

The Board of Commissioners of the City of Camden Redevelopment Agency held its Regular Monthly Meeting on Wednesday, March 11, 2015, at Camden City Hall, 520 Market Street, Council Chambers, Camden, New Jersey.

Chair Marilyn Torres called the meeting to order at 6:10 PM. Board Clerk Carla Rhodes called roll.

**Present:** MT, MN, JR, and MS  
**Absent:** VB and KH  
**Excused:** JV  
**Attendees:** Sandra Ross Johnson, Mark Asselta, Carla Rhodes, Sulena Robinson-Rivera, Olivette Simpson, James Harveson, and Johanna Conyer, CRA; Colandus “Kelly” Francis, Camden County NAACP and LaVerne Williams of Branch Village.

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

Chair Marilyn Torres stated Commissioner Jose Vazquez reported he would not be able to participate due to a family medical matter and his absence is excused.

### **Review of Minutes**

Date of Meetings-February 4, 2015 and February 11, 2015

**Motion:** MN, JR                      **Ayes:** MT, MN, JR, and MS

**Nays:**                                      **Abstentions:**

**Comments:** Board Secretary/Executive Director Sandra Ross Johnson noted a correction to the Minutes for the Regular Monthly Meeting of February 11, 2015 and clarified that CRA should be identified as the title holder in Resolution 02-11-15D.

### **Executive Director's Report**

Date of Meeting-March 11, 2015

**Motion:** MS, MN                      **Ayes:** MT, MN, JR, and MS

**Nays:**                                      **Abstentions:**

**Comments:** Ms. Johnson stated the written report stands as submitted. She also reported on actions taken at the March 10, 2015 meeting of the Camden City Council: there were second readings for two items removing restrictions for deeds for property being transferred to the Camden Redevelopment Agency and Commissioner Nieves was appointed for a full five-year term.

The board was advised that orientation was conducted for CRA’s three new board members. Additionally, Ms. Johnson reported that CRA is the recipient of a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Area-wide Planning Grant for three CHOICE neighborhoods and a press conference announcing the grant will be held by Mayor Dana Redd, Congressman Donald Norcross, and others on Monday, March 16. The commissioners were also informed of the establishment of The Ron Greene/Workforce Development Program, which will promote hiring of local residents.

A special welcome was extended to Economic Development Director James Harveson. He recently returned to work following a prolonged leave of absence.

There were no further comments.

**Resolutions for Review and Action**

**03-11-15A Resolution Authorizing a Contract for Property Maintenance Services with the Greater Camden Partnership d/b/a The Camden Special Services District, Inc. for the NSP 2 Clean & Green Vacant Lot Stabilization Program Operated in the Cooper Plaza and Lanning Square Redevelopment Areas For A Cost Not to Exceed \$ 160,480.00**

**Motion:** MN, MS

**Ayes:** MT, MN, JR, and MS

**Nays:**

**Abstentions:**

**Comments:** This resolution was presented by Housing Director Olivette Simpson. She advised that Greater Camden Partnership would receive a third contract, but the project had been competitively bid. Ms. Johnson inquired about employment under the contract. Ms. Simpson noted the majority of Special District Employees are low-income, Camden residents.

There were no further comments or questions.

**03-11-15B Resolution Authorizing a Professional Services Agreement with TRC Environmental Corporation to Complete a Preliminary Assessment/ASTM Phase I Assessment and a Boundary Survey of the County-Owned Lots of Harrison Avenue Landfill (Block 809, Lots 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17 of the Camden City Tax Map) for a Cost of \$8,750**

**Motion:** MN, JR

**Ayes:** MT, MN, JR, and MS

**Nays:**

**Abstentions:**

**Comments:** This resolution was presented by Economic Development Director James Harveson. Ms. Torres inquired about the extraction of natural gas from the site as well as a trailer on the premises. Mr. Harveson advised that CRA tested the site for the purpose of potentially heating the Kroc Center, but there was not a sufficient supply. He will investigate the location and purpose of the trailer and advise accordingly.

There were no further comments or questions.

**03-11-15C Resolution Authorizing the Adoption of a List of Pre-Qualified Environmental and Engineering Firms to Provide Environmental Services**

**Motion:** JR, MS

**Ayes:** MT, MN, JR, and MS

**Nays:**

**Abstentions:**

**Comments:** This resolution was presented by Finance Director Johanna Conyer. There were no comments or questions.

**03-11-15D Resolution Rescinding Resolution 02-04-15A Which Provided for an Amendment to a Joint Venture Agreement Adding Conifer Realty LLC as a Party to the Agreement**

**Motion:** MN, MS

**Ayes:** MT, MN, JR, and MS

**Nays:**

**Abstentions:**

**Comments:** This resolution was presented by Ms. Simpson. There were no comments or questions.

**Resolutions for Review and Action (cont'd)**

**03-11-15E Resolution Authorizing an Amendment to a Joint Venture Agreement Regarding the Housing Implementation Entity for the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative Implementation Grant Program Which Provides for the Adding of Block 1394, Lot 2.03 of the Camden City Tax Map to the Properties Subject to the Agreement**

**Motion:** MN, MS

**Ayes:** MT, MN, JR, and MS

**Nays:**

**Abstentions:**

**Comments:** This resolution was presented by Ms. Simpson. She advised that it clarifies contents of the redevelopment agreement regarding the engagement of Michaels Development Company I, LP, in Whitman Park. There were no comments or questions.

**03-11-15F Resolution Authorizing an Amendment to a Services Agreement with Perry Resources for the Provision of Temporary Employment Services**

**Motion:** MS, MN

**Ayes:** MT, MN, JR, and MS

**Nays:**

**Abstentions:**

**Comments:** This Resolution was presented by Ms. Conyer. She advised that it seeks to extend services previously authorized by the board and it is necessary, because the New Jersey Civil Service Commission is not expected to provide a list of eligible applicants to fill CRA's vacancies before June 2015. This resolution will permit utilization of the current temporary service provider within the threshold for public procurement. An RFP is in development and will be issued to cover the full period anticipated.

There were no comments or questions.

**Public Comments**

Ms. LaVerne Williams of Branch Village inquired about several resolutions. Regarding Resolution 03-11-15A, she asked if the period of activity for the Neighborhood Stabilization Program 2 had expired and requested details regarding employment opportunities. Ms. Simpson advised that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development requires weekly maintenance of land-banked properties. Ms. Simpson will provide written documents regarding employment opportunities.

In response to Ms. Williams' inquiry pertaining to Resolution 03-11-15B, Mr. Harveson advised that the pending environmental report is required under Environmental Protection law; this will establish the condition of the property prior to taking ownership.

Regarding Resolution 03-11-15C, Ms. Williams asked if the contract was being awarded on the basis of a (public) bid and how many firms responded. Ms. Conyer reported 17 firms responded to the RFP and she will provide a copy of the list of firms.

Regarding Resolution 03-11-15D, Ms. Williams if it was being rescinded and no action was required. Ms. Simpson affirmed.

Regarding Resolution 03-11-15E, Ms. Williams inquired about the location and type of housing. Ms. Simpson advised of the location and noted mixed-income housing is to be developed.

**Public Comments (cont'd)**

Regarding Resolution 03-11-15F, Ms. Williams inquired about the role of the Civil Service Commission and how job seekers were notified about the opportunity. Ms. Conyer provided background on the process that results in the development of Qualified Lists of candidates for employment. Due to a backlog, the list for CRA will not be provided as expeditiously as desired. Ms. Conyer also noted the current vacancy was advertised on the Civil Service website.

*Note: Ms. Torres stated all speakers must be respectful when addressing the board.*

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Colandus “Kelly” Francis of the Camden County NAACP inquired about the status of the RFP for the Lanning Square area. Ms. Johnson advised that the RFP is in development. The requirement for relocation of the residents is costly. Since CRA is without funds to cover this expense, the designated developer must bear the cost, and this may be a deterrent. Mr. Francis commented on the City’s liability for the residents and the reported defective condition of the properties.

There were no further comments or questions.

**Old Business**

Board Counsel Mark Asselta noted Boos’ termination agreement and the release of land for use by the Mastery Charter School Foundation. This matter will be reviewed at the Planning Board meeting of March 12, 2015.

There were no further comments or questions.

**New Business**

There were no comments or questions.

**Chairperson's Remarks and Observations**

Chair Torres thanked everyone and acknowledged Ms. Conyer for her support during a meeting with prospective developers.

**Executive Session**

None.

**Adjournment**

On a Motion made by Commissioner Maria Sharma, seconded by Commissioner Javier Ramos and affirmed by all in voice vote, this meeting adjourned at approximately 6:50 PM.