



**CAPITAL CITY REDEVELOPMENT CORPORATION  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

*This Meeting was held in-person and via Microsoft Teams.*

**November 26, 2024 @ 11:00 AM**

**MEETING MINUTES:**

***Members of the Board Present, in person or via conference call:***

Jo-Ann Povia, Chair, Designee for State Treasurer Elizabeth Muoio  
Elvin Montero, Vice Chairman  
Susan Weber, representing DOT Acting Commissioner Francis K. O'Connor  
Gina Fischetti, representing the Department of Community Affairs  
Commissioner Jacquelyn Suarez  
Jeffrey Laurenti, Board Secretary  
Willard Stanback, Board Treasurer  
Anthony Cimino  
Rosa Rosado  
June Dowell-Burton  
George Sowa

***Members of the Board Absent:***

The Honorable Reed Gusciora, Mayor, City of Trenton

***Others Present:***

Dorian Smith, Senior Counsel, Governor's Authorities Unit  
Meredith Friedman, Counsel, Attorney General's Office  
Julie Krause, Office of the State Treasurer  
Tom Solecki, Office of the State Treasurer  
Amy Bourne, Office of the State Treasurer  
Robert Tessier, Department of Community Affairs  
Nat Bottigheimer, Director, Real Estate Special Projects/Planning, EDA  
Diana Rogers, Sr. Community Development Officer, EDA  
Danielle Esser, Director, Governance & Strategic Initiatives, EDA  
Hector Serrano, Sr. Governance Officer, EDA  
Fabiola Saturne, Project Officer, EDA  
Evan Weiss, CEO, Newark Alliance  
Ashley Mays, Chief Real Estate & marketing Officer, Newark Alliance  
Jennifer Williams, Councilwoman

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chair Povia called the meeting to order at 11:00 am with a quorum of the Board members present.

**READING OF PUBLIC NOTICE:**

Ms. Saturne read the Open Public Meetings announcement and performed the roll call of the Board.

Ms. Saturne read the process for public comment.

**APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:**

The Board was presented with minutes from the Board of Directors meeting from September 24, 2024.

A motion to approve the September 24, 2024 minutes was made by Mr. Cimino, seconded by Mr. Stanback, and approved by the Board in a vote of 9-0-0.

**CHAIR'S REPORT:**

Ms. Povia offered a brief update. She reported that Treasury has again been working with the Trenton Parking Authority to redo the Memorandum of Understanding regarding the Front Street Garage, about which Willard Stanback would be able to give more information in his committee report.

She then turned to the guest presentation of the day, calling on Evan Weiss, CEO of the Newark Alliance, and Ashley Mays, the organization's chief real estate and marketing officer., to commence their presentation. Mr. Weiss, she noted, had done a lot of work in Trenton, including with EDA and the Governor's office.

**PRESENTATION: NEWARK ALLIANCE**

Mr. Weiss introduced the Newark Alliance as an organization on the Newark scene for 25 years that was founded by former Governor Tom Kean. Mr. Weiss himself has been at Newark Alliance for three years, though he is familiar with Trenton from his work as senior advisor on finance to Governor Phil Murphy for three years and, before that, as a consultant to the City under both Mayor Gusciora and Mayor Jackson working on the city's budget and Trenton Water Works. Mr. Weiss added he had previously worked in the city of Newark for mayors Cory Booker and Ras Baraka.

Mr. Weiss would, he said, be presenting a broad picture of what is going on in both Newark and Trenton, how they compare and differ, and how the successes in Newark can be translated in the city of Trenton. Ms. Mays will then present about her prior role in redevelopment at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, and they will tie this to Trenton's opportunity to pivot forward given new developments on the horizon.

Mr. Weiss noted that while the two cities are on different orders of magnitude — Newark has 300,000 residents while Trenton has 90,000 — both used to be leading industrial cities through the first half of the 20th century. In the 1930s, Newark purchased the port and now owns all of the land of this major trade engine and site as well of the airport — which together have generated thousands of blue-collar jobs. Obviously Port Newark and Newark airport cannot be duplicated in Trenton, given its distance from New York. Newark also, has a high and diverse concentration of

white-collar jobs; however, most of those jobs are held by non-Newark residents. The Newark Alliance seeks to bridge that gap.

Comparing the two cities' fiscal positions, Mr. Weiss observed that Newark has a slightly higher share of its land area that is tax-exempt than Trenton. A lot of that tax-exempt property is the Port of Newark, and the Port pays Newark about \$100 million in lieu of taxes each year. In addition, Newark has taxing authority beyond the property tax that Trenton does not. Newark employers pay a payroll tax that helps finance the city budget.

Mr. Weiss acknowledged that much of Newark's rebound relates to its proximity to New York City. Trenton is in a situation that is not as responsive to what happens in either New York or Philadelphia since it is on the outer edge of both metropolises. It much more must rely on the submarket of Mercer County.

Mr. Weiss emphasized how Rutgers University's Newark campus, Prudential, and Audible have helped change the mindset of what different companies and institutions owe Newark residents. Prudential has had a notably key role in the financing of a number of different projects, including through tax credits, equity financing, and other instruments. Audible moved to Newark with the stated intention of being part of the Newark community. It has been trying to grow the innovation economy in Newark and attracting new businesses. Mr. Weiss pointed to its "Live Local" program where an employee get a housing subsidy if they live in Newark.

Mr. Weiss pointed to recent redevelopment success stories such as Hahne & Co., one of the most important projects in Newark. Long one of Newark's flagship department stores, its Halsey Street site had lain abandoned for 20 years till it was revamped as a mixed-use development, with a Whole Foods grocery store on the ground level (the first of its kind, said Mr. Weiss, built like that in an urban market), Rutgers University as a key office tenant, and a range of residential units. Mr. Weiss observed that the Hahne Residences included 40% affordable housing; most such developments cap the "affordable" share at 20%.

Mr. Weiss called attention to 707 Broad (HAX), two blocks away. Also, a former department store, it had served as headquarters of the Newark Board of Education. HAX bills itself as a venture capital firm for hard tech startups, and EDA has supported the building's conversion. The State is a large tenant of this building. One issue for HAX is that it nurtures the creation of companies, but as the companies grow, they relocate without HAX reaping benefits. Mr. Weiss also referenced Panasonic, which had built a gleaming new office tower a decade ago but is now leaving it.

Finally, Mr. Weiss took note of the New Jersey Performing Arts Center's importance as a huge anchor for growth in Newark. NJPAC owns a considerable amount of land in its vicinity, including One Theatre Square, Artside, and Lionsgate Newark. Lionsgate is in one of the more economically challenged areas of Newark but having this movie studio built in this area can create more jobs for residents in Newark.

Ms. Mays followed. At Newark Alliance she runs the commercial corridor work, which is currently tightly focused on Halsey Street. She had much longer experience with the Brooklyn Navy Yard, which the federal government closed a half century ago. In the 1980s, the yard was reopened as a traditional industrial park, with the land owned by the city of New York but the site managed by a separate non-profit whose CEO is appointed by the Mayor. There is, she noted, a density of New York City Housing Authority housing nearby, which she said is an important component of the

Navy Yard's relationship with the neighboring community and expectations of economic opportunity.

Ms. Mays described the tenant makeup of the businesses on the Navy Yard as 75% manufacturing, 20% creative, and 5% amenities and services. The non-profit's mission is to create high quality, middle-class jobs for New Yorkers and providing services to the companies that occupy the Navy Yard to get those job opportunities to locals who live in the neighborhood. Also, the rent structure is 20% below market for manufacturing companies.

(Mr. Sowa joined the meeting at 11:40 a.m.)

Ms. Mays detailed how research and innovation have been at the core of the repositioning of the Navy Yard, with New Lab as an analog to Newark's HAX.

Ms. Mays stated that there is a workforce development group that works on providing programming to upscale workers who are employees of businesses on the Navy Yard. There is also a steam center that is a part of the New York City public school system, and a high school on the Yard site.

Opening the floor for questions, Chair Povia asked Mr. Weiss whether the 30% figure he cited for tax exempt property in Newark included faith-based tax-exempts. Mr. Weiss answered the 30% exempt figure is all inclusive. Mr. Weiss then tied the last slide of Ms. Mays presentation to Trenton, noting that when he went to visit that site at the Navy Yard it reminded him of the Roebling complex in Trenton. — the look, area, and potential are very similar for both.

Mr. Stanback, noting the Roebling analogy, asked if the city of New York still owns the Brooklyn Yard location — so that the city outsources the development while still maintaining ownership?

Ms. Mays answered that the City owns the land, but the Navy Yard is responsible for the upkeep of the land. The major capital improvements are funded through City Hall, which every year approves the budget for the Brooklyn Navy Yard, but she asserted it still has to be self-sustaining. Mr. Stanback asked if New York State was involved in any way; Ms. Mays responded that it is not involved.

Turning to Newark's downtown redevelopment as most relevant to the Capital City Redevelopment District, Mr. Laurenti asked Mr. Weiss why Panasonic is leaving Newark and how long it had been there. Mr. Weiss answered that he doesn't know why they're leaving. Panasonic's North America headquarters used to be in Secaucus, but tax credits helped lure them from Secaucus to Newark. One of the key things that is troubling for Newark, Mr. Weiss added, is that corporate commitment to the city is dependent on who is CEO. In Panasonic's case the CEO changed from someone who was committed to Newark to someone from Canada who is not. So, when the tax credits started to burn off, the company did not feel held there the same way. Another factor was that Panasonic had a shiny new riverfront building — and then Covid hit , whereupon they decided to leave.

Mr. Laurenti asked, in the Panasonic case, to what extent had the Newark community — Newark residents — felt that they were either employed by or had some connection to Panasonic? Mr. Weiss answered that it takes time; many companies have jumped in headfirst to engage with the Newark community.

Mr. Laurenti asked if NJPAC is a private for-profit entity, a non-profit, or a public corporation? Mr. Weiss answered that NJPAC has a lot of ties between the State and the city. The mayor, the treasurer, and the council president sit on the board. The success of NJPAC couldn't have started without the public sector, and so the structure is both public and private.

Mr. Laurenti then asked if there has been "community" resistance to the kinds of investment that State agencies have sought to make in the city. Mr. Weiss in answering underscored that it would not be possible without mayoral leadership from Mayors Booker and Baraka, and cited Baraka's emphasis that the locations in commercial districts do not generate the same negative reactions among the residents of Newark. The focus of residents' ire is when landlords buy up family homes and investment banks do the same.

Ms. Dowell-Burton stated that she had lived, worked, and been an activist in Newark for the past 20 years before moving to Trenton. Ms. Dowell-Burton stated that the street in Trenton that is equivalent to Halsey Street of Newark is Warren Street. She emphasized that redevelopment in Trenton needs to be about anchoring what is here for the local community and not just the 9-5 workers.

Mr. Bottigheimer asked Mr. Weiss's thoughts, based on his experience in Newark and Trenton, about what are Trenton's strategic assets on which we should be building. Mr. Weiss answered that the residential neighborhoods cannot be overemphasized. There are a number of buildings on State Street, he added, that can be repositioned. Also, Trenton might take inspiration from what Brooklyn Navy Yard did with repurposing old buildings that are multi-floor.

#### **PRESENTATION OF FINANCIAL REPORT:**

Ms. Bourne, Department of the Treasury, reported that there has been little change since September's meeting. There is approximately \$3.5 million in the CCRC operating account. The Taxation Building account has over \$4 million, and the Front Street Garage account has \$1.5 million. The two redevelopment accounts created earlier this year for redeveloping the Transit Center and the Willow Street/Canal Banks parking areas were newly opened with PNC bank, with \$2.1 million and \$1.5 million in resources respectively. Counting the various restricted resources, the CCRC has approximately \$12.8 million in total resources.

Mr. Laurenti asked when they planned on using the funds.

Ms. Povia stated that they've discussed how they will use the funds in their committee meetings, and we will receive an update during committee reports.

#### **CITY OF TRENTON UPDATE:**

There was no City of Trenton Update as the Mayor was not present for the meeting.

#### **REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES:**

##### **CCRC Strategic Planning – Budget/Programs – Skip Cimino, Chair**

Mr. Cimino stated that CCRC received one response to the request for proposals for the Heritage Tourism Manager, which will now be reviewed by a State evaluation panel.

With regard to the CCRC's engagement of an executive director, the thinking now is that there might be an individual in State service with good experience who could be brought on part time

for the CCRC. He stated that he's unsure if they've come to a final conclusion on that matter.

Ms. Povia stated that Treasury is still working on that candidate position for the CCRC.

Mr. Stanback sought clarification that they are discussing two different roles — one for directing all of CCRC's activities and a separate one for the heritage tourism/semiquincentennial?

Ms. Povia confirmed that these were two distinct roles.

#### CCRC Front Street Garage Committee – Willard Stanback, Chair

Mr. Stanback reported that the committee has met twice since the last Board Meeting and that it is still in waiting mode with regard to the Trenton Parking Authority. TPA has not yet come back outlining what it plans to do or the support it seeks from CCRC. Once that comes in, he expects CCRC will move the process along to assist with the demolition of the property.

Ms. Povia added that they were expecting more since they last met, and that Treasury will wait to hear back from the TPA.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

##### FORMER TAXATION BUILDING UPDATE:

Mr. Bottigheimer reported that the evaluation panel is still reviewing the sole proposal that has been submitted and has had conversations with the Office of the Attorney General about it. They are close to making a recommendation and hope to be able to announce that soon.

##### RT. 29 BOULEVARD UPDATE

Ms. Krause stated that, at the request of Mr. Laurenti, she has reached out to the County and asked if it could make a presentation to CCRC on its progress on a Reconnecting Communities grant application. She stated that she has to find a time that works for the County and CCRC.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Cimino expressed concern about the announcement yesterday that the departments of State government have been asked to cut their budgets by 5% and that a hiring freeze is being put in place. Does the fact that we have \$12 million that has not been utilized make us vulnerable to claw back in the next budget round? Chair Povia replied that she could not answer that question; however, she will advocate for CCRC funding to keep it moving forward.

Ms. Fischetti asked for any information about the city's former hotel on Lafayette Street. Mr. Sowa answered that Mayor Gusciora had, just in the previous hour, convened a press conference to announce a \$4 million local property acquisition grant that the EDA Board had just approved. The grant will match the purchase price at which the current owner has agreed to sell it. The city intends to acquire the property and put it out to developers to transform it into a vibrant mixed-use catalyst for the downtown, combining a smaller hotel function with residential units. Mr. Sowa noted that historically it was a publicly owned property that had performed rather poorly given its size.

Mr. Stanback stated that he understood there was going to be an RFP process — or will the city be doing direct negotiations? Mr. Sowa responded the mayor was passing out an RFP at this

morning's announcement. He added he will be meeting with the Mayor to discuss next steps, so there is more to come on this topic.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Ms. Esser read the open public comment policy.

Mr. Jacque Howard, Trenton resident and independent media person at Trenton 365 radio and television, stood to offer public comment. Mr. Howard came on behalf of Trenton Cycling Revolution, a nonprofit organization of Trenton cyclists advocating safe streets and corridors for Trenton's biking and pedestrian communities. For the last two decades, Mr. Howard said, Trenton Cycling Revolution has been working with local communities and with county, State, and regional agencies to advance biking, walking, skateboarding, or anything human-powered mobility. He stated that TCR is ready to showcase what simple things can be done, such as crosswalks, painting and bike lanes. He said that that is part of the Trenton 250 Master Plan and comprehensive Plan on which they had worked so diligently with the City planning department to make sure that they can provide safety to Trenton residents.

Ms. Povia expressed appreciation for the work of TCR. She hoped he might share some of the data and information with CCRC and the governance team at the EDA.

Mr. Laurenti asked Mr. Howard his assessment of the bike lane striping — without protective barriers — that was done right in the center of the Capital District, from the Battle Monument down Warren Street to Front Street and then up Broad Street back to the Battle Monument. How much do motorists respect the striping, and how safe is it for cyclists?

Mr. Howard responded that as developments come through, there are going to be some with maybe better technology and better access than others. Trenton Cycling Revolution is encouraging local officials to look at the city as a whole. In our 7.5 square mile city we have a combination of city owned, county owned and state-owned routes. TCR's research has found that the city of Trenton over the years has taken authority from the State and the county to maintain these roads on its own. He saw a clear disparity in the conditions of the State-numbered routes in Trenton versus the same roads when they cross the line into Hamilton, for example.

### **ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING:**

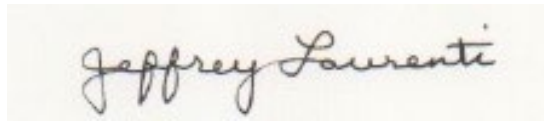
There being no further business, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Montero, seconded by Mr. Laurenti, and approved by unanimous vote at 12:50 PM.

### **NEXT MEETING DATE:**

The next meeting date for the Capital City Redevelopment Corporation is scheduled for Tuesday, December 17, 2024, at 10:00 AM.

### **CERTIFICATION:**

The foregoing and attachments represent a true and complete summary of the actions taken by the Capital City Redevelopment Corporation Board of Directors at its Board Meeting on November 26, 2024.

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jeffrey Laurenti".

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Jeffrey Laurenti, Secretary  
Capital City Redevelopment Corporation