

The Board of Commissioners of the City of Camden Redevelopment Agency held its Monthly Caucus on Wednesday, January 7, 2015, at Camden City Hall, 520 Market Street, 13<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room, Camden, New Jersey.

Chair Marilyn Torres called the meeting to order at approximately 6:04 PM. Board Clerk Carla Rhodes called roll.

**Present:** MT, VB, KH, MN, JR, MS, and JV  
**Absent:** None

**Attendees:** Sandra Ross Johnson (via telephone), Mark Asselta, Carla Rhodes, Johanna Conyer, and Olivette Simpson, CRA; Colandus “Kelly” Francis, Camden County NAACP

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**

Date of Meetings-December 4, 2014 and December 10, 2014

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

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

**Executive Director's Report**

Date of Meeting-January 14, 2015

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

Housing Director Olivette Simpson represented Executive Director Sandra Ross Johnson during her scheduled vacation. A written report was previously submitted.

Ms. Johnson, who participated by telephone, advised the Commissioners of walk-on resolutions and other documents related to the CHOICE Grant Application that will be presented at the Regular Monthly Meeting of January 14, 2015. Representatives of the Housing Authority of the City of Camden will present an overview of the full application.

Ms. Johnson also announced a Finance Committee Meeting to be held on Monday, January 12, 2015, will be arranged by Finance Director Johanna Conyer.

There were no comments or questions.

*Note: Commissioner Vance Bowman arrived during this portion of the meeting.*

**Resolutions for Review and Action**

**01-14-15A Resolution Establishing the Board of Commissioners' Meeting Schedule for 2015**

**Motion:** Ayes:

**Nays:** Abstentions:

**Comments:** Commissioner Vance Bowman inquired about the decision to hold all meetings on Wednesdays rather than on the last Thursday and first Wednesday of each month in 2015. Consensus was expressed by the majority of Commissioners present. There were no further comments or questions.

**01-14-15B Resolution Authorizing a Professional Services Agreement with Brownfield Redevelopment Solutions, Inc. to Provide Environmental Management Services on an Hourly Rate Basis for a Period of One Year**

**Motion:** Ayes:

**Nays:** Abstentions:

**Comments:** Ms. Conyers presented this resolution and noted CRA received four qualified responses to the RFP. Of these, BRS was most-qualified.

Commissioner Jose Vazquez inquired about the rates submitted and sought clarification on the use of principals and associates. Chair Torres asked about the principal's expertise. Ms. Conyer provided background regarding the technical capacity required to ensure compliance with federal and state brownfield grants administration and noted the majority of fees are paid through grant funds; not CRA's operating budget. Board Counsel Mark Asselta recommended distribution of a fee schedule at the meeting of January 14, 2015; Ms. Conyer will provide.

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Commissioners Torres and Bowman requested additional details pertaining to the anticipated walk-ons. Ms. Simpson advised that an agreement with Michaels Development and an MOU involving four partners are required for the CHOICE Grant Application.

Mr. Bowman requested clarification on the CHOICE neighborhood boundaries and asked what is happening in Centerville.

Ms. Simpson advised that homeownership is proposed.

Mr. Bowman stated he is in agreement with this approach and the plan should ensure homes are built rather than apartments, because Centerville is becoming a stable community that does not need subsidized rentals. According to Mr. Bowman, Whitman Park also needs homeownership.

Mr. Vazquez requested a list a properties for the CHOICE Neighborhood Grant Application and asked to have the resolutions emailed as soon as they are available. Ms. Simpson will provide.

Mr. Bowman asked who will be the developer. Ms. Simpson informed the commissioners that CRA will be the developer.

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

Commissioner Kenwood Hagamin expressed concern regarding the frequency of walk-ons and the inability to thoroughly review resolutions in advance of taking action on items. This concern was shared by Mr. Bowman. Ms. Johnson provided background on time-sensitive matters and other special circumstances.

Mr. Asselta advised the commissioners that, if they will not be comfortable taking action at the meeting of January 14, 2015, a Special Meeting can be scheduled.

Chair Torres thanked Commissioners Bowman and Hagamin.

*Note: Commissioner Mirta Nieves arrived during this portion of the meeting.*

**Public Comments**

Colandus “Kelly” Francis of the Camden County NAACP commended Ms. Conyer for explaining the brownfields activity so thoroughly. He also expressed concern regarding redevelopment activity at Lanning Square and noted this is the time of year when squatters seek shelter and incidences of fires increase.

Ms. Simpson provided background on the relocation process, noting resources are limited. CRA will seek to coordinate with DPW regarding re-securing the area.

Chair Torres asked Ms. Simpson to explore collaboration with the City.

Mr. Vazquez asked if relocation of the homeowners can be tied into the CHOICE Grant. Ms. Simpson will explore and advise.

There were no further comments or questions.

**Old Business**

Mr. Vazquez requested an update on projects authorized in 2014. Ms. Johnson noted they are listed in the CEDS and will be reviewed with new commissioners in the orientation. An updated activity report will be generated as well.

Ms. Johnson also reminded everyone re-org will occur at the January 14, 2015 meeting.

There were no further comments or questions.

**New Business**

None

**Chairperson's Remarks and Observations**

Chair Torres thanked the commissioners for attending, noting full participation. She encouraged continuation, because their expertise is needed.

**Executive Session**

None

**Adjournment**

On a Motion made by Mr. Bowman, seconded by Mr. Vazquez and affirmed by all in voice vote, this meeting adjourned at approximately 6:44 PM.