

JOHNSTOWN REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
SPECIAL MEETING
Wednesday, March 8, 2023

The Johnstown Redevelopment Authority met in a stated session for the general transaction of business. Mark Pasquerilla, Chairman, called the special meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Chairman Pasquerilla offered the invocation.

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

Mr. Pasquerilla, Mr. Haselrig, Ms. Rae, Mr. Truscello (via telephone) (4).
Absent: Ms. Huchel (1).

William Barbin, Esquire, Solicitor; Melissa Komar, Executive Director.

PUBLIC COMMENTS CONCERNING AGENDA ITEMS

John DeBartola, 1197 Bedford Street, Johnstown, had discussion with regard to Resolution B on the agenda concerning the purchase of property for the land bank. He opined that JRA was using the "sewer money" to buy properties, and this was a mistake and to stop using tax dollars in this regard. But that if the Authority continued to do this, not to do it at a special meeting when the regular meeting is scheduled in another week.

Mr. Pasquerilla commented that the Authority has been a big part of the "turnaround" in Johnstown and asked Mr. DeBartola to be "more careful" about his facts as they were not correct.

RESOLUTIONS AND MOTIONS

A. A RESOLUTION OF THE REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN AUTHORIZING THE CHAIRMAN AND SECRETARY TO SIGN AN AMENDMENT TO THE DCED SMALL WATER H2O GRANT, RESOLUTION NO. 4777, PASSED NOVEMBER 15, 2022.

Mrs. Komar noted that the changes made were taking the match amount from 50/50 to 70/30. The grant conditions were changed, and this needed to be updated and presented to the state by March 10, 2023, which was the reason for the special meeting.

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

Yeas: Mr. Pasquerilla, Mr. Haselrig, Ms. Rae, Mr. Truscello (4).
Nays: None (0).

B. A RESOLUTION OF THE REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO PURCHASE 1 ADDITIONAL PROPERTY FOR THE LAND BANK AT THE PRIVATE TAX SALE TO BE HELD BY THE CAMBRIA COUNTY TAX CLAIM BUREAU MARCH 24, 2023.

Mr. Truscello made a motion to approve. The motion was seconded by Ms. Rae.

Mrs. Komar indicated the address of the property is 534 Russell Avenue, and the development group hoped to create partnerships in Cambria County. Noting that she had just met the group, and a special meeting was being held anyway. It was decided to vote on the resolution. Mrs. Komar stated the properties were being brought back into taxation, being developed in the private sector, and saving blight elimination dollars on properties that would end up being demolished anyway.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mr. Pasquerilla, Mr. Haselrig, Ms. Rae, Mr. Truscello (4).
Nays: None (0).

Executive Director Komar asked the Board to approve moving the September meeting date to September 26, 2023, as she will be attending the PMAA conference around the third Tuesday of that month, the normal meeting date. Approval today would allow potential contractors to receive the RFP for the operation and maintenance contract on March 15, 2023.

Mr. Haselrig made a motion to amend the agenda. The motion was seconded by Ms. Rae and passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mr. Pasquerilla, Mr. Haselrig, Ms. Rae, Mr. Truscello (4).
Nays: None (0).

Ms. Rae made a motion to move the September meeting date to September 26, 2023. The motion was seconded by Mr. Haselrig and passed by the following vote:

Yeas: Mr. Pasquerilla, Mr. Haselrig, Ms. Rae, Mr. Truscello (4).
Nays: None (0).

NEW BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS/DISCUSSION ITEMS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS (ITEMS NOT ON AGENDA)

John DeBartola, 1197 Bedford Street, thanked Mrs. Komar for quickly providing information. He noted going to the courthouse to obtain information regarding the Xena Corporation and found a 2002 letter from Ron Repak indicating the corporation was tax exempt and inquired why JRA has this corporation. He suggested this corporation be dissolved.

Mr. Barbin explained the corporation was in order to maximize the federal grant dollars available when the Pasquerilla Center was built. The entire block including the parking garage, grocery store and the whole front part for the Pasquerilla Center was acquired. He further explained that in order for the City to reimburse JRA the cost of the acquisition for the parking garage, the federal government would not allow the City to pay money to buy from an authority created by the City, so the 501 (c)(3) organization was created.

Mr. Barbin stated, in terms of the JRA acting on real estate, that was the whole reason the Urban Redevelopment Law was created. The first project conducted by JRA in Johnstown was buying every single property on the left side of Broad Street heading towards the West End.

Mrs. Komar also explained these are land bank dollars provided by the City a year and a half ago to acquire the properties.

Mr. Barbin explained a "tremendous profit" was made with Hanging Gardens by taking property received gratis, investing money into it and in the end was paid \$1 million for the building.

Mr. Haselrig stated it was not sewer money.

Mr. Pasquerilla commented JRA is doing what redevelopment authorities are meant to do, noting the URA in Pittsburgh constantly buying and recycling properties to improve that city. He stated JRA will continue what it is supposed to do.

It was acknowledged that John Klanchar was not afforded his two minutes to speak on agenda items before the voting was done.

Mr. Barbin asked the Board to pass a motion ratifying Resolutions A and B after hearing Mr. Klanchar's comments.

Mr. Haselrig made a motion to ratify Resolutions A and B. The motion was seconded by Ms. Rae and passed by the following vote:

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Yeas: Mr. Pasquerilla, Mr. Haselrig, Ms. Rae, Mr. Truscillo (4).
Nays: None (0).

An Executive Session will be held with regard to potential litigation and real estate matters following adjournment. No official action will be taken.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:14 p.m.


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


BRUCE HASELRIG,
SECRETARY