



CITY OF WARREN  
REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
REGULAR MEETING  
May 26, 2021

The regular meeting of the Redevelopment Authority (RDA) was held on May 26, 2021 at 1:00 pm in Council Chambers of the Municipal Building, 318 W. Third Avenue.

**ROLL CALL**

Chair Michael Boyd called the meeting to order. All members were present Michael Boyd, Wendy McClain, Marty McQuillan, Mindy Saunders & Holly LeMeur. Also present were Mike Holtz, DPW Director, Vince DeJoy, Director of Zoning, Codes & Economic Development, Jessica Bee, Code Official and Ellen Nelson, Recording Secretary.

**MINUTES**

Upon motion by Ms. LeMeur and second by Mr. McQuillan, the minutes of the April 28, 2021 meeting were unanimously approved.

**VISITORS**

- Josh Cotton, reporter for Times Observer
- Douglas Hearn, resident & City Councilman

**CORRESPONDENCE**

NONE

**TREASURER'S REPORT** - Mr. McQuillan provided the following for April 2021:

The checking account beginning balance on April 1 was \$37,551.71. Interest earned was \$1.54 leaving a balance on April 30, 2021 of \$37,553.25.

The Enterprise Development Fund earned \$5.21 in interest bringing the balance of the DCED portion to \$332,467.38; Revolving Loan \$301,050.79 for a total balance of \$633,518.17.

One bill was received from Stapleford & Byham for legal fees \$864.25.

Ms. McCain asked about items on the bill from Stapleford & Byham. She asked for an explanation of why the RDA was charged for the property located on Rankin Street when it is owned by the City. She requested the RDA be more informed. Mr. Holtz explained that the ultimate goal was for the property to transfer to the RDA, so they were involved in this process.

Mr. Boyd asked when the proceeds from the property sales would hit the RDA accounts. Mr. Holtz explained that the fees will all be paid first – legal fees, auctioneer fees, sewer bills, liens, etc. When that is taken care of the net proceeds will be given to the RDA.

Upon motion by Ms. Saunders and second by Ms. McCain, the treasurer's report was unanimously approved. Upon motion by Ms. McCain, with a caveat that the RDA is more aware of how they are being charged to be able to manage costs to the RDA Bank account. and second by Ms. Saunders, invoice payment was unanimously approved.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

- **602 Conewango avenue**

Ms. Bee reported that the new owner is actively working on this property. Building permits have been issued. She passed around photos of the exterior improvements that have been made. Mr. Boyd asked if this is going to be flipped, rented or owner occupied. Ms. Bee is not certain but believes it is a flip. She asked the Authority members to let her know if they want more information.

- **708 W. Fifth Avenue & 202 Pennsylvania Avenue E**

Ms. McCain asked for updates on these properties.

- **1613 1/2 Madison Avenue**

Ms. Bee stated that with the COVID pandemic this property fell through the cracks. There have been a lot of property maintenance issues. Property was certified blighted by Planning Commission before it went into the tax sale and purchased by a new owner. The new owner was invited to the March 2020 meeting, but with COVID the building was closed to the public and no meeting was held.

Ms. Bee is beginning to receive complaints about property maintenance issues from the neighbors. There are several options: pursue new owner under the Property Maintenance Code, issue an order to demolish, or other action by the RDA. Mr. McQuillan asked if there is money owed for taxes, water, sewer, or liens. Ms. Bee replied that it was sold at the judicial sale free of all liens. Mr. Boyd suggested they pursue through the Property Maintenance Code and issue an order to demolish. Normally 60 days is given to demolish, but Ms. Bee said the City is willing to work with the owner. In response to Mr. McQuillan's questions, Ms. Bee stated that any expense related to the demo would be the responsibility of the owner.

- **Downtown Façade Grant Program**

Mr. DeJoy stated that two new letters of intent. One from Kurt Smith for 428-438 Pennsylvania Avenue W and the other by Dana Harrington for 20 Clark Street, Suite C (Goat Fort Climbing Wall). The Design Committee met on May 26, 2021, to review the applications and recommended that they move to the RDA for approval.

Ms. McCain made a motion to approve the Letters of Intent for 428-438 Pennsylvania Avenue W and 20 Clark Street, Suite C. Ms. LeMeur seconded the motion, that passed by unanimous vote.

- **WCCBI Task Force – Trestle to Trestle**

Mr. DeJoy stated that the full committee met May 25. Mr. Phil Gilbert did a presentation for Leadership Warren. The lodging committee is continuing to look for a hotel site in the river area. The City and WCCBI have approached a property owner about acquiring their site for a hotel.

Ms. LeMeur reported that WCCBI will be holding a Beverages & Business

presentation on June 16 at 4 pm at Bent Run Brewing Company. Representatives from Trestle to Trestle will report on what they have been working on.

- **Comprehensive Plan**

Mr. DeJoy said the process is going to get started very soon. A steering committee will be formed with members of the Planning Commission and community stakeholders. Mr. Boyd asked if any assistance was needed of the RDA, to which Mr. DeJoy replied not at this point.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- **Marketing for Downtown Façade Improvement Grant Program**

Mr. DeJoy put together a mockup of a mailer to promote the grant program. They can be hand-delivered or mailed. A QRC code will be included to direct people to the website information.

- **511 ½ East Street**

Mr. Holtz presented a resolution for approval. This verifies that Chairman Michael Boyd is qualified to sign the sales agreement. Mr. McQuillan made a motion to approve the resolution. The motion was seconded by Ms. LeMeur and passed by unanimous vote.

- **Committees of the City**

Ms. McCain requested information on the duties and responsibilities of all the committees, boards, and authorities of the City of Warren. What they are responsible for, what they handle and what they vote on. A binder with all this information would be helpful for new members of the RDA and other committees.

- **Tables & Chairs**

Ms. McCain reintroduced the concept of the RDA purchasing additional tables and chairs for the downtown area with the proceeds from the properties recently sold. Mr. Holtz commented that an email from the solicitor strongly advised against this action.

Mr. Hearn spoke as a resident of the City. He touched on the blighted areas of Warren and that affordable attractive housing and businesses are needed in the City. He asked how spending money on tables and chairs is going to help address the blight in neighborhoods and downtown and addressing the empty store fronts in our downtown. He would like to see the RDA become pro-active and approachable by people that own homes. When people see repairs being made to another property or something good happening, they look at their own home or business with a fresh set of eyes. Well-kept businesses and homes lead to nice attractive neighborhoods and downtown.

Ms. McCain made a motion to use the \$30,000 from the sale of houses for the purchase of City owned tables and chairs.

Ms. Saunders asked if that would include umbrellas, to which Mr. Holtz replied no, the City has never purchased umbrellas. Mr. McQuillan asked if it would need to go through a bid process and Mr. Holtz replied no it did not. Ms. LeMeur asked

how long the tables have been there because they still look really nice. Mr. Holtz replied 10 years. Mr. Boyd asked about the longevity and Mr. Holtz felt the chairs were good for at least 10 more years.

Mr. Boyd thought more information needed to be include in the original motion. How many tables and chairs? Mr. Holtz stated that he and Mr. DeJoy surveyed the area and came up with a plan that would add 12 4-top tables with chairs and 1 2-top table with chairs. Some of the existing 2-top tables will be repurposed in other locations. The total cost would be \$29,920.00.

Ms. McCain amended her motion for RDA to purchase 12 4-top tables and chairs and 1 2-top table and chairs for \$29,920 for City owned tables and chairs, contingent on City Council accepting them as a gift. Ms. Saunders seconded the motion.

Mr. Boyd asked for a roll call vote for approval of the motion. Ms. LeMeur – yes; Ms. Saunders – yes; Mr. McQuillan – no; Mr. Boyd – yes, with the stipulation that considering the caution by the Solicitor, this is a one-time purchase and future purchases would need to come before the RDA; Ms. McCain – yes. The motion passed by a vote of 4 to 1.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

NONE

**OTHER BUSINESS**

NONE

**ADJOURNMENT**

With there being no further business to come before the Authority, the meeting was adjourned by Chair Michael Boyd.

**NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on June 23, 2021 at 1:00 pm.

Minutes prepared by Ellen Nelson.