

# **Pine Bluff Urban Renewal Agency**

## **Monthly Meeting Minutes**

### **November 20, 2018**

The Pine Bluff Urban Renewal Agency (PBURA) held its regular monthly meeting on November 20, 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:

- Lily Ann Ausbrooks
- Leigh Cockrum
- Dee Herring Gatlin
- Eligha Lacy
- Jean Painton
- Matthew Pate
- Maurice Taggart, Executive Director (ED), PBURA
- Mayor Shirley Washington
- Ryan Watley

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Commissioner Dill.

Chairman Dill stated the PBURA is making progress.

Commissioner Franklin made a MOTION to approve the October 16, 2018 Monthly Meeting Minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Martin and was APPROVED.

Commissioner Mouser made a MOTION to approve the October 30, 2018 Called Meeting Minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Franklin and was APPROVED.

Commissioner Franklin presented the October 31, 2018 financial statements. The commissioners need clarification on where money is going that is being transferred out. ED Taggart will get an answer.

Commissioner Franklin made a MOTION to approve the October 31, 2018 Financial Statements as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mouser and was APPROVED.

ED Taggart introduced Eligha Lacy who has been hired as an URA Agent. Lacy is currently employed by the Code Enforcement Department. As URA Agent, he will have multiple responsibilities. He is trained in residential and commercial inspections and asbestos testing. Lacy will begin his duties November 30. Jeff Gaston, Code Enforcement Director, has approved the transfer.

ED Taggart reported that the current agreement between PBURA and Community and Economic Department (CEDD) for providing office space to PBURA is not in writing.

ED Taggart needs one office and one cubicle, plus use of the receptionist and secretary, conference room, printer and utilities. An agreement in writing will be available next month for \$650 per month.

Mayor Washington joined the meeting. She stated this should be a partnership between the two entities and there should be no charge. She will visit with CEDD.

Commissioner Franklin made a MOTION to table approving any monthly agreement with CEDD. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mouser and was APPROVED.

ED Taggart presented a written request for approval to immediately cease all outsourcing of demolition.

The Code Enforcement Department (CE) has been reviewing the files of the houses currently on the condemnation list to be sure all proper steps have been taken. Approximately half of the files have been reviewed and 250 of those files are incomplete.

ED Taggart and CE Director (CED) Jeff Gaston have agreed that CE should start fresh on all the houses.

Due to the number of incomplete files already found, ED Taggart is requesting to cease the demolition program indefinitely.

ED Taggart stated the files on the houses that have already been demolished were in compliance. The files on houses that bids were received on October 29 are not in compliance.

Commissioner Dill stated ED Taggart should have gotten Commissioner Martin involved from the start to be sure files are in compliance and paperwork has been filed properly. ED Taggart is to have a meeting with Commission Martin so that files can be reviewed. Taggart will find out when he and Martin can review the files and will also find out what CE's plan is on reviewing the remaining files.

Commissioner Mouser houses found that have proper paperwork and that can be condemned to keep the PBURA truck driver and equipment operator busy.

Referring to the properties listed on the Demolition Update report, Commissioner Dill asked ED Taggart if the five properties highlighted in green had proper filings. He stated if these five have been processed properly, he finds it disconcerting that 250 files have been processed in a faulty manner.

Commissioner Dill wants the six properties torn down if they are ready and he wants Commissioner Martin to review the files to be sure everything has been done correctly.

CED Gaston has told ED Taggart and Mayor Washington he is going to start new on the first 250 files. Commissioner Dill asked the Mayor if CE could review the other files instead to see if any of them are ready for demolition. Mayor Washington will visit with CED Gaston.

The bids that were accepted on October 29, 2018 have not been approved. ED Taggart will check with Assistant City Attorney Joe Childers about not accepting any of the bids.

Mayor Washington thought when the PBURA purchased equipment, demolition would be done in-house. Why are we moving at such a rapid rate when there is no plan for refill? She didn't know there was outsourcing and internal demolition being done.

ED Taggart stated the PBURA employees are going through ICC training and assisting the Street Department when they aren't performing PBURA duties.

ED Taggart provided a Cost Analysis on 2006 West 9<sup>th</sup> property. The total cost of demolition that shows the lowest outsourced bid, asbestos abatement, asbestos survey and publication of bid to total \$10,374.90. The value of the property according to county assessment records is \$4,290.00. Cost of demolition is \$6,084.90 more than the property is worth.

Commissioner Conley would like the houses that are on the condemnation list to be flagged if they are able to be rehabbed and figure out a way to get them off the list.

Commissioner Mouser wants ED Taggart to stop outsourcing until the commissioners tell him to start.

ED Taggart introduced Matthew Pate who has entered the properties that are on the condemnation list in a GIS system. There were just over 600 properties.

Mr. Pate reviewed each of the map versions. One of the versions he reviewed had an overlay of criminal hotspots. There is a strong link between condemned properties and hot spots.

Mr. Pate stated that the most efficient strategy for demolition should be data driven. There are problem anchors in every neighborhood. Different cultures in inspection and different cultures in public safety.

Resources will be most helpful to the people in these neighborhoods. He also stated there is poor communication to the public on what standards are. The City needs to have a mechanism in place to properly relay this information.

Mr. Pate will put the maps on CDs for the PBURA and will make himself available to the commissions when needed.

There was no Other Business.

Public Comments were made.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:07 pm.

/s/ Leigh Cockrum  
Leigh Cockrum  
Recorder

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