

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

August 24, 2021

Chairman Glenn Yeager called the meeting of the Board of the Redevelopment Authority of the County of Berks to order at 7:07 P.M. on August 24, 2021 via a Zoom meeting.

1. Roll Call:

The following Board members were present during the meeting:

Glenn Yeager, Chairman
Diodato Bassano, Treasurer
Thomas Ruth, Assistant Secretary/Treasurer

Also in attendance were:

Kenneth Pick, Executive Director
Peter Battaglia, Deputy Director
Kathy Heckman, Executive Assistant
Kathy Miller, Fiscal Officer
Thomas Dachowski, Housing Director
Daniel P. Becker, Esquire of Kozloff Stoudt, Solicitor
Josh Lewis

2. Reading and approval of minutes of the meeting of 7/27/21:

Upon motion made by Glenn Yeager and seconded by Thomas Ruth, all members of the Board present voted to approve the July 27, 2021 minutes of the Board of this Authority.

3. Report of Treasurer:

Diodato Bassano presented the Profit & Loss Statement and the Balance Sheet as of July 31, 2021. A copy of said report is attached to these Minutes. Upon motion by Glenn Yeager and seconded by Thomas Ruth, all Board members present voted to accept the report of the Treasurer, including said Profit & Loss Statement and Balance Sheet, subject to audit.

4. Bills and Communications:

Diodato Bassano presented the list of payments to creditors representing the period of August 1, 2021 through August 27, 2021. A copy of said report is attached to these Minutes. Upon motion by Glenn Yeager and seconded by Thomas Ruth, all Board members present voted to approve the list of payments to creditors.

There were no communications.

5. Reports of Committees:

There were no committee reports presented.

6. Unfinished Business:

a. Rentals:

Kathy Heckman advised that settlement on the two Hilltop Avenue properties located in Muhlenberg Township occurred on August 6, 2021. The properties were sold to Berks Housing Opportunities (BHO). Ms. Heckman further advised that beginning September 1, 2021, there will be a new tenant at the 517 E. Lancaster Avenue property, Apartment A.

b. Colebrookdale Railroad:

Mr. Pick advised that:

i. Phase I plans for the Boyertown transload facility were reviewed by PennDOT with a few minor comments. We are currently waiting for the E&S plan from the Conservation District for final approval from PennDOT.

ii. Mr. Pick and Solicitor Becker continue to work on the revised Lease and Operating Agreement with Eastern Berks Gateway Railroad.

iii. Mr. Pick and Mr. Guest continue to work on the FRAA application to the U.S. Department of Transportation for the major upgrades.

iv. Mr. Pick saw the diplomat car when he was recently in town. The renovations will begin soon.

c. Armorcast R.A.

Mr. Pick reported that Ms. London advised that a settlement has been reached with the owner for transfer of the lot. The train station located on the property will be removed and the property will be conveyed to the Borough.

d. Emergency Rental Assistance Program ("ERAP"). Mr. Battaglia advised that demand for the Program is averaging 100 applications per week. The demand has not waned. There are currently 3,102 tenants and 1,313 landlords in the system. There is currently a 1.8% denial rate and 98.2% approval rate. To date, a total of \$22,000,000.00 of the available funds from the three funding sources has been spent. Mr. Battaglia advised that currently 50.03% of the \$11,295,000.00 federal ERAP funds have been spent. He noted that 65% needs to be spent by September 30, 2021. Mr. Battaglia advised that 65.2% of the State ERAP funds have been obligated and 52% of the \$10,700,000.00 of the American Rescue Plan funds have been spent. Mr. Battaglia advised there was a \$42,000.00 disbursement from June which he is currently reviewing to be sure the lease agreement and amendment are legitimate. There currently are 220 applications pending. Mr. Battaglia explained that Neighborly Software has stepped up its performance and the software is working well. Neighborly enhanced the software to handle both the state and local programs.

Mr. Pick advised that in a general sense, the process for the programs is slower than Congress anticipated. Mr. Pick advised that Berks County is doing pretty well, at least average compared with other counties. Mr. Battaglia believes that the software enhancements have made the program more productive and more efficient at processing applications.

e. Hamburg Center.

No Report

f. Annual Dinner

Mr. Pick inquired as to how the Board felt about holding the annual dinner given the Delta variant of COVID. The Board decided to wait for a couple more weeks to see what the COVID cases look like at that time.

7. New Business:

a. Resolution #2021-8 ratifying the sales agreement and authorizing the purchase of a portion of 52 Henry Avenue, Colebrookdale Township for the purchase price of \$60,000. A motion was made by Glenn Yeager and seconded

by Diodato Bassano, all Board members present voted in the affirmative to approve Resolution #2021-8.

- b. **Resolution #2021-9 ratifying the sales agreement and authorizing the purchase of a portion of 26 Henry Avenue, Colebrookdale Township for the purchase price of \$59,000.** A motion was made by Glenn Yeager and seconded by Thomas Ruth, all Board members present voted in the affirmative to approve Resolution 2021-9.
- c. **Resolution #2021-10 ratifying the sales agreement and authorizing the purchase of 868 North Reading Avenue, Colebrookdale Township for the purchase price of \$210,000.** A motion was made by Glenn Yeager and seconded by Thomas Ruth, all Board members present voted in the affirmative to approve Resolution #2021-10.
- d. **Funding agreement with BCNDC providing \$150,000 from the County's federal HOME Program towards the project at 1951 Woodvale Avenue, Mt. Penn.** Mr. Pick advised that this property was acquired through the Blighted Property Review Committee. Settlement is scheduled for September 3, 2021. A motion was made by Glenn Yeager and seconded by Thomas Ruth, all Board members present voted in the affirmative to approve the Funding Agreement.
- e. **Funding agreement with Opportunity House providing \$60,000 from the County's federal ESG Program towards operations and maintenance of an emergency shelter.** A motion was made by Glenn Yeager and seconded by Thomas Ruth, all Board members present voted in the affirmative to approve the Funding Agreement.
- f. **Funding agreement with Berks Coalition to End Homelessness providing \$35,000 from the County's federal ESG Program towards operations and maintenance of emergency shelters.** A motion was made by Glenn Yeager and seconded by Diodato Bassano, all Board members present voted in the affirmative to approve the Funding Agreement.
- g. **Funding agreement with Family Promise providing \$80,500 from the County's federal ESG Program towards homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing.** A motion was made by Glenn Yeager and seconded by Thomas Ruth, all Board members present voted in the affirmative to approve the Funding Agreement.
- h. **Funding agreement with Berks Connections/Pre-Trial Services providing \$15,000 from the County's federal ESG Program towards homelessness prevention & rapid re-housing.** A motion was made by Glenn Yeager and

seconded by Thomas Ruth. All Board members present voted in the affirmative to approve the Funding Agreement.

8. Executive Session:

The Board entered into Executive Session at 7:48 p.m., returning to the meeting at 8:24 p.m.

9. Personnel

- a. Josh Lewis. A motion was made by Glenn Yeager and seconded by Thomas Ruth, all Board members present voted in the affirmative to hire Mr. Lewis for the position of Housing Generalist.
- b. Peter Battaglia. A motion was made by Glenn Yeager and seconded by Thomas Ruth, all Board members present voted in the affirmative to accept the resignation of Peter Battaglia.

Adjournment:

There being no further business of this Authority, a motion was made by Glenn Yeager to adjourn the meeting of this Authority. The motion was seconded by Thomas Ruth and all members of this Authority present voted in the affirmative. The next meeting of the Board will be September 28, 2021. This meeting was adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

Glenn Yeager, Chairman