion to approve resolution 2022-5. A motion was made by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Ms. McHale. Being no further discussion, the resolution was approved as presented.

7.0 Solicitor's Report

Mr. Andres indicated that documents for the SGO East Annex are being circulated through the attorneys regarding the transfer agreement, escrow agreement and deed. If approved, the title will transfer to the BRIA and transferred back at the conclusion, pursuant to various agreements that are being circulated in draft form.

8.0 Executive Director's Report

Ms. Karner indicated that we continue to work on the application with Wind Creek's hotel expansion. The property transfer was approved and the project itself received tentative approval. Ms. Karner has information that she in the process of reviewing and it will go back to Harrisburg.

9.0 Next Meeting Date

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 2, 2022.

10.0 Adjournment

Mr. Kelly made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Jobes asked for the status of current or new projects. Ms. Karner indicated SGO East Annex and Wind Creek expansion projects are being worked on. Wilbur Mansion apartments have been issued a Certificate of Occupancy. BRIA was involved in the event portion of the Wilbur Mansion project only. Six 10 Flats is under construction. She doesn't believe they will need additional funding but may ask for modification of the parcel for sub-division to use acreage for Polk Street frontage They received zoning and land development approval last week. Mr. Jobes asked if the restaurant and banquet center of Wilbur Mansion will be opening soon. Ms. Karner noted that she does not believe there is a Certificate of Occupancy. In addition, a restaurateur has not yet been announced.

There being no further business to come before the BRIA, the meeting was adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

Signed By: Joseph M Kelly
Print Name: Joseph M Kelly
Print Title: Chair