

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF THE REDEVELOPMENT
AUTHORITY OF THE COUNTY OF BERKS**

September 24, 2019

Vice Chair Eileen Kastura called the meeting of the Board of the Redevelopment Authority of the County of Berks to order at 4:30 P.M. on September 24, 2109 at the offices of the Redevelopment Authority of the County of Berks, 606 Court Street, 3rd Floor, Reading, Pennsylvania.

The following Board members were present during the meeting:

Diodato Bassano
Eileen Kastura
Thomas Ruth

Vice Chair Eileen Kastura declared a quorum of Board members present.

Also in attendance were:

Daniel P. Becker, Esquire of Kozloff Stoudt, Solicitor
Kenneth L. Pick, Executive Director
Kathy Miller, Fiscal Officer
Kathy Heckman, Executive Assistant
Pamela J. Cala, Esquire of Kozloff Stoudt, Solicitor (via teleconference)

Glenn Yeager and Pellegrino Orlando were absent from the meeting.

Christopher M. Turtell of Herbein & Company presented the 2018 Audit Report prepared by Herbein & Company, which included the Redevelopment Authority of the County of Berks and the Berks County Nonprofit Development Corporation. Mr. Turtell announced that the audit was a clean audit, with no instances of non-compliance with required standards or program requirements. The sole finding was a lack of segregation of duties, which is inevitable due to limited staff and found in nearly all agencies which

do not have a large number of employees. The report is attached to these Minutes. Upon motion by Diodato Bassano and seconded by Eileen Kastura all Board members present voted to accept the Audit Report (a copy of said 2018 Audit is attached to these Minutes).

Upon motion made by Diodato Bassano and seconded by Thomas Ruth all members of the Board present voted to approve the August 27, 2019 minutes of the Board of this Authority.

Diodato Bassano, Treasurer of this Authority, presented the Profit & Loss Statement for the period of January 1, 2019 through August 31, 2019 and the Balance Sheet as of August 31, 2019. A copy of said report is attached to these Minutes. Upon motion by Thomas Ruth and seconded by Eileen Kastura, all Board members present voted to accept the report of the Treasurer, including said Profit & Loss Statement and Balance Sheet, subject to audit.

Diodato Bassano then presented the list of payments to creditors representing the period of September 1, 2019 through September 24, 2019. A copy of said report is attached to these Minutes. Upon motion by Eileen Kastura and seconded by Thomas Ruth, all Board members present voted to approve the list of payments to creditors.

There were no communications.

There were no committee reports presented.

Kathy Heckman then gave a brief report on the "Next Step Program." Mrs. Heckman advised the Board that, to date, there are now seventeen (17) active contracts. Mrs. Heckman added that one of the tenants was evicted for nonpayment of rent due to

extenuating circumstances. She is currently in a shelter until she locates an adequate rental unit.

Pick gave a brief update on the Colebrookdale Railroad. Mr. Pick advised the Board that Nathaniel Guest and the Colebrookdale Railroad held a 150th anniversary event at the Railroad. Mr. Pick, who was also in attendance, said the event was very well received. Mr. Pick stated that they are still working on the repairs to the Colebrookdale Railroad culverts and bridges caused from the storms and flash flooding that occurred in Berks County. In addition, Mr. Pick reported that he continues to work on the Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP) in regard to the \$1,500,000.00 grant for the welcome center and transload facility in Boyertown, Pennsylvania. Mr. Pick also reminded the Board that the Borough Council for the Borough of Boyertown will vote on the approval of the Colebrookdale subdivision plan on October 7, 2019. Mr. Pick added that the subdivision plan and related documentation will clean up some remnant title issues related to the Colebrookdale Railroad and adjacent properties. Lastly, Mr. Pick stated that work continues to be done on the Pottstown Station.

Mr. Pick advised that there is nothing new to report on the Armorcast Redevelopment Area.

Mr. Pick gave a brief report on Housing Programs. Mr. Pick stated that when Mr. Dachowski returns he will deal with the punch list items for the restoration work at 525 E. Lancaster Avenue which is almost complete. Then Mr. Pick advised the Board that he has been meeting with the Borough of Shillington to obtain the necessary approvals to create an additional one-bedroom apartment at 517 E. Lancaster Avenue in Shillington,

Pennsylvania. Mr. Pick explained that he was seeking permission to create only one parking space for the new unit in light of the size of the existing parking lot. Mr. Pick added that the contractor is working on the renovation of the property located at 80 West Wesner Road. Then Vice Chair Kastura reported that the Blighted Property Review Committee held its bi-monthly meeting today at 2:30 p.m., at which time the Committee held a Certification Hearing for the property located at 1951 Woodvale Avenue in the Borough of Mt. Penn. She advised the Board that the Committee voted to certify the property as "blighted". Eileen Kastura then advised the Board that the Committee reviewed the status of the property located at 113 Gerald Avenue in Cumru Township and stated that the mortgage foreclosure for this property will now proceed. Eileen Kastura also reported that the Committee voted to approve sending a First Strike letter to the owners of the property located at 2438 McKinley Avenue, West Lawn, Spring Township. Lastly, Eileen Kastura stated that the next meeting of the Committee will occur on November 19, 2019.

Under Miscellaneous Items, Ken Pick advised the Board that this Authority is a member of the Pennsylvania Association of Redevelopment Authorities, also known as PARA. Mr. Pick explained that PARA gives out awards for best practice for various redevelopment projects. Mr. Pick reported that this year, this Authority received the 2019 Best Practice Award for the Authority's work with the Berks Coalition to End Homelessness to create homeless shelters.

Under New Business, Ken Pick presented the following:

- (1) A Funding Agreement with the Catholic Charities to provide \$34,000.00 from the federal ESG Program for homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing. A motion was made to approve the execution of said Agreement by Thomas Ruth, seconded by Diodato Bassano. All Board members present voted to approve the motion to execute the Agreement with the Catholic Charities. A copy of said Agreement is attached to these minutes; and
- (2) A Funding Agreement with Opportunity House to provide \$40,000.00 from the federal ESG Program for homeless shelter maintenance and operations. A motion was made to approve the execution of said Agreement by Eileen Kastura, seconded by Thomas Ruth. All Board members present voted to approve the motion to execute the Agreement with Opportunity House. A copy of said Agreement is attached to these minutes; and
- (3) A Funding Agreement with Safe Berks to provide \$40,000.00 from the federal ESG Program for homeless shelter maintenance and operations. A motion was made to approve the execution of said Agreement by Diodato Bassano, seconded by Thomas Ruth. All Board members present voted to approve the motion to execute the Agreement with Safe Berks. A copy of said Agreement is attached to these minutes; and
- (4) A Funding Agreement with the Berks Coalition to End Homelessness to provide \$24,943.00 from the federal ESG Program for homeless shelter maintenance and operations. A motion was made to approve the execution of said Agreement by Diodato Bassano, seconded by Thomas Ruth. All Board

- members present voted to approve the motion to execute the Agreement with the Berks Coalition to End Homelessness. A copy of said Agreement is attached to these minutes; and
- (5) A Funding Agreement with Family Promise to provide \$36,000.00 from the federal ESG Program for homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing. A motion was made to approve the execution of said Agreement by Thomas Ruth, seconded by Eileen Kastura. All Board members present voted to approve the motion to execute the Agreement with Family Promise. A copy of said Agreement is attached to these minutes; and
- (6) A Funding Agreement with Berks Connections/Pre-trial Services to provide \$5,000.00 from the federal ESG Program for homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing. A motion was made to approve the execution of said Agreement by Thomas Ruth seconded by Diodato Bassano. All Board members present voted to approve the motion to execute the Agreement with Berks Connections/Pre-trial Services. A copy of said Agreement is attached to these minutes.
- (7) The transfer of 2135 Denglers Hill Court, Reading to the Berks County Nonprofit Development Corporation for further sale to a third party who will assemble other parcels for development. A motion was made to approve the transfer of 2135 Denglers Hill Court to the Berks County Nonprofit Development Corporation for \$1.00 by Diodato Bassano, seconded by Eileen Kastura. All Board members present voted to approve said transfer.

There being no further business of this Authority, a motion was made by Eileen Kastura to adjourn the meeting of this Authority. The motion was seconded by Diodato Bassano and all members of this Authority present voted in the affirmative. The next meeting of the Authority will be October 22, 2019. This meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Following the adjournment of the meeting the Board recessed into Executive Session on a real estate acquisition matter at 5:10 p.m. and ended said Executive Session at approximately 5:20 p.m. No action was taken.

Thomas Ruth, Asst. Secretary