

# **Pine Bluff Urban Renewal Agency**

## **Monthly Meeting Minutes**

### **February 19, 2019**

The Pine Bluff Urban Renewal Agency (PBURA) held its regular monthly meeting on February 19, 2019 at The Baim Law Firm.

The following commissioners were in attendance:

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

Commissioners absent:

None

Also in attendance were:

Leigh Cockrum  
Marty Huddleston  
Eligha Lacy  
Joseph McCorvey  
Jean Painton  
Maurice Taggart, Executive Director (ED), PBURA – via phone  
Ryan Watley

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

Commissioner Mouser made a MOTION to approve the January 15, 2019 minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Conley and was APPROVED.

Commissioner Franklin reviewed the revised December 31, 2018 financial statements reflecting adjusted salaries.

Commissioner Franklin made a MOTION to approve the revised December 31, 2018 financial statements. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mouser and was APPROVED.

January financial statements were not available.

ED Taggart stated that for audit purposes, City Finance Director Steve Miller requested the PBURA's budget be approved in New World format (city's accounting system).

ED Taggart reviewed the following relating to the 2019 budget in New World format:

- Mayor Washington has approved the office space rental in the Economic and Community Development offices for \$650 per month that includes two office spaces, usage of copy machine and supplies, and utilities.
- Contract attorney – annual \$45K
- Legal Processing Fees - \$10K

- Miscellaneous - \$5K
- Convention Center Renovation Labor - \$30K
- Office Rental - \$8K
- Demolition Reserve - \$153K

The Reserve is built in for unknown costs related to asbestos abatement and dumping fees.

Joseph McCorvey, ED Pine Bluff Convention Center, and Marty Huddleston, Pine Bluff Convention Center Deputy Director, requested additional funds to defray costs incurred to prepare the arena for King Cotton. Convention Center staff had to employ extra contract labor to finish construction and painting. The Convention Center's arena is in better shape now than in over 35 years.

Mr. McCorvey stated there is new interest in booking arena events now and that he has contacted Great American Conference (basketball tournament) for 2020-2022 bid and the SWAG Conference for 2020 bid. He is in good shape to promote the arena to bring in other events.

Mr. McCorvey is requesting \$30K for overrun on the renovation.

Commissioner Conley stated he should put a proposal together for future needs.

The \$45K budget item for a contract attorney will not be paid until earned. Legal staff is needed to perform file cleanup on liens, filings, judgements, etc. This would be a part-time attorney position. Properties need to get back into tax paying status.

Commissioners expressed concern about paying a part-time attorney, need to pay on a case by case basis. ED Taggart stated this would be paid as a subcontractor.

The Commissioners want to approve how the attorney is paid but will approve the budget adjustment dollars at this time.

The two items not in the previous 2019 budget is the \$8K for office rental and \$30K request from the Pine Bluff Convention Center.

The commissioners requested the line item for URA Contract Attorney be changed to Legal Services.

Commissioner Franklin made a MOTION to approve the 2019 budget adjustments as amended and outlined in ED Taggart's letter dated February 17, 2019 to the Board. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Conley and was APPROVED.

ED Taggart thanked Eligha Lacy for the work he has done with the PBURA.

A worksheet was distributed that listed properties already demolished or are slated for demolition and their status. Properties highlighted in yellow and orange will be presented for approval by the Development and Planning Committee and then to city council for approval on April 3, 2019.

ED Taggart and Mr. Lacy are working with Code Enforcement on their projects as well.

ED Taggart will be purchasing the previously approved dumpster and bobcat next week.

Commissioner Dill pointed out the PBURA is getting some unsolicited advertising. Condray Signs has put an American Flag and City of Pine Bluff seal on their electronic board and "We support the Urban Renewal Project." Two houses across from them were recently demolished.

ED Taggart stated that we wanted home owners to put their property back into a habitable state. There is a process to get properties ready to be torn down and he will work with property owners to avoid demolition.

Commissioners requested ED Taggart prepare a list of lenders and grants that property owners can contact for assistance.

In Other Business, Commissioner Dill referred to an article in Farm Bureau's magazine about Moving Pine Bluff Forward. Dr. Watley and Mayor Washington were among interviewees for the article.

Public Comments were made. Pine Bluff Convention Center ED Joseph McCorvey thanked the PBURA for supporting the convention center and approving the \$30K.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:45 pm.

/s/ Leigh Cockrum  
Leigh Cockrum  
Recorder

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