



Redevelopment Authority of Lehigh County
March 5, 2026 Meeting

The regular meeting of the Redevelopment Authority of Lehigh County was held at 9:00 a.m. by Zoom video conference. A recording of this meeting is available at: <https://www.lehighcounty.org/Departments/Community-Economic-Development/Lehigh-County-Redevelopment-Authority>.

ATTENDING

Board Members: Oscar Ghasab (OG), Ricky Gower (RG), Kent Herman (KH), Jill Seitz (JS), David Weinstein (DW), Michael Yeager (MY). Quorum obtained.

Also in attendance representing the Authority, Chris Gulotta (CG)

County Staff: Virginia Haas (VH), Cyndi King (CK), Samantha Pearson (SP)

ABSENT - None

Public Guests – David Bernini - Catasauqua Resident

AGENDA ITEMS

CALL TO ORDER REGULAR MEETING at 9:00 a.m. by MY. Roll call.

Public Comment on Agenda Items – None

Review and Approval of Minutes of February 5, 2025 Meeting

No questions or concerns on minutes from the February meeting; motion for approval of minutes made by DW; seconded by RG. No opposition; all in favor. February minutes approved.

Financial Report and Approval of Bills – See Tab B

Five invoices awaiting payment from the Operating Payable account total \$4,619.43 to be paid as follows: The Gulotta Group \$3,479.40 with \$250.00 being billed to the MacArthur Road project and \$812.50 billed to the Borough of

Catasauqua for the Executive Director's time during the month of February; King Spry \$561.00 for the solicitor's time spent in February on the Iron Works Project; CR&Y \$420.00 (accounting service), T-Mobile \$66.18 phone bill for the Executive Director's use specifically for RALC business, and a bill for new checks \$92.55.

CG and MY asked for questions on the invoices. There were none. Motion to accept and pay the invoices made by DW and seconded by RG. No opposition; motion carried.

Balance sheet ending January 31, 2026 review showed Total Assets \$143,625.00 with remaining grant funding to be paid out to Iron Works Development Group for the flood plain study so, in particular, most of the \$49,713.00 shown under grants payable relates to that funding agreement. The fund balance is \$93,912.00 and there is a negative balance showing under checking. Checks were issued in January and the transfer was made from money market account to checking account shortly after January 31st. On the Income & Expense statement, there was income from reimbursable projects for the month and initial expenses related to the Executive Director, Legal, Accounting, Travel, Legal Advertising, and Phone. The amount still owed on the L.V. Dairy flood plain development shows as an expense for the month. The total expenditures shows as \$46,910.00. Interest income for the month is \$298.00. There is a loss for the month but we had a January 1 beginning fund balance of \$139,834.00 and the ending fund balance of \$93,912.00.

CG and MY asked for questions relative to the financial report; there were none. DW made the motion to accept the financial report and JS seconded the motion. No opposition; motion carried

OLD BUSINESS – None

STATUS REPORTS - Executive Director's Report - See Tab C

IRON WORKS PROJECT

CG is waiting to hear whether the \$350,000 LSA grant will be received. CG spoke with Senator Miller's office earlier this week and was told that more than 2,000 projects have been approved which created a backlog. The Senator's office is very interested in the RALC receiving this grant; if CG doesn't hear anything by the end of March, the Senator's office will follow-up. These funds will be used to construct the retaining wall along Front Street which will allow that street to become 2-way with parking on both sides to include an amenity strip with street

trees and street lighting. CG received word from the Borough that they recently received proposals for engineering work. \$35,000 of the \$350,000 grant would be used for engineering work with the balance used for construction work. As soon as the agreement arrives from the state and it gets signed by all the parties, the RALC would enter into the subrecipient agreement with the Borough and they would move ahead with awarding this engineering contract. The funding for the retaining wall is in place; the balance is completely funded and will come from the RACP grant which the Borough controls. Catasauqua has in excess of \$500,000.00 from a state grant to be used for streetscape improvements. So once the retaining wall is built, the street will be 2-way and will get paved.

The agreement of sale was amended with both the developer and the borough to reflect two conveyances, Phase 1 and Phase 2. Zoning amendments to what is called the Waterfront Zoning District will be moving ahead hopefully in May. This is being done to minimize the number of variances needed by the developer for Phase 1. CG reported that the grant agreement for the Iron Works Project floodplain study has been extended for six months. CG is still waiting to hear on the Main Street Matters application filed in August 2025 which would provide funding to VM Development Group for infrastructure improvements on Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the site. The Borough is also waiting to hear on a \$2.25 million RACP grant application. MY asked CG if the RALC is positive VM will move ahead with this project. CG assured the Board that Phase 1 will definitely move ahead with no need for additional public money. Phase 1 will be about 65 apartments, 10-12 townhomes, and the redevelopment of the depot building. The zoning amendments to the Waterfront Zoning District will be forwarded to the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission for their comments with the Chair of the Borough Council Planning and Zoning Committee and the borough's consultant very much involved in the redrafting of this amendment so that everyone is on the same page. DW asked if there was a sense of when they would close on Phase 1 land. CG replied that he originally thought this summer but with the amendments to the zoning ordinance it is probably going to be in the fall. CG is in almost-daily contact with the developer and they are definitely looking to getting started in the fall.

REDEVELOPMENT OF THE FORMER LEHIGH VALLEY DAIRY PROPERTY

CG received the \$100,000 DCED grant agreement secured to assist the entity which will eventually develop the site with predevelopment costs such as engineering work along with preliminary and environmental studies. Elias Property Group is evaluating several options for redevelopment. RALC prepared a

RACP application in September on behalf of Whitehall Township and they are still waiting to hear on that from the state.

OUTREACH EFFORTS

CG sent the 2025 Annual Report to the municipalities, the local state legislative delegation, and RALC program partners including nonprofit organizations. Yesterday, CG was given time on the Congress of Government (COG) agenda to talk about the work of the RALC. The COG meetings are well-attended by representatives of municipal governments, many of whom CG has already worked with, but he has not worked with all of them so he did meet new people. Glenn Eckhart, Catasauqua Borough Manager, spoke about how the RALC worked with the borough to move ahead the Iron Works Project. The new county executive, Josh Siegel, was very complimentary about the work of the RALC in his State of the County message and also at the COG. Executive Siegel is looking at the possibility of providing additional resources in the future to the RALC to accomplish its objectives. Outreach efforts have begun to create a pipeline of projects beyond the Iron Works and the Lehigh Valley Dairy projects which are larger in scale. He hopes to have a list to share in the near future.

MY asked for questions, comments, or concerns. David Bernini asked CG if VM Development indicated when a master plan might be publicly disclosed or published? CG believes the process is to finalize the zoning amendments to the waterfront zoning district and after that, the master plan would be presented in perhaps May or June. CG stated that it has taken about 6-weeks longer than he anticipated because of the zoning amendments. Mr. Bernini asked CG to broadly characterize what necessitated the zoning changes. CG said that a lot of it was verifying that the project will meet existing requirements of the zoning ordinance relating to open space. Other areas that have been discussed include but are limited to 1) a landscaping to screen parking areas, 2) clarification on the developer providing a manual or written guidelines to include graphic designs and the credentials of the firm that would provide those designs, 3) the amount of window space on the buildings to provide more rather than less windows and 4) parking requirements. The Chair of the Borough Council Planning and Zoning Committee, Tara Nichols from the borough was involved in the discussion about these changes. Mr. Bernini said that he would follow-up with her. CG went on to assure Mr. Bernini that both he and Ms. Nichols are trying to make sure that Catasauqua is getting a good product from a land development and zoning standpoint and not compromise either but just taking a second look at some of the requirements in the zoning ordinance that, at this point, may not be necessary, with

the idea to create a clearer pathway for this project to be approved through the zoning and subdivision process.

Mr. Bernini questioned whether the parking lot in front of the municipal building, that is currently held by a third-party, is part of the plan. This area will not be included in the master plan because it is privately owned. However, CG said that sufficient parking will be constructed in conjunction with the development of the first phase and some of that parking could be shared with the Borough.

RESOLUTIONS - None

NEW BUSINESS - None

PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS - None

EXECUTIVE SESSION - None

COMMENTS OR ANNOUNCEMENTS

MY asked for any other information for the good of the order. MY asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. DW made that motion which was seconded by RG. Unanimous voice approval.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the RALC is April 2, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. via Zoom. Meeting is adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Cynthia L. King