

# MINUTES FROM THE BETHLEHEM REVITALIZATION AND IMPROVEMENT AUTHORITY (BRIA)

December 3, 2020  
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, December 3, 2020 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 – attended virtually  
John Filipos  
Mark Jobs

Solicitor: Edward Andres

Staff in attendance: Alicia Miller Karner  
Chris Jones  
Asher Schiavone

## 3.0 Public Comment on Current Agenda

None

## 4.0 Approval of Minutes dated October 15, 2020

There are no additions or corrections. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Ms. McHale and seconded by Mr. Filipos. The minutes were then unanimously approved as presented.

## 5.0 Treasurer's Report

Mr. Filipos presented the Authority's financial activity for the first eleven months of 2020 and mentioned that there was nothing noteworthy to report. He asked that the report be accepted as presented. Ms. McHale moved to accept the Treasurer's report and Mr. Kelly seconded the motion. The report was unanimously approved.

## 6.0 Old Business

None

## 7.0 New Business

### 7.1 Wilbur Mansion Financing Resolution

Mr. Kelly asked that Mr. Seth Tipton, counsel for Mr. John Noble and his Wilbur Mansion project, provide an update on the project before Mr. Kelly asks Authority members to take action on the financing resolution. Mr. Tipton and Mr. Noble both attended the meeting virtually. Mr. Noble explained that his team is currently in the demolition phase of the Masonic Temple. The mansion itself will be fully restored with 9 hotel rooms on the upper floors and a first floor lounge and restaurant with a capacity of 80 – 100. A new 4800 square foot single-story addition to the mansion will have both commercial and catering kitchens. The new addition will also offer 2500 square feet of event space that will be expandable to the outdoors with the use of movable glass wall panels. Mr. Noble expects the entire complex to be open by November 2021. His four acre site will also feature a 50 unit apartment complex that will be located along the Cherokee Street border of his property. The apartments are part of a separate tax parcel and are not expected to be completed until February or March of 2022. Mr. Noble's CRIZ designated property is only about 9,000 square feet of his total. Responding to questions from Authority members he mentioned that financing is in place with People's Security. He also mentioned that although the COVID epidemic has severely impacted the hospitality and food service industries, it will ultimately benefit his head-hunting efforts as there is currently an excess of talented industry personnel in the marketplace.

Mr. Andres asked about the anticipated closing date and Mr. Noble indicated it would be late January or early February 2021. Mr. Tipton added that he does not anticipate any last minute problems with the financing. Ms. Karner mentioned that the financing of this project would be recognized as conduit debt in a similar manner as earlier BRIA-financed projects. She also said that this would be the first time the Authority is being asked to address the financing with a formal resolution. In the past, the Authority accepted and voted on motions to approve financing. Mr. Andres indicated that the new practice is consistent with past practice and just adds a dimension of formality to the approval process.

Mr. Kelly asked for a motion to accept the resolution and that was provided by Ms. McHale. Ms. Taggart seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken which ended in unanimous approval by the five Authority members.

### 8.0 Solicitor's Report

None

9.0 Executive Director's Report

Ms. Karner directed attention to a one-page summary of the CRIZ revenues received last month. The Authority had previously approved the use of the standard 5% retainage (about \$29,000) for administrative costs. Based on final details recently received from the Commonwealth, we now know the total of supplemental retainage that results from contractual arrangements with current project developers. Those funds amount to about \$31,500 and Ms. Karner would like a motion to approve the expenditure of these funds on remaining professional consultant services and the City's New Street streetscape project in accordance with Commonwealth directives concerning the appropriate use of these funds. Any unused funds from one year must then be returned to the Commonwealth by the following April 1<sup>st</sup>. Board members asked about details of the New Street streetscape project and Ms. Karner explained how the funds would be used for sidewalks and other pedestrian infrastructure, specialty lighting and trees. She believes that the City just received the bids for construction that should commence in the spring. To date, BRIA has contributed nearly \$150,000 to the multi-million dollar project. Mr. Kelly noted that although he supports Ms. Karner's current request to apply these funds, he suggested that the Authority begin looking at other uses of future retainage. It was mentioned that architectural lighting might be considered at some point. Ms. Karner reiterated that the ultimate use of these funds must benefit a current CRIZ project. A motion was then made by Mr. Jobs to approve the use of remaining 2019 CRIZ retainage for outstanding professional service expenses and the City's New Street streetscape project. Ms. McHale seconded the motion which then was approved unanimously.


Finally, Authority members recognized Mr. Filipos' reappointment to the board.

10.0 Next Meeting Date

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 7, 2021.

11.0 Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, a motion was made by Ms. McHale and seconded by Mr. Filipos to adjourn the meeting. The motion was unanimously approved at 3:57 pm.

Signed by:   
Print Name: Ann McHale  
Print Title: Vice Chairperson and Assistant Secretary