

**CITY OF BUFFALO URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
June 24, 2021**

REMOTE MEETING VIA WEBEX CONFERENCE CALL

<https://cityofbuffalourbanrenewalagency.my.webex.com/cityofbuffalourbanrenewalagency.my/j.php?MTID=madc4a042c36f8177858e53cda0df1842>

MEETING DATE: June 24, 2021

MEMBERS PRESENT: Brendan R. Mehaffy, BURA Vice Chairman
Commissioner Donna Estrich
Timothy Ball, Corporation Counsel
Council Member Joseph Golombek
Council Member Christopher Scanlon

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Mayor Byron Brown,
Council President Darius Pridgen

SECRETARY: Scott C. Billman

OTHERS PRESENT: Yvonne McCray, BURA Director of Housing, Jenna Bichler, BURA Director of Operations, Tracy Cooley, BURA Deputy Director of FCA, Jessica Brown, Director of Administration & Finance, Dana Harris, Maria Melchiorre, Tony Chestnut, Leslie Vishwanath, Pam Walker-Jarmon, Evelyn Rodriguez, Anthony Sheppard, Nate Newman, Malika Lee, Gina Granville, Theresa Farrell, Joanne Kearns, Ty Eubanks, LaDonna Clements

1. Mr. Mehaffy called the meeting to order at 9:35 am.
2. Council Member Scanlon made the motion to waive the reading of the minutes of the May 24, 2021 meeting, seconded by Mr. Ball and carried unanimously.
3. **FINANCIAL CONTROL OF AGENCIES (Informational)**
 - 3a. Ms. Cooley, Director of FCA (Financial Control of Agencies) provided a fiscal update to the Board.

4. CDBG FUNDED ITEMS

4a. Consultant Agreement with HR Buffalo for Human Resources

Agency Members approved a request to enter into a Consultant Agreement with HR Buffalo for Consulting Services. In 2020, the BURA Agency underwent a reorganization. As a part of the reorganization, a recommendation was made to hire an HR consultant to assist the agency in creating a framework for a robust and productive HR department. BURA issued an RFP issued received six responses. The committee assessed the companies' capacity, expertise, location, and fees and selected HR Buffalo, a WBE firm located in the City of Buffalo. The contract is a month-to-month contract, but the expectation is to work with the firm for one year, unless otherwise agreed upon. The terms of the contract are not to exceed \$3,150.00 per month or \$37,800 for a one year commencing July 1, 2021.

Motion made by Council Member Scanlon to approve Item 4a, seconded by Mr. Ball and carried unanimously.

5. OFFICE OF TEMPORARY & DISABILITY ASSIST (OTDA) FUNDED ITEMS

5a. Buffalo Urban League, Inc. Budget & Scope of Services Modification #1

Agency Members approved a request for a contract budget and Scope of Services modification for the Buffalo Urban League, Inc. (BUL). The agency is currently administering programs and services associated with the

STAND UP Mortgage Assistance and Foreclosure Prevention contract. This contract modification will allow the Buffalo Urban League to assist with the administration of the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP), operated by New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (NYS OTDA). This program uses Treasury funds assigned to the City of Buffalo and reassigned to NYS OTDA. The program will aid individuals and families at risk of homelessness due to their inability to pay rent and/or utilities, due to financial hardship and lingering economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The budget modification will provide for 40 slots/applications available to residents of the City of Buffalo and the CBO will be eligible to receive up to \$400 per application, along with up to \$7,500 for reports and outreach efforts. The total funding amount, previously set at \$97,500 will be amended to \$121,000, with the increase of funds in the amount of \$23,500. There is no change in the contract period of February 1, 2021 through January 31, 2022. The Partner contract execution will be contingent on agreement execution between the City and OTDA.

Motion made by Commissioner Estrich to approve Item 5a, seconded by Mr. Ball and carried unanimously.

5b. Treasury/OTDA Additional Partners

Agency Members approved a request to enter into new contracts with Erie Regional, Neighborhood Legal Services, Jericho Road, Metro CDC, and Harvest House. These agencies responded to a recent RFQ for rent assistance application processing services and outreach. Additionally, we are going to do a STAND UP partner contract modification with 211. Previously the BURA Board approved a modification for a slightly adjusted scope of services for 211 outreach assistance. This board item will replace that request as we need increased application processing assistance from 211, not just outreach. These contracts and the modification for 211 will allow the agencies to assist with the administration of the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP), operated by New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (NYS OTDA). This program uses Treasury funds assigned to the City of Buffalo and reassigned to NYS OTDA. The program will aid individuals and families at risk of homelessness due to their inability to pay rent and/or utilities, due to financial hardship and lingering economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The five new contracts and the contract modification will provide for 2150 slots/applications available to residents of the City of Buffalo and the partners will be eligible to receive up to \$400.00 per application, along with up to \$7,500.00 for reports and outreach efforts. The total funding amount to be approved under this BURA board action item will not exceed \$905,000.00. There is no change to the current contract period for the 211 contract modification. New contracts will have a 6-month term. Community Based Organization (CBO) Partner contract modification execution will be contingent on agreement execution between the City and OTDA for ERAP 1 and the pending modification with OTDA for ERAP 2.

Motion made by Mr. Ball to approve Item 5b, seconded Council Member Scanlon and carried unanimously.

6. AGENCY STATUS REPORTS

6a. General Program

Leslie Vishwanath, Director of Program Management, provided an update to the Board.

6b. Communications

Dana Harris, Communications Manager, provided an update to the Board.

7. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Commissioner Estrich made the motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Ball and carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 am.

Scott C. Billman

Scott C. Billman, BURA Secretary

Reported By: Risë Geller