

ATLANTIC CITY EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Tuesday, June 16, 2020

Zoom Conference Call

1) REMARKS FROM LT. GOVERNOR SHEILA OLIVER

- a) Hello from Trenton where we are working to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. We've successfully flattened the curve but have lost close to 13,000 people. So many families have been just devastated and ripped apart by this virus.
- b) Health care professionals weathered the storm. New Jersey received help from all over the country.
- c) Now Governor Murphy is on the trajectory of getting things opened back up. But we want to do it right because we are seeing those states that rushed to reopen are having spikes in COVID-19 cases; states like Arizona and Florida.
- d) We are concerned with what this crisis is doing to the economy; we are feeling this in Atlantic City.
- e) We are working to gear up assistance programs; for example, rental assistance programs for renters and even assistance programs for landlords.
- f) With the casinos being closed all these months and with people being laid off and being food insecure, we applaud all those individuals and organizations who helped get food to people in need.
- g) Senate Bill 2400 has implications for the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority (CRDA) and implications for other things we want to do in Atlantic City. The Governor and I met with legislative leaders about this and we know that CRDA has been exceptional in the first two years of this administration in supporting efforts to strengthen Atlantic City. We want to continue to support development and initiatives and diversifying the local economy.
- h) We are hoping in the future – the Governor started a restart and recovery commission at the state level – to get some support of corporate institutions on the commission.
- i) We are also in the midst of a big social movement. This is prompting us to bring policing into the 21st century.
- j) Congratulate everyone for hanging in there. Happy to see that COVID-19 testing sites are still open in Atlantic City. We have to keep up with social distancing.
- k) We have heard from shore businesses and how they are losing their summer season. We understand how they are feeling, but there has been so much death and devastation, we don't want to see that happen again.
- l) No word yet on how we are going to deal with schools in the fall. However, daycares have opened back up. We know we can't get people back to work until we have childcare.
- m) Thank India Still, deputy director of the Atlantic City Initiatives Project Office, for holding down the fort while Mike Epps, the executive director, is on sick leave.
- n) Still wants to see the Atlantic City supermarket project move forward.
- o) We haven't forgotten about Atlantic City; the city will be the next big challenge that we are dealing with.

- p) Steve Perskie, advisor to Atlantic City Mayor Marty Small, asked about when casinos will open. Lt. Governor Oliver said an announcement will happen very soon.
- q) Dr. Barbara Gaba, president of Atlantic Cape Community College, asked about education in the fall. Lt. Governor Oliver said it will likely be a mix of in person and virtual learning.

2) REMARKS FROM ATLANTIC CITY INITIATIVES PROJECT OFFICE DEPUTY DIRECTOR INDIA STILL

- a) The Atlantic City Initiatives Project Office (ACIPO) continues to be focused on the Atlantic City Implementation Plan and we are holding down the fort.
- b) Will share later this week resources about social unrest and addressing racism within organizations.
- c) Playing tag team with Elijah Langford, community outreach manager for ACIPO, while Mike Epps is out. Encouraged Atlantic City Executive Council members to reach out with any questions they have.

3) ATLANTIC CITY UPDATE FROM MAYOR MARTY SMALL

- a) Thanked Atlantic City police, FBI, State Police and community leaders for helping to make the second Black Lives Matter protest a peaceful one. Thanked people who assisted in the cleanup after the first protest.
- b) Thanked Lt. Governor Oliver and DCA for supporting the City of Atlantic City budget.
- c) Executive Order 3 that the City issued last week allowing the consumption of alcohol on certain parts of the boardwalk is getting rave reviews. The City will take the results of the Executive Order to the State Legislature and hopes to keep it going post COVID.
- d) A Superior Court judge agreed that Trump Plaza is a public hazard that should be demolished. The judge gave property owner Carl Ichan 45 days to submit a demolition plan. Last week, a lot of pieces from Trump Plaza fell on the boardwalk. Trump Plaza agreed to wrap the building and put netting around it to prevent that from happening in the future.
- e) The City will turn its attention to the revitalization of the Trump Plaza property.
- f) The City is ending the first phase of the COVID-19 testing sites on Friday and will go out to bid for testing site continuation. The City has two days of drive up COVID-19 testing and two days of walk up testing. Most people are doing walk up testing; therefore, the City is going to one day drive up and three days walk up. The City wants to keep these testing services going.
- g) The City also wants to put out to bid the senior hot meals initiative.
- h) The City has a virtual recreation program and esports is getting under way in the next few weeks with the Board of Education. This is important since it can't have a traditional summer recreation program due to the pandemic.
- i) Talked with Reverend Collins A. Days Sr., pastor of Second Baptist Church, and Joe Jingoli, co-partner of Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Atlantic City, about doing some type of summer work program for city youth; i.e., cleaning vacant city-owned lots so youth can make some money while controlling blight.

- j) City received a letter on June 10 that it will receive \$1 million from the NJ Department of Transportation for the Venice Park bridge the crosses Venice Lagoon. The City can start the design and other things on this project.
- k) Dined outdoors at a restaurant last evening; fascinating to seeing the crowds and everyone being excited. Everyone is trying to make the best out of the new normal.
- l) Invited any Atlantic City Executive Council member who is interested in talking about their initiatives to come on 'IN THE MIXX" with Atlantic City Mayor Marty Small Sr. on 96.1 WTTT every Saturday morning at 9am.

4) CRDA UPDATE: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MATTHEW DOHERTY

- a) Thanked Lt. Governor Oliver for pushing back against Senate Bill 2400, legislation that would gut CRDA if passed into law.
- b) Highlighted the approximately \$994,000 that CRDA has allocated for food distribution in Atlantic City.
- c) Senate Bill 2400 would force CRDA to use general funds for its marketing campaign for Atlantic City. Those funds are what CRDA uses to benefit Atlantic City residents through initiatives like the food distributions, community policing, youth initiatives, etc. While the legislation has been revised to get a little better, CRDA is still worried about it.
- d) Encouraged people in the meeting to do what they can to oppose the legislation.

5) UPDATE ON HEALTH OFFICER: ATLANTIC CITY BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR ANTHONY SWAN

- a) Thanked Lt. Governor Oliver for allowing the City to move forward with hiring a health officer. The final three candidates for the position were amazing. The City has selected a candidate and plans to soon send an offer. Hopes to invite the health officer to the next Atlantic City Executive Council meeting.
- b) Supports CRDA 100 percent. Said he has been with the City for more than 15 years and never has seen CRDA work with the City so closely and effectively as in the last two years.

6) YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AND SUMMER EMPLOYMENT: ELIJAH LANGFORD

- a) Due to COVID, the City and ACIPO have been constrained with all youth initiatives.
- b) Reported on the following efforts:
 - i. Joe Jingoli of Hard Rock Atlantic City and Revered Days of Second Baptist Church are collaborating and looking to have 200 at-risk city youth participate in a summer youth employment program run through Turning Point Ministry. The youth would work Monday through Friday beginning at 8 a.m. Interviews are set to begin in about a week or two.
 - ii. Stephanie Koch, CEO of the Boys and Girls Club of Atlantic City, says the organization will have a summer camp, which is great news since it is one of the most popular summer camps in the city.
 - iii. ACIPO has been in talks with the Atlantic City Police Department and Atlantic City Fire Department about doing drone internships. Youth can social distance while learning how to use drones. The class would be for 20-25 city youth to work with the police and fire departments on drones.

- iv. Reverend Robert Hargrove, pastor of Cathedral Grace Family Church, and the faith-based community is looking to bring back a program in Atlantic City in which city youth can get leadership experience by serving as junior mayor and junior city council.

7) GENERAL DISCUSSION

- a) ACIPO Deputy Director India Still said Mayor Small and his team have been very active in managing the City's response to COVID-19. She mentioned the City's COVID-19 newsletter is being sent out weekly.
- b) Amber Hamlett spoke on behalf of Joe Jingo and said he is committed to making sure city youth have something positive to engage in this summer. The goal is to have the summer youth employment program start the week of July 6 and go until the end of August.
- c) Elizabeth Terenik, a senior project manager at Atlantic City Development Corporation and a leader of the Chelsea Economic Development Corp, said the Chelsea EDC is trying to finish its neighborhood plan to submit to the NJ Department of Community Affairs' Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit program in order to get about \$1 million in investment a year. The deadline to submit is July 15 and anyone can comment on the plan and is encouraged to do so.