

ATLANTIC CITY EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Tuesday, February 18, 2020

Stockton University – Atlantic City Campus

1) REMARKS FROM DCA ACTING CHIEF OF STAFF AND ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER KIM HOLMES ON BEHALF OF LT. GOVERNOR SHEILA OLIVER

- a) Kim Holmes introduced Stephanie Bush-Baskette, the new business administrator for Atlantic City, to the Atlantic City Executive Council.
- b) Total revaluation of all properties located within Atlantic City was completed earlier this month. Letters were mailed out to residential and vacant land property owners last Friday to inform them of the new assessed value of their property.
- c) Letters to non-residential property owners will be sent out in the near-term.
- d) These types of letters go out in every single revaluation performed throughout the state.
- e) The last revaluation in Atlantic City was conducted in 2008 before the onset of the Great Recession. At the direction of the Atlantic County Board of Taxation, the City of Atlantic City began a revaluation in 2019.
- f) The letters also include information about what the estimated annual property taxes will be in 2020 for the property owner based on the new assessed value of their property.
- g) The estimated taxes were calculated using the 2019 budget and do not include any budget adjustments in 2020 that are yet to be determined. The estimated taxes also do not include deductions a property owner may be receiving such as abatements or senior citizen, veteran and/or disabled credits.
- h) Property owners will not see the tax impact of the revaluation until their July 2020 tax bill.
- i) It is customary to provide property owners at least a 30-day window for meetings with representatives of the revaluation company to occur before the new tax list is submitted as final to the County Board of Taxation. It is possible that with information presented by property owners at these meetings that an adjustment to their assessment could occur, if warranted.
- j) Therefore, the letters and the opportunity for a meeting with a revaluation representative serve both a public education function, as well as providing another step in the process which seeks to ensure that each property owner's assessment is an accurate reflection of its true market value.
- k) If the property owners believe their final assessment is still not correct after meeting with the revaluation representative, they can file a formal tax appeal prior to the May 1, 2020 filing deadline.
- l) The intent is to have the reports for residential properties done by the beginning of this week so the City can have that knowledge as they encounter questions/reactions from residential property owners.
- m) The non-casino commercial property properties are not quite finished. However, final analysis of the changes will be available at the end of this week.
- n) Atlantic City will host the NAACP's national convention in July 2022. Great news that demonstrates the city's positive momentum.
- o) The national convention is expected to bring \$7 million in economic benefit to the city. The convention attracts about 4,000 attendees annually.

- p) The city is rich in African-American history. For example, it is the site of Fannie Lou Hamer's famed "sick and tired of being sick and tired" speech during the 1964 Democratic National Convention. And it is the birthplace of many African Americans who played an important role in the nation's culture.
- q) Later today, students and staff of the Sovereign Avenue School, Atlantic City Arts Foundation, ACDEVCO and Atlantic City Initiatives Project Office will learn about one such person – renowned African American artist Jacob Lawrence, who was an Atlantic City native. Lawrence was the first African American given a solo exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in 1941. He was hailed as the most influential artist in the twentieth century and recognized for his ability to comprehensively portray the African American experience.
- r) Today's event at Sovereign Avenue School is part of larger effort by ACDEVCO and stakeholders such as the Atlantic City Arts Foundation and African American Heritage Museum of Southern New Jersey to promote the City's heritage on its billboard at Albany and Atlantic Avenues. The tribute to Jacob Lawrence is kicking off the series that will highlight Atlantic City's history and culture.
- s) This is a terrific and creative idea to highlight the artistic and cultural heritage of the city and we look forward to more such installations in the future.
- t) Chelsea Economic Development Corp. recently hosted meetings on January 28 and February 10 to gather input from the community to learn the neighborhood's top priorities.
- u) Group will use the information to apply for grant funding, including from the Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit Program at DCA.
- v) NRTC Program is a fantastic initiative at DCA that is designed to revitalize neighborhoods through things like small business assistance and housing.
- w) NRTC funds are used by neighborhood-based non-profit organizations that have prepared, submitted and received approval from DCA for a revitalization plan for the neighborhood it serves.
- x) Wonderful news that Chelsea Economic Development Corp. is stepping up to serve this role for its neighborhood in Atlantic City.
- y) Orsted hosted public meetings earlier this month to update people on the wind power project off the coast of Atlantic City and give them a sense of what the wind farm will look like once it's complete. The meetings also included information about potential job opportunities with the project.
- z) Many amazing and transformational initiatives happening in Atlantic City. Important to keep the momentum going to demonstrate that positive things are happening in the city.

2) REMARKS FROM ATLANTIC CITY INITIATIVES PROJECT OFFICE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MICHAEL EPPS

- a) Michael Epps remarked that the Atlantic City Initiatives Project Office (ACIPO) is back to a full complement of staff. He introduced India Still as ACIPO's new deputy director and said she has hit the ground running and is very aggressive in getting things done. She has taken the lead in organizing the social services summit, which will be on March 11 from 10 am to 12 noon at the All Wars Memorial Building in Atlantic City. The summit will be a round table discussion to see how social services organizations can work more collaboratively together to help people in the city.
- b) One of the things ACIPO hears about frequently is how Atlantic City needs to be clean and safe. Therefore, the Office will look to organize a citywide clean up initiative to end with a picnic at the end for people who participate. ACIPO will engage with the City's public works

department, which has a blueprint to do this, and will try to hold the clean up perhaps at the end of June.

- c) If Executive Council members have an item they would like to add to the monthly agenda, he asked them to please give him a call.

3) ATLANTIC CITY UPDATE FROM MAYOR MARTY SMALL

- a) The mayor had a meeting with the Casino Association of New Jersey in which he addressed head on the issue of casino executives being critical in public of the city and city government. The mayor said it does no one any good to be complaining about Atlantic City to the press.
- b) The City will hold a job fair for Atlantic City residents; AtlantiCare has agreed to participate in the job fair.
- c) On February 27, the mayor's quality of life series will begin and will take place at Atlantic Cape Community College's city campus location from 6 pm to 8 pm. The session will provide attendees with information about funeral expenses, life insurance, living wills, and more.
- d) The mayor's weekly radio show on 96.1 FM has been expanded from 30 minutes to one hour. The show is focused on educating the public about the Atlantic City community and could be simulcast on 99.3 FM. The mayor is encouraging Executive Council members to participate on the show to get their message out.
- e) Bruce Weeks, a member of the mayor's staff, is excited to announce the Small Business Academy, an eight-week program for Atlantic City residents about how to start, market and grow a business. The academy will begin March 24 at Stockton University, Atlantic City campus.
- f) February 24 will be the first information session for the Small Business Academy; so far about 35 people have committed to come to the information session.
- g) The mayor gave a presentation about the proposed city division of recreation, youth and senior services and is hoping City Council will entertain this idea at their meeting on Wednesday. He said the city's youth believe that better recreation services can lead to new experiences, new skills, better physical and mental health, enhanced social skills and self-esteem, and cultural awareness and diversity. He said they lament the lack of community centers, recreation equipment, and funding.
- h) The city administration's recreation plan would use the Atlantic City High School, All Wars Memorial Building, Uptown Complex, MLK complex, Sovereign Avenue School, Chelsea Heights School, Police Athletic League (PAL), Pop Lloyd stadium, and Atlantic City Convention Center. Recreation would include a variety of sports across seasons, specialty summer camps, youth clubs, city-wide tournaments, community anti-violence program, adult sports recreation, and activities for senior citizens.
- i) The recreation plan would be done through partnerships with the NFL, NBA, PAL, Boys and Girls Club, Atlantic City Arts Foundation, ACIPO, AtlantiCare, Atlantic City Board of Education, ACCC, and Stockton University.

4) CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT: JACOB LAWRENCE PROGRAM PREVIEW

- a) Michael Epps said this is the type of collaborative effort among Executive Council members that ACIPO is hoping for.

- b) Liz Terenik talked about the Chelsea Economic Development Corporation and its involvement in the program. She talked about the event later today in which students will paint and learn about Jacob Lawrence.

5) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: ØRSTEAD

- a) Ørstead did a brief presentation about the company, which is a global leader in offshore wind and developed America's first offshore wind farm. It is grateful to New Jersey for leading the way in the transition to clean energy.
- b) Wants to build wind farms from Virginia to New England.
- c) To a question about why New Jersey and New York are leaders in offshore wind, Ørstead said it is because these states have offshore wind with a relatively shallow continental shelf.
- d) The 1100 MW wind farm off the coast of Atlantic City is the largest offshore wind farm Ørstead is building to date. It will employ 2,000 to 3,000 people just to get the project up and running. They are in the process of securing federal permits; timeline hinges on that.
- e) Ørstead recently held first open houses for the public and got a lot of feedback. They recognize that they need to do a better job of informing the public about the project.
- f) Did extensive outreach among commercial fishermen.
- g) Once the wind farm is up and running, it will employ 70 full-time people. The company is committed to hiring Atlantic City residents.
- h) Recently ranked the most sustainable company in the world.
- i) This project is something Atlantic City and Atlantic County can be proud of.
- j) It is located 15 miles off the coast. The wind turbines are 850 feet high and on clear days people will be able to see them from land.
- k) Key environmental groups are supportive of this project.
- l) Ørstead is working with Jingoli & Sons about educating the city's youth about the project and opportunities available with clean energy.

6) LAND USE PLANNING: BADER FIELD DESIGN COMPETITION

- a) Bo Kemp, a consultant on the Bader Field design competition, spoke about his professional experience. He said Atlantic City is fortunate to have land development possibilities, especially at Bader Field.
- b) With projects like Bader Field, you have to fight against people's disbelief that the property will actually get developed.
- c) The first thing is to explain to people why a project hasn't yet happened. In this case, the problem is not not being able to find a developer; rather, the problem is the property isn't prepped for development and is vulnerable to the ocean and storms. Mr. Kemp said the land must be raised in order to even build on it.
- d) The second aspect of the property is incorporating sustainability.
- e) Mr. Kemp is looking to create a selection committee to get concepts of what could be built at Bader Field.
- f) One of the ideas that former Governor's Special Counsel Jim Johnson had and that the city should incorporate is there needs to be a lot of public dialogue; more of an education process than anything else. This is not to convince people, but to give them the information needed to make an informed decision of how the city may want to proceed with Bader Field.

- g) The first thing that needs to be tackled is what to do to make the property resilient, then a whole host of other questions will come after that.

7) YOUTH DEVELOPMENT: SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

- a) Not able to make this presentation today. Joe Jingoli will make the presentation at the next meeting.

8) GOOD OF THE ORDER

- a) Atlantic City Councilman Kaleem Shabazz reported that it was a unanimous vote by NAACP to bring the national NAACP convention to Atlantic City. He will be forming a host committee and will be reaching out to many on the Executive Council to join and participate. He said the convention is a boost to the city, including an economic boost.