

ALTOONA REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY AND ALTOONA LAND BANK
Minutes of Friday, July 17, 2020

The Redevelopment Authority of the City of Altoona and the Altoona Land Bank Board held their regular monthly meeting on Friday July 17, 2020 in the Fourth Floor Conference Room in City Hall.

Board Members Present: Richard Fiore, Jr., Ron Beatty, Mayor Matt Pacifico, Louisa Lobre-Riley, Jessica Sprouse

Staff Present: Lee Slusser, Nick Ardizzone, Attorney Elizabeth Benjamin

Guests Present: Dan Bradley – YOBCO
Evan Kephart – “Prophet’s Melt Shop”

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair, Richard Fiore, at 8:31 a.m.

2. Approval of the Minutes

The Minutes of the Friday, June 19, 2020 meeting were reviewed. A motion was made to approve the minutes as read by Louisa Lobre-Riley and seconded by Jessica Sprouse, which passed unanimously.

3. Approval of Financial Reports

Lee Slusser presented June 2020 Financial Reports. Ron Beatty moved to approve the Financial Statements. Motion was seconded by Matt Pacifico, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Slusser then introduced Mr. Dan Bradley of Young, Oaks, Brown and Co., who presented the 2019 Audit Report of the Redevelopment Authority of Altoona. The report showed no findings and the internal control shows compliance with laws and regulations. A motion to approve the audit was made by Matt Pacifico. Motion was seconded by Ron Beatty, which passed unanimously.

4. Public Comment

None at this time.

5. Solicitor’s Report

No regular business to report.

6. Other Business

a. Rental Proposal – Café Space

Mr. Slusser introduced Mr. Evan Kephart who has submitted a proposal to operate a café in the Transportation Center. Mr. Kephart explained his proposal. After a brief discussion the board decided to have Attorney Benjamin draw up a lease agreement to be submitted at the meeting in August. A motion was made by Ron Beatty to continue with preliminary negotiations to develop a lease agreement that is to the satisfaction of both parties, and will be contingent on approval by the Redevelopment Authority board. Motion was seconded by Mayor Matt Pacifico. Motion passed unanimously.

b. Zoe's Equipment – Update

A discussion ensued regarding the equipment that was left in the Zoe's Café space at the Transportation Center. Mr. Slusser sent an email to the previous tenant, but there has been no response. Attorney Benjamin requested an inventory of the equipment. It could be that Mr. Kephart may be interested in some of this equipment. Mr. Kephart will get together with Lee Slusser and Nick Ardizzone to do a walk through, to see exactly what equipment is available and if he can use any of it. Then the board will have to decide what they want to do.

Ron Beatty questioned as to whether or not we could have the city electrical department come in and look at the electrical system in the café space to be sure it is able to handle the equipment that Mr. Kephart will be using. The city electrical department might at least be able to tell us if we have enough circuits to handle the load and let us know if it can be upgraded easily or if it is going to require a major upgrade. The board will then need to talk with Mr. Kephart and decide how this will be accomplished and who will be responsible for the cost.

c. Land Bank Grant Opportunity

At our last meeting Winnie Branton presented a Land Bank Grant Opportunity through DCED for blight remediation. She has some ideas as to how we could use this grant. She also sent us a written proposal for her to apply for those funds. Mr. Slusser said that depending on how things go in the next few weeks with budgeting and staff load, we may be able to this in house. But looking into it further we have discovered that we are having trouble finding a

project for the grant. We looked at a condemnation of a commercial building, (which we were told that condemnation is not an allowable expense), a church at 1501 12th Avenue, but it already has two bidders on it, and we looked at another church at 1110 7th Avenue which the city is in the process of tearing down. But with it we have no end product except a parking lot for the neighborhood.

One advantage to this type of grant is you can repurpose the land however you want. Mayor Matt Pacifico said that he and Lee Slusser had spoken with Johnna Pro who is our Regional Director for DCED to try to establish what uses we could find for the grant. One of the ideas that Winnie Branton gave us was trying to purchase repository properties, tearing down the structures and reselling the land or buying tax sale properties and using the money to repair the houses and then reselling them.

d. Joint Meeting with Altoona City Council – Mr. Slusser said there isn't any update. City Council is going to meet with the Parking Authority and AMTRAN. The next step in the process is to see what they want done with the Transportation Center and to see if the building could be better aligned with AMTRAN and the Parking Authority, with the possibility of other grants or monies that would be available to them as opposed to the Redevelopment Authority or the City.

e. Renewal of Lease with AMTRAK
AMTRAK has requested a renewal of their lease using the option of extending their lease for another 5 years. Ron Beatty made the motion to approve their lease renewal. Motion was seconded by Louisa Lobre-Riley. Motion passed unanimously.

7. Adjournment

There being no other business, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 a.m. by Jessica Sprouse. Motion was seconded by Ron Beatty. Motion passed.

Approved by