

The Board of Commissioners of the City of Camden Redevelopment Agency held its Monthly Caucus on Wednesday, May 6, 2015, at Camden City Hall, Suite 1300, Camden, New Jersey.

Chair Marilyn Torres called the meeting to order at approximately 6:00 PM. Board Clerk Carla Rhodes called roll.

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

**Absent:** VB, KH

**Excused:**

**Attendees:** Saundra Ross Johnson, Mark Asselta, Carla Rhodes, Johanna Conyer, James Harveson, and Olivette Simpson, CRA; LaVerne Williams of Branch Village

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

### **Review of Minutes**

Dates of Meetings- April 27, 2015 and April 8, 2015

**Motion:** Ayes:

**Nays:** Abstentions:

**Comments:** Chairperson Torres asked all Commissioners if they had an opportunity to review the minutes. There were no comments or questions.

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

Date of Meeting- May 6, 2015

**Motion:** Ayes:

**Nays:** Abstentions:

**Comments:**

Board Secretary/Executive Director Saundra Ross Johnson requested an Executive Session to review a personnel matter.

In her report on Administration Matters, Ms. Johnson noted the presentation of two walk-ons in preliminary form; these will also be presented in final form at the Regular monthly meeting. Ms. Johnson also noted that about 31 projects are currently underway at CRA and highlights of the top 10 will be presented at the Regular Monthly Meeting of May 13<sup>th</sup>. The Property Inventory will be presented in June 2015.

Ms. Johnson thanked CRA's Commissioners for their attendance at April's Monthly and Special Meetings and stated additional details relating to the Corrective Action Plan will be presented at the June meeting.

Information pertaining to hiring for the Camden Partnership Clean-up Program was presented. In response to a request for ethnic breakdown, a revised document will be provided.

**Resolutions for Review and Action**

**05-13-15A Resolution Authorizing an Agreement with Camden County One-Stop/WorkFirst New Jersey to Participate in the Community Work Experience Program (CWEP)**

**Motion:** Ayes:  
**Nays:** Abstentions:

**Comments:** Ms. Johnson presented this resolution and provided background on the program. Commissioner Maria Sharma inquired about how this program relates to the Second Chance program. Ms. Johnson advised the Second Chance program is focused on prisoner re-entry program, and it is operated by the Workforce Investment Board. Commissioner Mirta Nieves asked if the CWEP participants receive training. Ms. Johnson advised that the program participants receive formal training through the NJ Department of Labor; CRA affords participants opportunities to refresh their skills and enhance understanding of protocols and business processes. Ms. Torres inquired about qualifications for participation. Ms. Johnson advised the group that individuals who receive public assistance are referred to CRA by State and Camden County representatives; some 50 interns have participated to date. There were no further comments or questions.

**05-13-15B Resolution Authorizing an Affiliation Agreement with Rutgers, The State University School of Social Work/Transitions for Youth and Montclair State University Summer Housing and Internship Program (SHIP) 2015**

**Motion:** Ayes:  
**Nays:** Abstentions:

**Comments:** Ms. Johnson presented this resolution and provided background on the program. She noted the interns have been enormously helpful in inventorying records and providing general clerical support. There were no comments or questions.

**05-13-15C Resolution Approving an Extension of a Leave of Absence from Employment with the City of Camden Redevelopment Agency for Vincent Basara**

**Motion:** Ayes:  
**Nays:** Abstentions:

**Comments:** Ms. Johnson presented this resolution and provided background. She advised that no salary is afforded during the leave of absence. Ms. Torres asked if the funding be set aside and Ms. Johnson reported funds will not be set aside. Mr. Basara’s salary and benefits are reimbursed through State/UEZ funds. Ms. Nieves ask if anyone has been identified to perform the services in the event Mr. Basara does not return to this position. Finance Director Johanna Conyer noted that Mr. Basara continues to carryout UEZ duties through an expanded role in the Office of Mayor Dana Redd.

**05-13-15D Resolution Authorizing the Acceptance of a United States Environmental Protection Agency Brownfields Area-Wide Planning Grant in the Amount of \$200,000 for the Mt. Ephraim Choice Neighborhood**

**Motion:** Ayes:  
**Nays:** Abstentions:

**Comments:** This resolution was presented by Economic Development Director James Harveson. Ms. Johnson noted that considerable work will be performed in Whitman Park at the Camden Chemical location. Mr. Harveson also advised that noted Phil-mar and Camden Labs also will require substantial work. There were no further comments or questions.

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

**05-13-15E Resolution Terminating the Redeveloper Designation of The Cooper Health System, a New Jersey Non-Profit Corporation, for Block 179, Lots 14 and 15, Block 180, Lots 6, 31, 33, 39 and 49; and Block 181, Lots 78-87 on the Camden Tax Map Located in the Lanning Square Redevelopment Area and Terminating an Option for Redevelopment Agreement between CRA and The Cooper Health System in Connection with Such Property**

**Motion:** Ayes:  
**Nays:** Abstentions:

**Comments:** Housing Director Olivette Simpson presented and provided background pertaining to this resolution and its related tax map. There were no comments or questions.

**05-13-15F Resolution Designating the Rowan University/Rutgers-Camden Board of Governors as Redeveloper of, Pursuant to the Redevelopment Law, Block 181, Lots 65, 67 and 68, Block 181, Lots 77 and 72, and Block 181, Lots 78 -87 on the Camden Tax Map located in the Lanning Square Redevelopment Area and Authorizing an Agreement for the Conveyance of Such Property to the Redeveloper**

**Motion:** Ayes:  
**Nays:** Abstentions:

**Comments:** Ms. Simpson presented and provided background pertaining to this resolution. Board Counsel Mark Asselta noted that one lot previously acquired by Cooper will not be used, but it will be returned to CRA. Ms. Torres asked if CRA will earn revenue through this transaction. Ms. Simpson reported that Cooper paid a non-returnable option fee of \$20k. Discussion ensued regarding the difference in anticipated revenue attributable to the respective developers. Ms. Simpson noted of the projected \$800k, \$513k will be payable on the Economic Recovery Board loan. City Attorney Marc Riondino noted the properties will be utilized for a \$50+ million project financed by the Higher Education Bond Act. There were no further comments or questions.

**05-13-15G Resolution Authorizing the Acquisition of Property Owned by Broadway Camden Investments, LLC Known as Block 181, Lots 65, 67 and 68 on the Camden City Tax Map Located in the Lanning Square Redevelopment Area for the Purchase Price of \$300,000**

**Motion:** JV, KH Ayes: MT, KH, MN, JR, JV  
**Nays:** Abstentions:

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

**05-13-15H Resolution Certifying that Each Member of the City of Camden Redevelopment Agency Board of Commissioners Has Personally Reviewed the FYE 2014 Annual Audit Report**

**Motion:** Ayes:  
**Nays:** Abstentions:

**Comments:** Finance Director Johanna Conyer presented this resolution and noted it is the final phase of the audit process. Ms. Torres noted that Commissioner Jose Ramos needs an opportunity to review the audit prior to voting, as he was unable to attend the Special Meeting on April 27, 2015. Ms. Nieves requested another hard copy.

**05-13-15I Resolution Authorizing the City of Camden Redevelopment Agency to Accept the Conveyance of Property Designated as Block 1184, Lot 5 and Block 1182, Lot 5 of the City of Camden Tax Map from the City of Camden**

**Motion:** Ayes:  
**Nays:** Abstentions:

**Comments:** Mr. Harveson presented this resolution along with related tax maps. Ms. Nieves asked for the address. Mr. Harveson advised that the site is also known as Borden Chemical--located at 1625 Federal Street—and adjacent properties. Ms. Torres asked if the rowhouses are occupied. Mr. Harveson explained the homes will not be part of the assemblage. Mr. Riondino noted there is a lot of interest in the area and redevelopment in the area will afford a lot of jobs. Mr. Asselta pointed out that half of revenue will be directed to CRA. There were no further comments or questions.

**05-13-15J Resolution Authorizing a Shared Services Agreement with the City of Camden for Contract Administration of a Safe and Clean Business Corridors Program for the Contract Amount of \$10,000**

**Motion:** Ayes:  
**Nays:** Abstentions:

**Comments:** Ms. Simpson presented this resolution. She noted that funding for clean-up no longer exists through the Urban Enterprise Zone, but business owners have requested assistance with clean-up. In response to concerns raised by various commissioners, Mr. Asselta asserted that a special assessment can be charged against business owners. In the short-term, in the interest of current revitalization efforts, the City will pay for service and CRA seeks authorization to administer the contract. There were no further comments or questions.

**Public Comments**

Ms. LaVerne Williams sought additional clarification on Resolutions 05-13-15E, F, and G. Board Counsel Mark Asselta advised that these properties are to be sold at fair-market value.

Ms. Williams also requested a map of the Federal Street project.

Regarding Resolution 05-13-15C, she asked why are positions being taken from CRA and put in the Mayor's Office. Ms. Johnson clarified: Business Representative Joe Thomas has always been a City employee and Ombudsman Vincent Basara is performing UEZ Coordinator duties in an expanded capacity.

**Old Business**

None.

**New Business**

None.

**Chairperson's Remarks and Observations**

Ms. Torres noted a necessity to fill the vacancy created with the resignation of CRA's former Treasurer and made a motion to appoint Commissioner Maria Sharma. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Mirta Nieves and confirmed by all in a Voice Vote.

**Executive Session**

On a motion made by Ms. Nieves, seconded by Mr. Ramos, an Executive Session commenced at approximately 6:40 PM. The session involved a discussion of personnel matters. On a motion by Ms. Nieves, seconded by Ms. Sharma, the Executive Session was closed at about 7:00 PM.

**Adjournment**

On a Motion made by Ms. Nieves, seconded by Ms. Sharma, and affirmed by all in voice vote this meeting adjourned at approximately 7:30 PM.

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