

**Redevelopment Authority of the City of Allentown**  
**Monthly Meeting Minutes**  
**April 12th, 2023**  
**2:00 PM**

The following are meeting minutes of the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Allentown pertaining to the meeting held on **Wednesday, April 12th, 2023** at 2:00 pm Via Teams Virtual Meeting.

**Board in Attendance**

Daniel Schmidt, Chair  
Rodney Bushe, Vice Chair  
Tyrone Russell, Secretary  
Jessica Ortiz, Treasurer

**Staff in Attendance**

Megan Hart  
Scotty Smith  
Joshua Gildea, Solicitor

**Public in Attendance:**

Hasshan Batts  
Zaid Mohiuddin  
Shaheed Hasshan  
Pastor Gregory Edwards  
Laila Monerra

**Determination of a Quorum**

Daniel Schmidt determined a quorum was in place and called the meeting to order at 2:03.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Tyrone Russell made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023 meeting, Rodney Bushe seconded, and all were in favor.

**Old Business**

Megan Hart provided an inventory update including no new inventory has been added since the last meeting, the settlement for 136 S. 8<sup>th</sup> Street is still delayed due to the City's delay with the environmental review and the property at 1218 W. Gordon Street received multiple offers to purchase. Megan Hart added 802 W. Walnut and 540 W. Hamilton are still in litigation and asked if there are any questions. Tyrone Russell asked what the delay is with the properties in litigation to which Joshua Gildea suggested an Executive Session to discuss litigated matters.

Megan Hart introduced Hasshan Batts on behalf of the Islamic Society of Greater Allentown. Hasshan Batts explained the submitted letter of intent in further detail including other benefits that can be offered to the community with the purchase of 725 N. 10<sup>th</sup> Street including a food pantry, neighborhood clean ups, Freedom School for summer literacy and work toward health and fitness. Tyrone Russell asked the timeline for improvements to the building. Hasshan Batts stated the improvements would begin immediately with the goal of completion within one year. Jessica Ortiz asked what the field of expertise is of the developer and if projects similar have been completed. Shaheed Hasshan replied he has experience in development and construction, is open to develop in any location and is personal to him because he is a Muslim. Jessica Ortiz asked if the developer has reached out to any neighbors to which Hasshan Batts replied he himself has thru community engagement. Megan Hart asked for any

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comments. Pastor Gregory Edwards voiced his full support of this project and the benefit it can bring to the community. Laila Monerra expressed full support of the work of Promise Neighborhoods and of this project because of the community impact. Zaid Mohuddin voiced his support of this project and stated he has seen how Muslim communities in inner cities have changed blighted neighborhoods and seeing the work Hasshan Batts does with Promise Neighborhoods, it would be great for Allentown especially because of the partnerships between mosques in the Lehigh Valley. Daniel Schmidt asked if a parking or traffic study was done because of the congestion already in the neighborhood to which Hasshan Batts replied he looked at other mosques and is not concerned with the space available. Megan Hart asked if there were any other questions to which there were none.

Megan Hart updated the Board of Directors on the proposal to lease 725 N. 10<sup>th</sup> Street and asked if there were questions to which there were none.

**New Business**

Megan Hart stated HDC requested their nonrefundable deposit to be returned and explained the options to the Board including returning the full amount, not returning the deposit or partial return. Daniel Schmidt suggested if HDC resubmits another proposal in response to the RFP and is awarded the project, an option would be to apply the deposit to the new award. Rodney Bushe agreed with Daniel Schmidt and stated he thought that was fair. Jessica Ortiz stated standard practice in real estate is not to refund a nonrefundable deposit and agrees that it can be applied if HDC is awarded the project again. Tyrone Russell was in agreement to apply the deposit if HDC resubmits and is awarded the project again.

Megan Hart asked if all Board members reviewed the Ethics Policy and if there were any questions. Tyrone Russell asked if this was the same policy discussed at the workshop to which Megan Hart responded no, the policy at the workshop was only an example. Joshua Gildea stated we talked about creating a policy at the workshop and since the Land Bank adopted an Ethics Policy last year, it was suitable to use the same for this situation as well. Joshua Gildea said the structure discusses financial interest that may not be a conflict of interest but would require disclosure. Tyrone Russell asked what the discipline action(s) would be to which Joshua Gildea answered there isn't a list of penalties, the rest of the Board would determine. The Board of Directors recommended additional verbiage be added to the Ethics Policy to include potential removal from the Board.

Daniel Schmidt asked what the status was of the vacant board member position was and Megan Hart replied she informed the Mayor that the candidate he wished to appoint did not qualify according to the Authority's bylaws.

**RESOLUTION** - Jessica Ortiz motioned to adopt the Ethics Policy to include verbiage of potential removal from the Board in section 4b, seconded by Tyrone Russell and all were in favor.

Megan Hart provided the monthly profit and loss for March and asked for any questions to which there were none.

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Daniel Schmidt made a motion for an Executive Session at 2:58 to discuss litigated matters and the sale of real property.

Executive Session ended at 3:42pm.

Megan Hart asked Joshua Gildea if now would be the time to disclose any conflicts of interest. Joshua Gildea answered yes, this would be the time for any board member to disclose any possible conflicts of interest. Megan Hart asked the Board of Directors if anyone had any conflict of interest to disclose to which there were none.

**RESOLUTION** - Jessica Ortiz made a motion to table all current offers in relation to the property located at 725 N. 10<sup>th</sup> Street and authorize the Executive Director to issue RFP, seconded by Daniel Schmidt. Tyrone Russell was in favor. Rodney Bushe was not in favor.

**Public Comment**

None

**Adjournment**

3:52 pm