The Board of Directors of the Urban Redevelopment Agency met for their Regular meeting on Wednesday, April 12, 2023, at Harlem City Hall at 9:00 a.m. with Chairman John Neal presiding.

Present: BOARD: Chairman John Neal, Vice Chairman Gary Holley, Director Robert Culpepper, Director Renee Dean, and Director Hope Hodge; STAFF: City Manager Debra Moore, Community Development Director David Jenkins, City Clerk Leona Holley, City Attorney Adam Nelson, and City Attorney Tom Watkins.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Neal at 9:00 a.m.

The Invocation was given by Vice Chairman Holley.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Neal.

Approval of the Agenda: Director Hodge made the motion to approve the Agenda as presented; 2nd by Director Dean. The motion carried with Directors Dean, Hodge, Holley, and Neal voting in the affirmative.

Approval of the Minutes: Director Hodge made the motion to approve the minutes of the March 8, 2023, Regular Meeting; 2nd by Vice Chairman Holley. The motion carried with Directors Dean, Hodge, Holley, and Neal voting in the affirmative.

Director Culpepper joined the meeting at 9:03 a.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Mayor Roxanne Whitaker - Mayor Whitaker reported the month of March kicks-off the busy season with the Harlem Merchants Association and other groups that puts on festivals. The downtown business seems to be thriving. Mayor Whitaker stated The Swingin’ Medallion concert has been moved to April 28th due to the weather.

City Attorney Nelson introduced City Attorney Tom Watkins. City Attorney Watkins will be filling in for City Attorney Nelson and Attorney Fleming if they are unable to attend the meeting.

REPORTS:

Staff Report – David Jenkins:

- Dollar General Plus store is coming along.
- Harlem Mini Storage is on hold. They are working with GDOT (Georgia Department of Transportation) with the connection of the mini-detention pond into the DOT stormwater culvert.
- Heritage Ridge property (commercial/townhomes) on N. Louisville Street – They have worked through the process of relocating a water line that is under the deceleration lane. They are looking at emphasizing the commercial aspect first.
- The Vacancy rate downtown is at 1-2%, national rate is 10%.
REPORTS (cont’d):

Staff Report – Debra Moore:

- City Manager Moore provided the financial report through March 31, 2023.
- Touch of Life’s rent will increase from $650.00 to $750.00 starting June 1st.
- Brandy Jones with Touch of Life contacted Public Works about honeybees coming into the building, and around the electric meter. Robert Holland was contacted to look at the bees; when he went to check he could not find any sign of bees.
- As of April 1st, the interest rate with the bank will go to 2.25%.
- San Saba Property – The estimate came in at $2.2 million for the purchase and demolition of the property. The estimate did not include the environmental studies. Ms. Moore emailed Nancy Chavis with San Saba to let her know that the city does not have an intent to purchase the property; Ms. Chavis has not responded. Chairman Neal stated there needs to be further discussion on the property to bring in developers. Mayor Whitaker asked how long the property needs to sit before it deteriorates, there is standing water; Ms. Moore stated that would be a code enforcement issue through the city and she will have Ms. Pamela Nickles reach out to them on the code enforcement.

Directors Reports: Chairman Neal asked if the demographics from Nextsite would be useful in approaching potential developers, Mr. Jenkins responded background information from the demographics would be available; the information is more for events. Vice Chairman Holley questioned if there have been any updates with the Brewery. Director Dean stated Mr. McCloud is still working on the process and the financing for the brewery. Ms. Moore stated she has only received a verbal acceptance through email from Mr. McCloud on the brewery, not an actual signed agreement. Discussion if a time limit should be placed on property if someone wants to buy property. Attorney Nelson stated the standard contract does have a time period; there is no signed contract on the brewery or no earnest money has been paid. City Attorney Nelson will review the contract to see if there is a deadline.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: N/A

NEW BUSINESS:

Durst Property – Purchase Proposal – Rajeshkuman P. Patel: Moved to Executive Session.

Executive Session:

Director Culpepper made the motion to go into Executive Session; 2nd by Director Hodge. The motion carried with Directors Culpepper, Dean, Hodge, Holley, and Neal voting in the affirmative. Executive Session opened at 9:28 a.m. Mr. Rajeshkuman P. Patel was asked to stay for Executive Session.

Vice Chairman Holley made the motion to come out of Executive Session; 2nd by Director Dean. The motion carried with Directors Culpepper, Dean, Hodge, Holley, and Neal voting in the affirmative. Executive Session closed at 10:04 a.m. Mr. Patel left Executive Session at 9:37 a.m.
Executive Session (cont’d):

City Attorney Nelson reported that there was one real estate matter discussed and no final action was taken. Director Culpepper made the motion to authorize Chairman Neal to sign the affidavit affirming this report; 2nd by Vice Chairman Holley. The motion carried with Directors Culpepper, Dean, Hodge, Holley, and Neal voting in the affirmative.

Other:

Mr. Jenkins reported Hollingsworth Appraisal Company was contacted regarding doing a survey for the sewer easement for the Durst property, the proposal for the sewer easement is $1,200. The total survey for the entire Durst property is $1,500. Mr. Martinez, owner of the property for the sewer easement, has not responded to Mr. Jenkins. City Attorney Nelson stated there is a process for the city to do the condemnation; the process is a Declaration by Taking once the initial process has been done.

Director Culpepper made the motion to authorize and proceed with the appraisal of $1,200 for the sewer easement; 2nd by Director Dean. The motion carried with Directors Culpepper, Dean, Hodge, Holley, and Neal voting in the affirmative.

With there being no further items for discussion, Director Hodge made the motion to adjourn the meeting; 2nd by Director Dean. The motion carried with Directors Culpepper, Dean, Hodge, Holley, and Neal voting in the affirmative. The meeting adjourned at 10:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Leona H. Holley
City Clerk