

ECONOMIC RECOVERY BOARD FOR CAMDEN

May 27, 2008

Settlement Music School, Camden, NJ

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Members of the Board present: Rev. J. C. Jones, Vice Chairman; Judge Theodore Davis, COO; Mayor Gwendolyn Faison; Hannah Shostack for David Rousseau, State Treasurer; City Council President Angel Fuentes; and Public Members: Rodney Sadler, William Hosey and Robert Milner.

Also Present: Assistant Secretary: Maureen Hassett; Bette Renaud, DAG; and EDA staff.

Absent: Secretary Caren Franzini, designee for EDA Chairman Carl Van Horn; Assemblywoman Nilsa Cruz-Perez, Non-Voting Legislative Member; Marge DellaVecchia representing DCA Commissioner Joseph Doria, Jr.; and Freeholder Director Louis Cappelli, Jr., Non-Voting Member.

Assistant Secretary Hassett called the meeting to order at 10:05 am.

In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, Ms. Hassett announced that notice of this meeting had been sent to the *Star Ledger*, the *Times*, and the *Courier Post* at least 48 hours prior to the meeting, and that a meeting notice has been duly posted on the Secretary of State's bulletin board at the State House.

A quorum of the ERB Board was present.

Ms. Hassett introduced Assistant State Treasurer Hannah Shostock as the Treasurer's designee who will also act as Chairwoman of the board. She then welcomed new non-voting Legislative Member Senator Dana Redd.

Chairwoman Shostack asked for a motion to approve the March 25, 2008 minutes of the Board.

MOTION TO APPROVE: Mr. Sadler SECOND: Mr. Hosey AYES: 8

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING

Robert Capanna, Executive Director of the Settlement Music School, stated he that he was pleased to welcome the Economic Recovery Board Members and all present. Mr. Cappanna stated that the ERB has provided significant funds for its beautiful building, but the most important aspect was the services that they provide. He stated that currently they service just under 800 students. He stated that last year they provided \$122,000 in direct assistance to needy families and so far this year they've provided \$150,000. He then recognized Valerie Clayton, Branch Manager and all the excellent work she is doing.

Rosa Ramirez entered the meeting at this time.

Chairwoman Shostack asked Ms. Hassett to summarize the first item before the board, the Greater Camden Partnership, Inc. Feasibility Study for Eastern Edge/Ferry Avenue Terminal Transit Village – (P21944) project. Ms. Hassett stated that the Members were being asked to approve a \$50,000 predevelopment recoverable grant to The Greater Camden Partnership, Inc. to fund a feasibility study for a mixed use development project and that the funds would be provided from the Demolition and

Redevelopment Financing Fund.

After a motion by Mr. Hosey, and seconded by Ms. Shostack, four members of the Board (Judge Davis, Mayor Faison, Council President Fuentes, and Rodney Sadler), indicated the need to be recusal as they are also members of the Greater Camden Partnership Board. As seven affirmative votes are required to approve the action, the resolution was tabled. Ms. Hassett noted that in order to advance the project a subsequent special meeting would be scheduled and noticed on the ERB's website.

Chairwoman Shostack asked Ms. Hassett to summarize the next item before the board, the Puerto Rican Unity for Progress [(PRUP) P018785]] project. Ms. Hassett stated the Members were being asked to approve a modification to the \$295,000 public purpose grant by extending the project completion date to June 30, 2009 to fund pre-development activities at the project site.

Ms. Hassett stated that on January 22, 2008, the Members approved a modification to convert the \$297,000 non recoverable infrastructure grant to a \$295,000 public purpose grant for PRUP which is being used to fund environmental activities, infrastructure improvements, as well as architectural and legal fees for the development of a 8,500 sq.ft. state of the art facility for PRUP's social service programs.

Ms. Hassett added that PRUP is currently located at 427 Broadway and is contemplating moving as a result of the expansion of Cooper Hospital and the construction of a school of medicine by the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. She also stated that as the project advances, PRUP plans to return to the ERB to request an additional \$705,000 to receive a total of a \$1 million public purpose grant to also fund a portion of the permanent financing on the project.

Ms. Hassett remarked that the pre-development phase, which includes design, construction documentation and bidding, as well as obtaining building permits, is scheduled to continue through March 2009; and PRUP is requesting that the project completion date for pre-development activities be extended through June 30, 2009 to implement the additional activities. She added that once PRUP requests the additional ERB public purpose funding for the development phase, the project completion date will be extended to reflect the date of the anticipated final certificate of occupancy.

MOTION TO APPROVE: Mr. Milner SECOND: Mr. Hosey AYES: 8

Council President Fuentes abstained because he is an employee of Cooper Health Systems.

Mayor Faison stated that while she was for the project, she wondered about the grant amount of \$295,000 and how it would be applied. Ms. Hassett stated that PRUP was relocating from the current facility and because of code requirements for childcare space they would be expending funds to ensure that those requirements are met. The applicants are also in the process of value engineering the design to identify cost savings.

Chairwoman Shostack asked Ms. Hassett to summarize the next item before the board. Ms. Hassett stated that the next item was approved under delegated authority and was for informational purposes only. The applicant, the Esquires Four Limited Liability Co. (P22005) is a real estate holding company that owns the project property located at 415 Federal Street in Camden. The company was approved for a \$20,000 grant and the proceeds would be used to complete additional site renovations such as façade improvements.

Chairwoman Shostack requested updates or items of interest from the Members.

Council President Fuentes stated that Mr. Robert Dickerson, co-founder of Unity Community Center, Inc., (UCC) has been very active in the community for over 25 years. His organization has helped empower the City's youth, he's very active in helping the City and the entity is trying to advance a project in a building donated to them several years ago. Council President asked whom can they contact to assist them. Ms. Hassett stated that she has a meeting scheduled with representatives of their group, however; the public purpose grant is no longer available that they has applied for some time ago, and which was not advanced because they were not able to evidence how they would meet matching requirements.

Judge Davis agreed that was unfortunate that the grant is no longer available, but noted that since they received a gift with a tax lien attached that perhaps the lien could be forgiven by Council. He explained further that there is an application for forgiveness of the lien that the group can submit to Council.

Chairwoman Shostack requested comments from the members of the public.

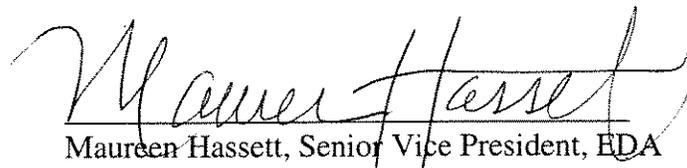
Mr. Colandus "Kelly" Francis, President NAACP of Camden stated that last month over 40 Camden high school students took part in the annual NAACP National ACT-SO contest which was held in Newark at the New Jersey Institute of Technology. He stated that students won 23 medals, including 8 gold medals. He stated that the gold medalists would take part in the National awards for the State competition.

Ms. Byheijja Sabree, Public Relations Director; and Trina Anderson, Vice President; Community Affairs for Unity Community Center, Inc. (UCC) addressed the board and expressed their frustration with the City of Camden in not being able to obtain funding to relocate from their present location on Mt. Ephraim Avenue.

Several board members agreed that the UCC was a worthy group and the Mayor suggested that something should be done soon to assist them with relocating.

There being no further business, on a motion by Mr. Hosey and seconded by Judge Davis, the meeting was adjourned at 10:45 am.

Certification: The foregoing and attachments represent a true and complete summary of the actions taken by the State Economic Recovery Board for the City of Camden at its meeting.


Maureen Hassett, Senior Vice President, EDA
Assistant Secretary, ERB