



Redevelopment Authority of Lehigh County
April 2, 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 – None

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 March 5, 2025 Meeting

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

Financial Report and Approval of Bills – See Tab B

Five invoices awaiting payment from the Operating Payable account total \$4,720.64 to be paid as follows: The Gulotta Group \$4,046.90 with \$1,623.00 being billed to Catasauqua for the Iron Works project for the Executive Director's

time during the month of March; King Spry \$187.00 for the solicitor's time spent in March; CR&Y \$420.00 (accounting service), and T-Mobile \$66.74 phone bill for the Executive Director's use specifically for RALC business.

CG and MY asked for questions on the invoices. There were none.

Balance sheet ending February 28, 2026 review showed Total Assets \$162,918.00 with remaining funds in the checking, money market, and unexpended funds in the Elias Property Group account and unexpended funds in the Lehigh Valley Dairy Project grant. CG noted the assets for the same period of time last year was \$235,912.00. CG explained that RALC spent down a lot of the grant money in the past year. \$50,000.00 grant was spent for the Iron Works projects with additional funding provided to VM Development Group for engineering costs and the floodplain study. In Liabilities, the amount remaining in the state grant is primarily for VM Development and the flood plain study related to the Iron Works. The RALC Fund Balance is \$115,170 compared to last year, \$169,066.00. Revenues and Expenses for the month: Total expenditures \$3,999.00. The annual \$25,000.00 funding from the County was received in Revenues. Net Income for the month \$21,258.00. Year-to-date total income ending February 8, 2026 \$25,691.00, total expenditures \$50,911.00, leaving a net loss of \$24,664.00. The Fund Balance is \$139,834.00.

CG and MY asked for questions relative to the financial report; DW asked what was meant by the note on the bottom of the financial statements where the "management [has] elected to omit substantially all the disclosures required..." DW noted that he had not seen this before. CG replied that it has been on the financial statements since CR&Y since took over issuing the statements but he would inquire from them as to the specifics on the disclosures they would want the RALC to issue relating to the modified cash basis of accounting.

MY inquired with OG if Catasauqua was current with their reimbursement of outstanding fees. OG replied Catasauqua was current and timely. RG made the motion to accept the financial report and DW seconded the motion. No opposition; motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS – None

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

IRON WORKS PROJECT

CG reported receiving the grant agreement from the state for the \$350,000 Local Share Agreement (LSA) grant. CG is looking for a fully executed agreement from the state in the near future. These funds will be used in tandem with other state funds, Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP) funding, to construct a retaining wall which will allow Front Street to become a two-way street with parking and an amenity strip on both sides. MY and RG have signed the agreement with the state and it has been returned to the state for full execution. Once RALC receives the fully executed agreement, it will enter into a subrecipient agreement with the borough for the borough to use those funds for engineering associated with the retaining wall and the actual construction of the wall. CG is hoping to receive the fully executed agreement quickly so as to get it on Catasauqua council's agenda this month because they have proposals from engineering firms and they must select one of those firms to move ahead with the engineering work, hopefully, this month.

On March 20, 2026, Congressman Ryan Mackenzie announced the approval of \$3.683 million dollar congressionally directed appropriation which was a positive development for this project. These funds will be used in conjunction with the second phase of the project which is expected to result in the construction of over 200 apartments, 24 townhomes, 120-square feet of mixed-use commercial/residential space, and 13,000 square feet of retail space. CG said a few words at that grant announcement. He also noted that the borough manager expressed his appreciation for the work of the RALC in moving the project ahead. CG received very positive feedback from members of borough council and the borough manager, too, specifically on the Iron Works project. The RALC's application for million-dollar funding in Main Street Matters remains pending. If it is approved, it will be used to Phase II.

As a Phase I update, it does appear as though the borough will be advertising the amended zoning ordinance for the Waterfront Zoning District at the April 20 council meeting. The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) has the opportunity to review that amended ordinance. The amended ordinance will be advertised in the newspaper and also will be filed at the Lehigh County Law Library. As early as the June 1 council meeting, council is expected to announce and advertise a public hearing on June 15 and the ordinance could be adopted as soon as June 15. There have been a number of meetings with the developer to get their input on how the ordinance can be tweaked so the need for variances would be minimized. Variance processes prolong the process because hardship must be demonstrated, among other things. So the thought was to see if the need for

variances could be minimized if not completely eliminated. The idea is to create an ordinance that would not compromise any of the interests of the borough but look to accommodate the developer as much as possible, with the idea of minimizing, if not eliminating any need for variances which will streamline the whole approval process. The goal is to get the earliest possible construction start date which appears as though it will be in the fall. Once council approves the zoning ordinance, the developer will file a master plan sketch showing the plan for the entire site. The borough's planning commission has the opportunity to review that master plan and then, assuming everything is in order, it would go to council for approval possibly at their July meeting. The developer would file their preliminary land development plan for Phase I in late July or early August.

CG and MY asked for questions on the Iron Works project and there were none.

REDEVELOPMENT OF THE FORMER LEHIGH VALLEY DAIRY PROPERTY

CG received the \$100,000 DCED grant agreement that Senator Miller worked to acquire for pre-development costs associated with the L.V. Dairy property. The owner of the property, Elias Property Group, is looking at different options and they have formulated a concept plan which CG has not yet seen. No funds will be provided to Elias Property Group until that concept plan has been reviewed by the Senator and CG. Elias Property Group must also provide a budget for how they are proposing to use the \$100,000.00 in pre-development costs which would presumably be engineering costs and some preliminary planning costs. Things remain fluid with CG staying in contact with both the owner and Senator Miller to establish, over the next couple months, which direction will move the project forward.

One \$2.5 million dollar application filed with the state last September and which remains pending is the RACP application for Whitehall Township which would be used for infrastructure, water, sewer, and streets within the proposed development. That funding would have to be matched by the developer.

OUTREACH EFFORTS

CG sent the March 2026 newsletter. CG shared the March website tracking numbers compiled of the people connecting with the RALC website: 776 "hits" or views and 222 "unique hits" or views from the same unique person. CG also shared his thoughts that the work of the RALC, which has been high-profile, with the Iron Works Project and the Lehigh Valley Dairy Site Project, along with the

newsletter, the annual report, and his outreach to the municipalities and organizations, have people connecting to the website. CG includes not only information about members of the board and the minutes on the RALC website but highlights strategies to address blighted properties and funding sources. People want information on some of these tools and strategies to address blighted properties. The RALC is performing a valuable role in terms of technical assistance with regard to funding, bringing funding to the table, and also providing technical assistance in sharing information with RALC program partners on tools and strategies to address blighted properties. CG believes all these factors contribute toward that noteworthy extent of interest in the RALC website shown by the large number of hits/views each month.

CG had a good meeting with Lower Macungie Township planner, Nathan Jones. They talked about a number of potential projects related to redevelopment efforts in Lower Macungie.

CG also had a good meeting with Scott Unger with the Allentown Economic Development Corporation (AEDC) where the focus is on manufacturing and how the RALC and AEDC might partner going forward. The Bridgeworks Facility in Allentown is located within the city and is specifically for manufacturing. CG referred to The Bridgeworks as an “incubator” with a lot of entrepreneurial activity and creative people starting businesses; he had also been involved in setting up another similar incubator in Carlisle earlier in his career. Every once in a while, one of those businesses gets to be a really big operation. CG opined this is arguably the future of Lehigh County in terms of business development.

MY and CG asked for questions, comments, or concerns with the Executive Director’s report. JS asked if CG had any sense what land uses Elias Property Group might go with for the Lehigh Valley Dairy site? CG has nothing at this point to publicly share but having said that he thinks it’s primarily retail/commercial. No further questions.

RESOLUTIONS - None

NEW BUSINESS - None

PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

MY noted that The Morning Call reported County Executive Josh Siegel is in favor of making the executive director position of the RALC a full-time paid position. CG reported that the newspaper report is very true. They are looking at how to

both fund and support the authority moving forward as they seek a full-time person to work with CG during the transition and also to be able to expand the pipeline and the work which the RALC does. The internal process is being looked at as well as speaking about it with some of the commissioners. CG praised SP for being in contact with one another on an almost weekly basis on a variety of issues regarding the projects; the lines of communication are open. SP spoke for the administration when she said they appreciate the work the RALC is doing and that work is seen as valuable and key to the kind of future of the county and the valley.

MY noted it was National Recognition Day and he recognized the solicitor, Kent Herman, who also appeared in a Morning Call article, for being awarded one of the top attorneys in the Lehigh Valley. The Board congratulated KH.

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. JS made that motion which was seconded by DW. Unanimous voice approval.

The next scheduled meeting of the RALC is May 7, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. in-person at the Lehigh County Government Center, Room 436. Meeting is adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Cynthia L. King