

CITY OF BUFFALO URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY

Board Of Directors Meeting

Thursday, March 28, 2024

9:30 a.m.

Room 901 City Hall

The Public May Attend By Joining:

www.webex.com

<https://cityofbuffalourbanrenewalagency.my.webex.com/cityofbuffalourbanrenewalagency>

my/j.php?MTID=m57d0c9612520e8f249e82515653eff1d

Meeting number :(access code): 2553 720 6871

Password: 5FVvybHEm52 (53889243 from phones and video systems)

JOIN BY PHONE

+1-415-655-0001 US Toll

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Byron Brown, Chairman
Brendan R. Mehaffy, BURA Vice Chairman Council
President Scanlon
Commissioner Delano Dowell
Corporation Counsel, Cavette Chambers
Council Member Golombek
Council Member Everhart
Ms. Dowell

SECRETARY: Scott C. Billman

OTHERS PRESENT: Hope Young Watkins, BURA Senior Director, Yvonne McCray, BURA Director of Housing, Tracy Cooley, BURA Director of Finance, Joanne Kearns, Pam Walker-Jarmon, Evelyn Rodriguez, Ronald Dixon, Tashene Eubanks, Jermaine Jackson, Brandon Baxter, Angelica Morrison, Anthony Chestnut

1.0 Vice Chairman Mehaffy called the meeting to order at 9:30 am.

2.0 Mayor Brown made the motion to waive the reading of the minutes of the January 25, 2024 meeting, seconded by Council Woman Everhart and carried unanimously.

3.0 **MONTHLY REPORT**

3.1 **FINANCIAL CONTROL OF AGENCIES UPDATE**

Ms. Cooley, Director of FCA (Financial Control of Agencies), provided an update to the Board.

4.0 **NEW BUSINESS**

4.1 **COMMUNITY CENTER IMPROVEMENTS**

Agency Members approved a request to enter into agreements with three community centers, the Belle Center (formerly known as Father Belle), the YWCA, located in the BlackRock area; and Harvest House. Funding will be CDBG, not to exceed \$320,000.00. Staff determined that each community center would receive up to \$75,000.00 allowing for any possible change orders that may arise. The Belle Center upgrade and improvement to restrooms, converting them to ADA accessible, YWCA, install a fence and safe access in the front yard of adjacent property, landscaping, Harvest House, renovating space for office and lobby space. All the Community Centers have procured their contractors and are ready to begin once and the projects are to be completed on or before July 2024.

Motion made by Corporation Council Chambers to approve Item 4.1, seconded by Council President Scanlon, and carried unanimously.

4.2 **CITY HALL 9TH FLOOR RECONFIGURATION**

Agency Members approved a request to utilize nonfederal funds for an amount not to exceed \$115,000 for the cost associated with demolition, construction, and office equipment and furnishings for the relocation of BURA staffing to a centralized location on the 9th floor of City Hall. The primary objective of this relocation is to enhance the

functionality and productivity of our agency. Over the past 18-24 months, BURA has made significant strides in filling staff vacancies, thereby increasing our capacity to effectively fulfill the agency's mission. Consolidating our staff in one central location within City Hall will allow us to maximize our footprint without the need for external relocation.

The requested funds will be utilized for the following purposes:

1. Construction and demolition: these costs are essential for the necessary renovations and adjustments to accommodate our staff in the new space.
2. Office equipment/ furnishings; procuring appropriate office equipment and furnishings is crucial for creating a conducive and productive work environment for our staff.
3. Relocation of staffing: cost associated with the physical relocation of staff members to the new office space, including logistical arrangements and any related expenses.

Motion made by Commissioner Dowell to approve Item 4.2, seconded by Council Woman Everhart, and carried unanimously.

4.3 FIRST TIME HOMEBUYER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM BUDGET MODIFICATION & TIME EXTENSION #2

Agency Members approved a request for experienced housing groups to assist in the administration of the First Time Homebuyer Assistance Program for the City of Buffalo. BURA issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) on July 6, 2022 and received three responses and the evaluation committee made the recommendation to contract with all three organizations. The three agencies were Belmont Housing Resources for WNY, Inc., Heart of the City Neighborhoods, Inc., and University District Community Development Association, Inc. The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding amount, previously set at \$19,500, will be amended to \$31,600 with the increase of funds in the amount of \$12,100. The current contract dates of September 1, 2022, through February 28, 2024, have been revised to include a six-month contract time extension. The revised contract dates will be September 1, 2022, through August 31, 2024. This contract modification will allow the above agencies to continue to provide financial assistance to first time homebuyers to purchase a home and help create wealth building opportunities for income eligible applicants, especially historically underserved minority borrowers. Additionally, the time extension will allow BURA to consider releasing a Request for Proposals (RFP) to help identify qualified Community Based Organizations (CBO) to provide program and services beginning on or about September 1, 2024.

Motion made by Ms. Dowell to approve Item 4.3, seconded by Council President Scanlon, and carried unanimously.

4.4 COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS INITIATIVE (CPI) BUDGET MODIFICATION & TIME EXTENSION #3

Agency Members approved a request for experienced housing groups to assist in administering the Community Partnerships Initiative (CPI) for the City of Buffalo. BURA issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) on July 6, 2022, received four responses and the BURA evaluation committee made the recommendation to contract with all four organizations. The four agencies selected are: Heart of City Neighborhoods, Inc., Polish Community Center (Lt. Col. Matt Urban Center), Old First Ward Community Association, Inc., and University District Community Development Association. The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding amount, previously set at \$545,300, will be amended to \$679,700 with the increase of funds in the amount of \$134,400.

Motion made by Corporation Council Chambers to approve Item 4.4, seconded by Council Member Golombek, and carried unanimously.

5.0 UPDATES

5.1 BURA INFILL PROJECT

Mr. Baxter, Special Project Manager, provided an update to the Board.

5.2 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FOR 667 MAIN STREET AND 664 WASHINGTON STREET

Mr. Baxter, Special Project Manager, provided an update to the Board.

5.3 3012 MAIN STREET

Mr. Baxter, Special Project Manager, provided an update to the Board.

5.4 725 HUMBOLDT PARKWAY

Mr. Baxter, Special Project Manager, provided an update to the Board.

6.0 EXECUTIVE SESSION

7.0 ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Mayor Brown made the motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Council Woman Everhart and carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 10:05 am.

Scott C. Billman

Scott C. Billman, BURA Secretary

Reported by: Risë Geller