

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

March 23, 2021

Chairman Glenn Yeager called the meeting of the Board of the Redevelopment Authority of the County of Berks to order at 3:07 P.M. on March 23, 2021 via a Zoom meeting.

1. Roll Call:

The following Board members were present during the meeting:

Glenn Yeager, Chairman
Eileen Kastura, Vice Chairperson
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
Joan E. London, Esquire of Kozloff Stoudt, Solicitor
Daniel P. Becker, Esquire of Kozloff Stoudt, Solicitor

2. Reading and approval of minutes of the meeting of 2/23/21:

Upon motion made by Glenn Yeager and seconded by Eileen Kastura, all members of the Board present voted to approve the February 23, 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 February 28, 2021. A copy of said report is attached to these Minutes. Upon motion by Glenn Yeager 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.

4. Bills and Communications:

Diodato Bassano presented the list of payments to creditors representing the period of March 1, 2021 through March 26, 2021. 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.

5. Reports of Committees:

There were no committee reports presented.

6. Unfinished Business:

a. Rentals:

Kathy Heckman advised the following:

- i. As of March 1, 2021, there are two new tenants at the East Lancaster Avenue property.
- ii. The tenant who resided at the Fairview Street property has been relocated to the Taft Avenue property.
- iii. A homeless Veteran will be moving into the vacant East Lancaster Avenue property on April 1, 2021.

b. Colebrookdale Railroad:

Mr. Pick advised the following:

- i. There are 14 properties that must be acquired for the Boyertown transload facility project, the majority are located within the old abandoned railroad right-of-way.
- ii. Acquisition letters have been sent to the owners of the property to be acquired. Tom Bellairs is preparing appraisal reports for the properties to be acquired.
- iii. One property to be acquired is owned by the Boyertown Foundry. The Foundry is excited about the railroad project and is working with the

railroad in hopes that they can utilize the railroad for its coke (fuel) shipments.

- iv. Another property to be acquired is owned by Boyertown Propane and Oil. They too are excited about the railroad project and they are working with the railroad in hopes that they can utilize the railroad for their propane tanks and oil shipments.
- v. Mr. Pick and Mr. Guest are working on the plans and specifications for the PennDOT grant application.

c. Housing:

Thomas Dachowski advise of the following:

- i. 1209 Meade Street. The interior of this property was repainted and has been leased to Family Promise to provide housing for the homeless.
- ii. 2253 Raymond Avenue. The interior of this property was repainted and has been leased to Family Promise to provide housing for the homeless.
- iii. 521-B E. Lancaster Avenue. The interior was repainted and new flooring installed. A tenant will be moving in on April 1st.
- iv. 2539 Fairview. This property is in the process of being painted and new flooring installed. The Authority anticipates selling this property.
- v. 617 Walnut Street. This property is currently being cleaned up at the present time.
- vi. 619 Walnut Street. This property consists of three units which are being used by Opportunity House to house those who need to be quarantined because of COVID-19.
- vii. Floret Avenue. This property is new construction. Prior to the meeting, Mr. Dachowski provided photographs to the Board of the progress of the construction.
- viii. 1951 Woodvale Avenue. This property was acquired through the Blighted Property Review Committee. The property has been framed and all of the mechanicals are in the process of being "roughed in". Mr. Dachowski provided before and after photographs of the property to the Board prior to the meeting.

d. Armorcast R.A.:

Nothing to report.

e. Emergency Rental Assistance Program ("ERAP"). Mr. Battaglia advised that the program started on March 8th. There are currently 1,382 applications submitted by tenants and 303 applications submitted by landlords. Approximately \$9,600.00 in funds have been disbursed. Given the large amount of funds being allocated to this program, Mr. Bassano questioned whether the D&O insurance coverage is sufficient. Ms. Miller advised that the D&O policy coverage is sufficient, however, the insurance agent is adjusting the "Crime Policy" to adjust the limits to \$2,000,000.00/\$5,000,000.00, which would result in a policy premium increase of \$200.00/year.

f. Blighted Property Review Committee.

Mr. Dachowski advised:

- i. 333 N. Church Street. The Committee authorized a letter to be sent to the Berks County Planning Commission and the Lower Heidelberg Township Planning Commission for reuse of the property.
 - ii. 2438 McKinley Avenue. A resolution was adopted certifying the property to the County of Berks Redevelopment Authority for acquisition/condemnation.
 - iii. 1951 Woodvale Avenue. This property was acquired by the Authority.
 - iv. No new applications or referrals were received.
- g. Credit/Debit Card Policy. Solicitor Becker advised that the policy had been revised for a municipal authority, rather than a business corporation. Ms. Miller advised that the policy would have to be revised to increase her limits from \$750.00 per billing statement to a \$750.00 limit per transaction. Mr. Bassano questioned the limits of the Authority's exposure for unauthorized use. Ms. Miller will review the bank contract for those limits and report to the Board. A motion was made by Glenn Yeager and seconded by Thomas Ruth, to approve the Credit/Debit Card Policy, subject to Solicitor Becker making the revision to include a \$750.00 limit per transaction for Ms. Miller. All members present voted in the affirmative to approve the Credit/Debit Card Policy.

7. New Business:

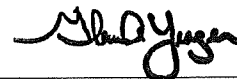
- a. Agreement with the County of Berks related to the state Emergency Rental Assistance Program. Mr. Pick advised this Agreement is for administration of the ERAP program. The Authority will receive a \$275,00.00 fixed fee; \$150.00/hour for staff time; and reimbursement of all costs and expenses to administer the program. Chairman Yeager asked if the fixed fee was reasonable and comparable to the fee paid to other administrating agencies. Mr. Pick replied that the fee was within the permitted limit under the Act and the County found it acceptable. He also advised that Lancaster County received a \$400,00.00 fee to administer the program. A motion was made by Glenn Yeager and seconded by Eileen Kastura, all Board members present voted in the affirmative to approve the Agreement.
- b. Agreement with Berks Coalition to End Homelessness related to the state Emergency Rental Assistance Program. A motion was made by Glenn Yeager and seconded by Thomas Ruth, all Board members present voted in the affirmative to approve the Agreement.
- c. Funding agreement with Neighborhood Housing Services for the Grove Road project providing \$181,700 from the County's federal HOME Program. Mr. Pick advised that this property was a blighted property wherein the house was razed and the construction of two new semi-detached homes have been built. A motion was made by Glenn Yeager and seconded by Diodato Bassano, all Board members present voted in the affirmative to approve the Agreement.

8. Miscellaneous:

Mr. Bassano advised that some of the previous meeting minutes contained an error in his name. Accordingly, any previous meeting minutes which reflect the name "Theodore Bassano" are amended to reflect Mr. Bassano's correct legal name of "Diodato Bassano".

9. 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 Diodato Bassano and all members of this Authority present voted in the affirmative. The next meeting of the Board will be on April 27, 2021. This meeting was adjourned at 4:20 p.m.



Glenn Yeager, Chairman