

# **Pine Bluff Urban Renewal Agency**

## **Monthly Meeting Minutes**

### **October 16, 2018**

The Pine Bluff Urban Renewal Agency (PBURA) held its regular monthly meeting on October 16, 2018 at The Baim Law Firm.

The following commissioners were in attendance:

Jimmy Dill, chair  
Rita Conley  
Lloyd Franklin, Sr.  
Travis Martin  
Kirby Mouser

Also in attendance were:

Leigh Cockrum  
Chandra Griffin  
Dee Herring Gatlin  
Randy Light  
Jean Painton  
Maurice Taggart, Executive Director (ED), PBURA  
Lori Walker  
Ryan Watley  
Ivan Whitfield

The meeting was called to order at 5:29 p.m. by Commissioner Dill.

Commissioner Dill stated a few houses have been torn down and we are finally showing the public their tax money is being spent wisely.

Commissioner Franklin made a MOTION to approve the September 18, 2018 minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Martin and was APPROVED.

Commissioner Franklin reviewed the financial statements as of September 30, 2018.

Commissioner Mouser made a MOTION to approve the September 30, 2018 financial statements as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Conley and was APPROVED.

Executive Director Maurice Taggart introduced Randy Light who has been hired by the PBURA as an excavator operator. He also has a CDL license and can drive trucks.

Mr. Taggart thought he had two truck drivers hired but they didn't show up on their first day. He went to the truck driving school to do some recruiting.

The excavator will be delivered no later than the end of the week.

Commissioner Franklin presented an evaluation form around that he would like to use to evaluate Mr. Taggart.

Mr. Taggart gave an update on demolition of properties. There are ten properties on a list that have been advertised for bids. The bidding closes on October 29.

Mr. Taggart distributed a map that had the ten houses currently being bid on marked and the next ten that is scheduled to be demolished. He wants to target properties on major thoroughfares for the short-term.

Matthew Pate from the police department is going to put condemned properties into a GIS system to make identifying the order of properties to be demolished easier.

Mr. Watley suggested the equipment and truck operators get certified to inspect property like the Code Enforcement officers for backup. Code Enforcement already has their plan to work. It would be best to certify our employees to inspect then we don't have to wait on Code Enforcement.

Commissioner Mouser suggested working with the police department to identify condemned houses in hot spot areas.

Commissioner Martin wants to be sure the PBURA will have the authority to condemn houses. Mr. Taggart explained that the PBURA will be able to take a listing of houses to be condemned that were inspected by the PBURA to the City Council for approval.

Commissioner Franklin would like Jeff Gaston, director of Code Enforcement, to attend a meeting to get clarification. Commissioner Conley wants to ensure we are working with Code Enforcement.

Mr. Taggart gave an update on the convention center. The restrooms and concession stands should be completed by Friday. The installation of the electronic score boards will start mid-November. The refurbishing of the basketball floor will be last and will be complete by King Cotton.

Mr. Taggart presented the Scope of Professional Services and Fee Proposal from SCM Architects for the Stabilization of 300 Block of Main Project. There are two properties listed in the Scope that have been sold and should be excluded from the work.

Comments on the Scope included:

- Dee Herring Gatlin: Have the property owners been talked to? Why is money being spent on buildings when the owners want to tear them down?
- Ultimate goal is to stabilize and purchase the properties.
- Commissioner Dill: the Scope is just to find out if it is worthwhile to enter into an agreement to stabilize or not.
- Public entities can apply for Historic grants while private individuals cannot.
- The Historic Commission should be sending out letters to the owners to clean up their properties.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Conley to transfer \$63,000 from the "Downtown District Project Reserve" line item to the "4<sup>th</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup>" Scope of Work line item to cover Phase 1 and 2 of the project. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mouser. The motion was APPROVED with Commissioner Dill abstaining.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Mouser to enter into a contract with SCM Architects. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Martin. The motion was APPROVED with Commissioner Dill abstaining.

Environmental Protection Associates submitted a proposal for asbestos surveys. Four properties on the proposal were removed. The proposal was for \$3,032 after the removal of four properties for survey only for asbestos.

Mr. Taggart asked for authorization of expenditures for survey and removal of asbestos up to \$73,000 in order to not have to come back to the Commission for approval to save time.

Commissioner Franklin made a MOTION to approve expenditures up to \$73,000 for the rest of 2018 for asbestos survey and abatement. Commissioner Conley seconded the motion and was APPROVED.

Mr. Taggart asked for the Appraiser Proposals be removed from the agenda.

Commissioner Franklin made a MOTION to adopt the evaluation form he presented for evaluating the PBURA staff and the Executive Director. Commissioner Mouser seconded the motion and was APPROVED.

The signs that were approved on September 18, 2018 showing sales tax dollars at work and partnership with the PBURA and GFPB were in. They will be placed on properties for two weeks after demolition.

Commissioner Conley stated she would like a program put in place to address control of grass and weeds. It was noted we cannot do anything on someone else's property.

Commissioner Mouser stated the PBURA needs to follow-through all the way to the end on property. The PBURA needs to purchase, the owner deed us the property, or foreclose on the property after demo.

Prior to Mr. Taggart being hired, a Land Bank was discussed. Commissioner Mouser stated if property owner doesn't do anything and we obtain the property, then we have a Land Bank.

The commissioners signed a statement if they own or control, directly or indirect interest in any property included or planned to be included within the Urban Renewal Area, A.C.A. § 14-169-713. The statement is attached to the official minutes.

Public Comments were made.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

/s/ Leigh Cockrum  
Leigh Cockrum  
Recorder

/s/ Wm. Kirby Mouser  
W. Kirby Mouser  
Secretary