

The Board of Commissioners of the City of Camden Redevelopment Agency held a **Regular Meeting on Wednesday, November 13, 2024**, via tele-/videoconference.

Chairman Ian Leonard called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM. Board Clerk Donna Arthur-Pettigrew called roll.

Present: Ian Leonard, Maria Sharma, Christopher Collins, Derek Davis, and Gilbert Harden, Sr., Tasha Gainey-Humphrey, and Jose Javier Ramos

Absent:

Attendees: Olivette Simpson, Mark Asselta, Esq., Glynn Jones, Donna Arthur-Pettigrew, CRA, Carla Rhodes, CRA, Jack Layne, DCA, Shalisa Alba, guest

Ms. Arthur-Pettigrew advised the Board that, pursuant to the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act, notice(s) had been posted in the Courier-Post, the Philadelphia Inquirer, and the Office of the City Clerk.

Review of Minutes

Date of Meeting: October 2 and 9, 2024

Motion: MS, CC **Ayes:** IL, MS, DD, CC, GH, TGH, JR

Nays: **Abstentions:**

Comments: Mr. Leonard verified that everyone had a chance to review the Minutes and asked if there were any questions. There were none.

Interim Executive Director's Report

Date of Meeting: November 13, 2024

Motion: MS, CC **Ayes:** IL, MS, DD, CC, GH, TGH, JR

Nays: **Abstentions:**

Comments: Ms. Simpson thanked Commissioners Ramos and Gainey-Humphrey for attending the Yaffa community meeting on the evening of November 12th. The Meeting, in part, was to inform the neighborhood of CRA's submission of a \$2.5 million U.S. EPA grant application for the environmental clean-up of the Yaffa Site. Mayor Carstarphen hosted the meeting and was joined by several City Council members and the City's Business Administrator.

Ms. Simpson also announced that New Jersey Transit will unveil development plans for the Walter Rand Transportation Center on November 14th in a virtual and in person meeting. Board members were encouraged to join a session and learn more.

Redevelopment Project Presentations

None.

Resolutions for Review and Action

The resolutions below were presented for consideration.

11-13-24A Resolution Authorizing a Second Amendment to a Shared Services Agreement with the City of Camden for the Management of Funding and Environmental Management Services for Certain Property in Blocks 331 and 324 of the City of Camden Tax Map to Include Block 331, Lot 53 and Extend the Term of the Agreement

Motion: GH, TGH **Ayes:** IL, DD, GH, TGH, JR

Nays: **Abstentions:** MS, CC

Comments: Ms. Simpson informed the Lot 53, a privately owned property improved by a residential structure, is directly adjacent to the Yaffa Site. This property is negatively impacted by the Yaffa contaminated soil material, which has migrated onto the property. She added that the city and private owner are engaging in a “friendly” condemnation process where the city will acquire Lot 53 by eminent domain for purposes to remediate the environmental contamination. The City and CRA desire that the property be included within the scope of CRA’s remedial activities under a Shared Services Agreement (SSA) with the city, and it is necessary to amend the SSA to include Block 331, Lot 53 for these purposes.

11-13-24B Resolution Authorizing an Application to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for a Brownfield Clean-up Grant for Certain Property within Block 331 of the City of Camden Tax Map known as the former S. Yaffa & Sons Site

Motion: MS, GH **Ayes:** IL, MS, DD, CC, GH, TGH, JR

Nays: **Abstentions:**

Comments: Ms. Simpson stated the CRA on behalf of the city, seeks to apply to U.S. EPA for a clean-up grant for \$2,5 million for the Yaffa Site. Funding applications are very competitive. Notifications may be issued in late Spring. The draft preliminary investigation report indicates the presence of historic fill and PFAS at the site, requiring remediation. We are also in the process of preparing for a redevelopment plan process with funding through the city’s ARA grant.

Mr. Leonard informed the Board that PFAS are chemicals that don’t go away and are very common and are hard to break down because they are synthetic and not natural. These chemicals and by-products are in legacy industrial cities like Camden, Paterson and Newark. Many companies like Dupont and Chevron are being sued for costs associated with the clean-up of PFAS.

11-13-24C Resolution Authorizing a Professional Services Agreement with Brownfield Redevelopment Solutions to Provide Environmental Management Services on an Hourly Rate Basis for a Total Amount Not to Exceed \$300,000.00

Motion: MS, GH **Ayes:** IL, MS, DD, CC, GH, TGH, JR

Nays: **Abstentions:**

Comments: Ms. Simpson informed the board CRA advertises via a Request for Proposals (RFP) for environmental management services on an annual basis; pursuant to a competitive, fair and open process. The work associated with the Brownfields Program, including the supervision of environmental contractors, the review of technical documents, the preparation of grant applications and the compliance with reporting requirements, is highly specialized and requires distinct and specific training.

The RFP was advertised in the Courier-Post and posted on CRA’s website on October 21, 2024, and two (2) responsive proposals were received. The proposal from Brownfield Redevelopment Solutions, Inc. (BRS) ranked higher. Contract services will be paid through various shared services agreements entered in to with the City, grants from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection’s Hazardous Site Discharge Remediation Fund (HDSRF).

Resolutions for Review and Action (cont'd)

11-13-24D Resolution Authorizing a License Agreement with the New Jersey Historical Commission for Installation of a New Jersey Black Heritage Trail Historical Marker at 377 Washington Street Designated as Block 154, Lot 18 of the City of Camden Tax Map in the Lanning Square Redevelopment Area

Motion: MS, CC **Ayes:** IL, MS, CC, GH, TGH, JR

Nays: **Abstentions:** DD

Comments: Ms. Simpson informed the board the New Jersey Historical Commission (“NJHC”) looks to install a New Jersey Black Heritage Trail historical marker for Black Liberator Reverend Alexander Heritage Newton on the property at 377 Washington Street, which is currently owned by the CRA. Once installed, the historical marker becomes State property. The NJHC and the New Jersey Black Heritage Foundation will be responsible for the cost of the marker, installation, repairs and maintenance, and/or replacement.

Mr. Asselta reminded Mr. Davis he must abstain, since he is a board member of the NJHC.

11-13-24E Resolution Appointing Olivette Simpson as Executive Director of the City of Camden Redevelopment Agency

Motion: CC, MS **Ayes:** IL, MS, DD, CC, GH, TGH, JR

Nays: **Abstentions:**

Comments: Mr. Leonard offered on behalf of the board that Ms. Simpson should be appointed the Executive Director of the City of Camden Redevelopment Agency. Mr. Leonard stated this was long overdue and was happy to see it come to fruition. The entire Board expressed its approval and congratulated Ms. Simpson. Ms. Simpson was very appreciative of the appointment and thanked the board the appointment.

Public Comments

None.

Old Business

Action has not been taken regarding Resolutions 03-09-22 E & F.

New Business

None.

Executive Session

None.

Chairperson's Remarks and Observations

None.

Adjournment

Mr. Collins moved to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Ms. Sharma and affirmed with Mr. Leonard calling to adjourn the meeting by voice vote affirmed. This meeting ended at approximately 6:34 PM.