

JOHNSTOWN REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING
Tuesday, January 17, 2023

The Johnstown Redevelopment Authority met in a stated session for the general transaction of business. Mark Pasquerilla, Vice Chairman, called the meeting to order at 12:04 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

An Executive Session was held with regard to personnel matters.

The following members of the Authority were present for roll call:

Mr. Haselrig, Ms. Huchel, Mr. Pasquerilla, Ms. Rae, Mr. Truscello (5).

William Barbin, Esquire, Solicitor; Melissa Komar, Executive Director; Thomas Kakabar, EADS Group; Cheryl Labosky, Finance Director; Michael Grandinetti, Maintenance and Operations Manager were also present.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Mr. Truscello made a motion to nominate Mark Pasquerilla as Chairman, Rick Truscello as Vice Chairman, Bruce Haselrig as Secretary, Laura Huchel as Assistant Secretary, Sherri Rae as Treasurer. The motion was seconded by Mr. Pasquerilla.

PUBLIC COMMENTS CONCERNING AGENDA ITEMS

John DeBartola, 1197 Bedford Street, Johnstown, questioned which member of the JRA has the ability to be chairman. He stated Monsignor Balta was Chairman and "knew everything." He noted concerns that Mrs. Komar "would not be able to do the job now because Balta is not here." Mr. DeBartola commented he is strongly against Mr. Pasquerilla "being Chairman of this Board" and questioned his involvement with Vision 2025.

John Klanchar, Southmont resident, thanked Ms. Huchel for "looking at Mr. DeBartola" while he offered public comment and asked Chairman Pasquerilla to "look at people when they speak."

The motion regarding nominations passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mr. Haselrig, Ms. Huchel, Mr. Pasquerilla, Ms. Rae, Mr. Truscello (5).
Nays: None (0).

Sherri Rae introduced herself and provided a brief history of her professional background.

Chairman Pasquerilla offered the invocation.

MINUTES

Ms. Huchel made a motion to approve the Minutes of the December 20, 2022 Regular Meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Rae and passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mr. Haselrig, Ms. Huchel, Mr. Pasquerilla, Mr. Truscello (4).

Nays: None (0).

Abstention: Ms. Rae (1) was not present at that meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS CONCERNING AGENDA ITEMS (CONT.)

None.

PRESENTATION:

Paulette Baker, one of the founding members of the Laurel Highlands Historical Village presented before the Authority for discussion of the Honan Avenue Trail. Ms. Baker noted that historically around the turn of the century the Ku Klux Klan and the mayor ran undesirables out of Johnstown into deplorable living conditions at the Rosedale Borough, a dark part of Johnstown's history that is seldom talked about. She stated her vision is to rebuild that village and offer reenactments in that area. Mrs. Baker's group would like to place benches and attractive foliage in an area owned by the JRA to turn something that was "ugly" into something that would be "nurturing and educational."

Ron Shawley, Executive Director, Laurel Highlands Historical Village, commented that in conjunction with Cambria County Trails and Recreation his group created a loop trail which consists of Honan Avenue, going north around Hinkston Dam, across 271, down to Mineral Point to connect to the tunnel trail.

Mr. Shawley noted permission was given by the JRA to build trails from Honan Avenue to the LLHV mountain (little hill) by way of a road that goes up to the top of that hill where an overlook was built for people to sit on a bench and look over the City. Mr. Shawley indicated the stone for the Stone Bridge was mined on that mountain top.

Mr. Shawley indicated that liability insurance was obtained per recommendation by Mr. Barbin. He noted the LLHV is a nonprofit trying to preserve this history. Their website is lhhv.org.

Mrs. Komar noted there were concerns that their project would have a potential conflict with the work already started by the JRA but indicated it is located on the opposite side of the parcel and would have no effect on the work implemented by the Authority.

Mr. Barbin explained that the matter would eventually need to be memorialized in a memorandum of understanding.

REPORTS:

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Melissa Komar, Executive Director, reported that the weatherization program with regard to the current funding received is officially closed. She noted that overall funding spent on residential owner/occupied homes in the City.

The Authority advertised for the financial advisor position last week and is awaiting RFQs. Three companies have already responded.

Executive Director Komar noted that JRA is partnering with the Cambria County Redevelopment Authority to apply for an additional \$1.7 million through housing rehab funds. She noted the County did award the contract to JRA to be the administrator for the grant.

Inspection commenced last week for the 2023 Hosanna dollars with the Authority acting as the liaison between the property owners and Hosanna.

Prospect demolition was completed at the end of December. All five neighborhood blight elimination funds are also depleted.

JRA continues to work with investors in the Central Business District over the last few weeks concerning bringing properties back into reuse.

Mrs. Komar stated the Women's Help Center is very interested in the Goodwill Youth Build property on Sherman Street. She hopes to get the property deeded over to the Help Center next month.

Mr. Barbin explained this is an exception to the general rule requiring bids on property that is being transferred.

Mrs. Komar indicated that a tour of the property can be arranged for those members who are interested.

She noted registration with the Tax Claim Bureau for the land bank for the private sale of two properties, one listed at the corner of Hickory and Horner Streets and the other one at 157 Hammer Avenue.

Toby Fauver, representative from Rockland Consulting, and Brian Krul, TranSystems were present to provide an update on the access road.

A meeting was held with the Cambria County Library which is interested in applying through the Commonwealth Libraries and Pennsylvania Department of Education for a StoryWalk project of the Iron Street Trail. She noted the project was successful at Stackhouse Park. An agreement will be presented at next month's meeting regarding the matter.

Mrs. Komar indicated that Dr. Frem will be present at next month's meeting.

PRESENTATION:

Toby Fauver, Rockland Consulting, Phase II

Brian Krul presented before the Authority to provide an update on the road design and permitting issues on Phase I of the access road funded by the state. He referred members to a PowerPoint presentation for further discussion of an infiltration trench, shoulders to capture drainage, utilities and connection that links to Phase II.

Mr. Krul reviewed tasks completed to date noting final approval of all geotechnical work through PennDOT. A joint permit application will need to be submitted for small projects, a National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit which is taking longer than anticipated. A preapplication meeting with DEP was held in March of 2022 and finally received direction on the permit requirements in the fall of 2022.

An E&S and post construction storm water management will need to be completed for the County, City of Johnstown and PennDOT. An NPDES package will be submitted to Cambria County Conservation District and a joint permit application will be submitted to DEP.

Mr. Krul indicated a 100 percent submission in March pending receipt of all PennDOT comments and permit approval.

Toby Fauver, Rockland Consulting, indicated that he had received an update that PennDOT is in receipt of the Erosion and Sedimentation (E&S) plan and noted they would review and provide comments. Mr. Fauver indicated the

design is done with a 90 percent submission, that the only changes would be tweaks based on comments of the 90 percent.

Mr. Krul indicated the timeframe for the permit approval once submitted is approximately 3 to 12 months. He summarized by noting two things necessary are approval of the NPDES permit by the Cambria County Conservation District, followed by the approval of the Small Projects Joint Permit Application by DEP. There was further discussion.

Mr. Krul noted the NPDES permit will be ready to submit the beginning of February.

Mr. Fauver noted that Phase II was federally funded through Appalachian Regional Commission Funds. He talked about onsite meetings with the National Park Service and SHPO which were held to look at potential impacts of building the federally-funded connector road. The grant would be matched with the stated-funded portion of the grant so that no additional JRA funds would need to go in to advance the project. There was further discussion.

Chairman Pasquerilla commented that new Governor Shapiro wants economic projects to move forward at a faster pace, that Pennsylvania is "short on ready-to-go industrial sites and he commended Paulette and Ron for their efforts.

FINANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Cheryl Labosky, Finance Director, noted a resolution on today's agenda to escheat funds to the PA Treasury for uncashed checks more than three years.

She reiterated the RFQ for the financial advisor which would need submitted no later than Friday, February 10, 2023.

Reports received from S&P Global regarding bond ratings are included in her report for review.

Ms. Labosky indicated the sewer lateral loan program remains active with over 500 properties being fully completed to date, and of those, one-fifth have paid their loan balance in full.

The Cambria County grant program continues to be very active as well with 49 properties being completed and another 20 under contract.

December 2022 Disbursements:

Cambria Iron Works, \$39,466.52; Grant Partnership Fund, \$19,716.70; Centre Town Mall, \$1,813.15; Revolving Account, \$472,995.71; Johnstown Regional Sewage, \$821,066.31 for a total disbursement of \$1,355,058.39.

Mr. Truscello requested a brief update of what each grant represents.

SEWAGE OPERATIONS REPORT

Michael Grandinetti, Maintenance and Operations Manager, noted he continues to meet with staff at the Sewage Plant.

Work continues on Capital Improvements at the Dornick Point Sewage Plant. The ARC Flash Study was previously approved by the Board and will be scheduled within the next few weeks.

Alternatives to liquid oxygen are being sought, a bubble diffuser is being considered as an alternative.

Mr. Grandinetti reported that a lot of contracts associated with vendors will be reviewed, looking for any hidden surcharges and a safeguard in dealing with escalating fuel charges will be established.

The municipalities have until January 20, 2023 to submit a JRA progress report and JRA's report to DEP is due January 31, 2023.

He reiterated the sewer lateral program has been reinstated and work continues with regard to the weatherization grant.

A preconference meeting was held with regard to the Washington Street televising which is moving forward.

SANITARY SEWER OVERFLOW REPORT

Thomas Kakabar, EADS Group, reported a final inspection with DEP has yet to be scheduled regarding the Fairfield Avenue Interceptor project.

A Route 271 paving project will be forthcoming when the asphalt plants open and construction season begins again.

Report No. 29 is due the end of January. Reports from members systems are coming in.

Mr. Kakabar had no update with regard to the flow metering program.

The NPDES renewal is ongoing.

Two grant applications for H2O Grant in the amount of \$7 million and Small Water System Grant in the amount of \$475,000 were submitted by deadline of December 21, 2022 and are under review at the DCED.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

William Barbin, Esquire, Solicitor, reported discussion with Authority staff to assure mortgage documents are properly recorded.

He noted consulting with the Executive Director regarding different issues.

Mr. Truscello made a motion to approve the Fiscal/Operations Reports. The motion was seconded by Ms. Huchel and passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mr. Haselrig, Ms. Huchel, Mr. Pasquerilla, Ms. Rae,
Mr. Truscello (5).

Nays: None (0).

RESOLUTIONS AND MOTIONS

A. A RESOLUTION OF THE REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN AUTHORIZING THE FINANCE DIRECTOR TO ESCHEAT FUNDS TO THE PENNSYLVANIA TREASURY FOR UNCASHED CHECKS OLDER THAN 3 YEARS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$368.46.

Ms. Huchel made a motion to approve. The motion was seconded by Ms. Rae and passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mr. Haselrig, Ms. Huchel, Mr. Pasquerilla, Ms. Rae,
Mr. Truscello (5).

Nays: None (0).

B. A RESOLUTION OF THE REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF CERTAIN OBLIGATIONS RELATED TO SEWAGE OPERATIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING RESOLUTION NO. 3869.

Mr. Truscello made a motion to approve. The motion was seconded by Ms. Huchel and passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mr. Haselrig, Ms. Huchel, Mr. Pasquerilla, Ms. Rae,
Mr. Truscello (5).
Nays: None (0).

TABLED MATTERS

A RESOLUTION OF THE REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN AUTHORIZING THE SALE OF PROPERTY LOCATED AT 322 2ND AVENUE, TAX MAP NO. 85-004.-109.00 TO DAVID M. SAPOLICH OF JOHNSTOWN, PA, FOR \$15,000.00.

Mrs. Komar commented that the contractor was present last week and replaced windows. That information will be provided to Mr. Sapolich to see if has continued interest. She will provide an update at the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS/DISCUSSION ITEMS

Chairman Pasquerilla expressed his confidence and support of Executive Director Melissa Komar. He stated she is a very committed citizen of Johnstown and Cambria County. He thanked fellow Board members for their confidence in him to hopefully "do some good things together."

PUBLIC COMMENTS (ITEMS NOT ON AGENDA)

John DeBartola, 1197 Bedford Street, noted JRA has spent \$1.4-plus on deficit, raised the fee last month through 2028. He questioned if the Authority was mispending taxpayer money. He provided a breakdown of the budget, loan amounts and balances due and inquired if it was more beneficial to pay rent to the City of Johnstown for space in the Public Safety Building than "bleeding" money into 416 Main Street. Mr. DeBartola commented that JRA cannot use sewer-revenue funds for nonrelated sewer expenses and inquired where the money was coming from to pay for the Main Street building.


Mr. DeBartola felt discrimination today that when you have a meeting with public comment which allows two speakers to speak on non-agenda items and make him wait the entire meeting, is it because "you don't like me" or "because I'm gay?" He stated that questions regarding that matter and the amount of money spent on 416 Main Street would satisfy his request.

Chairman Pasquerilla stated he was offended by Mr. DeBartola's comments regarding his public speaking opportunity, and 416 Main Street is "one of the best things that JRA has done." He further stated that JRA is going to "move forward" and is "committed to making a difference."

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Truscello made a motion to adjourn. The motion was not seconded, no vote was taken.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:11 p.m.



TRANSCRIBED BY:
SARGENT'S COURT REPORTING
SERVICE, INC.



BRUCE HASELRIG,
SECRETARY