

ANIZDA Board
MEETING MINUTES
May 07, 2025
America on Wheels Museum
5 North Front Street, Allentown, PA

Attendance:

Board Members: Seymour Traub, Esquire (Chairperson), Stephen Breininger and John Stanley, Esquire, attended in person. Dr. Ann Bieber and Pedro Torres, Jr., attended via Zoom video conference. Eileen Aguilera and Tiffany Polek were absent.

Board Staff: Steve Bamford (Executive Director), Jerome B. Frank, Esquire (Solicitor) and Selma Ritter (Manager, Finance and Administration).

Presenters: Patrick M. Browne, Secretary of Pennsylvania Department of Revenue; Mark Hartney, Deputy Director, City of Allentown Department of Community and Economic Development; Dan Diaz, Business Development Manager, City of Allentown; and Brian Krajewski, General Manager, Oak View Group/PPL Center.

Members of the public and media were present.

1. **Call to Order.** The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Seymour Traub at 5:00 p.m. A quorum was met.
 - a. S. Traub reported on April 02, 2025 board member Nelson Diaz tendered his resignation from the ANIZDA Board effective April 30, 2025. S. Traub noted N. Diaz served on the board admirably since its inception in 2011 and it is sad to see him leave. ANIZDA appreciates all of N. Diaz's service over the years and wishes him the very best in his future endeavors.
 - b. S. Traub addressed statements made in a recent article that appeared in the Morning Call regarding Neighborhood Improvement Zone tax records. A copy of S. Traub's prepared statement was provided to the board and members of the public in attendance at this meeting. The statement is attached and incorporated into these minutes.
2. **Approval of April 02, 2025 Meeting Minutes.** A motion to approve the April 02, 2025 meeting minutes, as written, was made by J. Stanley and seconded by S. Breininger. The public was given the opportunity to comment. No comment(s) or change request(s) were received. The minutes were approved by a vote of 5-0.
3. **Public Comment on all Matters to be Acted Upon.** Comments were deferred until matters were to be acted upon.
4. **Old Business** - None.

5. **New Business.**

a. Transfer of Preliminary Excess NIZ Revenue for 2024 to Commonwealth – Resolution R2025-332.

S. Bamford reported the Commonwealth has remitted \$103,569,031.57 in certified NIZ revenue to the Escrow Agent for program year 2024 and the Final Accountant’s Allocation Report has been issued. Of the funds remitted, \$66,571,651.48 has been allocated to the debt service on developer dedicated indebtedness and \$36,997,380.09 has been pledged to the debt service on the Arena bonds. The 2025 debt service on the Arena bonds is \$12,565,500.00.

In accordance with the terms of the agreement ANIZDA has entered into with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania acting through its Department of Revenue and its Office of the Budget, Resolution R2025-332 authorizes the transfer of \$22,000,000.00 in Preliminary Excess NIZ Revenue from the Surplus Fund to the Excess NIZ Revenue Account and payment of the Initial Annual Excess NIZ Revenue to the Commonwealth and the execution of an Officer’s Certificate and Transfer Request to be delivered to the Master Trustee, Bank of New York Mellon.

A motion to approve Resolution R2025-332 was made by S. Breininger and seconded by J. Stanley. The public was given the opportunity to comment. No public comment was received. Resolution R2025-332 was approved by a vote of 5-0.

b. Request to Modify 900-1100 Block Hamilton Streetscape Improvement Project to include sculpture – Resolution R2025-333.

S. Bamford explained the board previously approved streetscape improvements in the 900, 1000 and 1100 blocks of W. Hamilton Street, at a cost not to exceed \$6,115,000. This project is substantially complete and it is expected to be finished under budget. S. Bamford introduced Secretary Pat Browne, of the Pennsylvania Department of Revenue to present a unique opportunity to further enhance the public improvements without the need to increase the previously approved funding commitment of \$6,115,000. If approved, the existing Tri-Party Agreement would be modified to change the scope of the project.

Secretary Browne discussed the history of theater and performance venues in downtown Allentown including The Rialto Theater which featured an 8-foot marble sculpture named “The Abduction of Psyche” in its grand 200-foot-long foyer.

Secretary Browne requested the board consider approving a modification to the previously approved streetscape project to include a marble replica of the Psyche and Eros sculpture within the public right of way, between the Moxy Hotel and Archer Music Hall in proximity to where the original sculpture once stood within The Rialto Theater at a cost not exceed \$33,000 to be paid from the available balance of funding initially approved for the 900-1100 Block Hamilton Streetscape Improvement Project.

A motion to approve Resolution R2025-333 was made by J. Stanley and seconded by A. Bieber. The public was given the opportunity to comment.

Mayor Matt Tuerk spoke in favor of Resolution R2025-333 and expressed support for installing the replica sculpture as part of the streetscapes in the 900 block of Hamilton Street. He expressed his gratitude to the ANIZDA Board, and everyone else involved in making tremendous public improvement investments in the downtown.

The vote was then taken and Resolution R2025-333 was approved by a vote of 5-0.

c. Request to Modify Downtown Wayfinding Public Improvement Project to include Gateway Arch – Resolution R2025-334.

S. Bamford provided a brief introduction to this request. This Board previously approved the Downtown Wayfinding Public Improvement Project at a cost not to exceed \$350,000. This project is substantially complete and is expected to be finished under budget. Mark Hartney from the City of Allentown Department of Community and Economic Development is in attendance to present an opportunity to further enhance the public improvements without the need to increase the funding commitment beyond the previously approved \$350,000. If approved, the existing Tri-Party Agreement would be modified to change the scope of the project.

M. Hartney discussed the completed Wayfinding Signage. The Wayfinding project included erecting pedestrian kiosks, vehicular, downtown entrance, single-sided pedestrian and double-sided pedestrian signs to facilitate navigation of the downtown area for both pedestrians and motorists to local businesses, retail areas, public services/amenities, parking facilities and other points of interest.

M. Hartney then discussed the request to add the proposed Gateway Arch to the project. The curved black steel plate arch would be erected in the 1100 block of Hamilton Street, coming into the downtown area. Two trees would be eliminated for the Arch posts to be installed. M. Hartney summarized the key benefits of the Arch including cultural and visual appeal, improved navigation, economic impact, community pride, urban renewal and transportation and infrastructure related benefits. The total cost for this project would not exceed \$200,000 to be paid from the available balance of funding initially approved for the Downtown Wayfinding Public Improvement Project. Design would commence in May 2025, with installation complete in November 2025. S. Bamford reiterated that the Wayfinding project is under budget and there is no need to increase funding beyond the amount previously approved.

A motion to approve Resolution R2025-334 was made by S. Breininger and seconded by J. Stanley. The public was given the opportunity to comment. No public comment was received. Resolution R2025-334 was approved by a vote of 5-0.

d. N. 6th & W. Linden/N. 6th & W. Turner Streetscape Improvements – Resolution R2025-335.

S. Bamford stated the ANIZDA Public Improvement Committee held a public meeting on April 29, 2025, to review the project before the Board this evening in accordance with ANIZDA’s Guidelines for Public Improvement Investments. At that meeting the committee unanimously voted to recommend the project proceed to the ANIZDA Board for consideration of funding in an amount not to exceed \$1,800,000 through the Public Improvement Investment Program. The City of Allentown is the public property owner and City Center Investment Corporation (“CCIC”) is the sponsor.

The public property owner is represented this evening by Mark Hartney, Deputy Director of Community & Economic Development, City of Allentown. The sponsor is represented by Robert DiLorenzo, Director of Planning and Construction, City Center Investment Corporation.

S. Bamford requested M. Hartney present a *Progress Report* on the previously approved public improvement projects, prior to presenting the N. 6th & W. Linden/N. 6th & W. Turner Streetscape Improvements project.

M. Hartney presented the City of Allentown’s *Progress Report*, dated May 07, 2025 summarizing the status of the following projects:

- ANIZDA Approved and Completed Projects
 - Court Street Arts Alley
 - Hamilton Connector
 - Soldiers and Sailors Monument Lighting
 - APA Parking Pay Stations
 - ACR Development Streetscapes
 - LANTA Bus Terminal
 - N. 6th & Linden/N. 7th Streetscapes
 - Hamilton Street (500-600, 800-1100 blocks) Streetscapes
 - Downtown Wayfinding
 - Da Vinci Science Center public spaces

- ANIZDA Approved/In Progress Public Improvement Projects
 - 8th and Linden Streetscapes
 - 600 and 700 blocks of Hamilton (southside) Streetscapes
 - Center Square Redesign and Renovation

The report provided photographs, status updates, project impacts, the City of Allentown’s plan, construction timelines for approved projects in progress, and a project funding chart as of 04/24/2025.

Dan Diaz, Business Development Manager, City of Allentown, discussed other downtown investment made possible due to the impact of surrounding NIZ investments. He

commented there has been a surge in downtown businesses and more entrepreneurs are interested in moving their businesses into the NIZ.

M. Hartney then presented the proposed *N. 6th & W. Linden/N. 6th & W. Turner Streetscape Improvements* project before the board for consideration. He described the previously completed streetscapes in the area, existing conditions and the new proposed improvements on the east side of N. 6th Street between Linden and Turner Streets, the north side of W. Linden Street from N. 6th to Law Street, a portion of Law Street, and the south side of W. Turner Street between 5th and 6th Streets. The proposed improvements would include new street trees, sidewalks and curbs, lighting, a bike rack and trash/recycling receptacles consistent with the completed streetscapes within the surrounding NIZ area. Construction is proposed to commence in March 2026, with completion expected in June 2026. M. Hartney reiterated the funding request is not to exceed \$1,800,000.

M. Hartney noted that the old Morning Call site at 6th and Turner Streets is currently being prepared for construction of a 247-unit apartment building to provide workforce housing. The new building is to be developed in conjunction with the proposed streetscapes. S. Bamford noted that the apartment building is not NIZ funded.

Vicky Kistler, Director for Community and Economic Development, City of Allentown, also spoke in support of the streetscape project.

A motion to approve Resolution R2025-335 was made by J. Stanley and seconded by P. Torres. The public was given the opportunity to comment. No public comment was received. Resolution R2025-335 was approved by a vote of 5-0.

e. PPL Center Lease Year 11 and 12 capital projects – Resolution R2025-336.

S. Bamford stated that pursuant to the terms of the Lease Agreement between ANIZDA and the Arena Operator, BDH Development, the Operator is required to deposit \$500,000 annually into the Capital Reserve Fund to be used for projects at the Arena, identified by the Operator and approved by ANIZDA. If approved, Resolution R2025-336 would authorize the Capital Repairs and Capital Improvements for lease years 11 & 12. The current balance in the Arena Capital Account is approximately \$2,259,000.

S. Bamford then introduced Brian Krajewski of Oak View Group, the new General Manager of PPL Center to present the capital project for lease years 11 & 12 and to answer any questions.

B. Krajewski discussed the Capital Repairs and Improvements listed in the resolution at a cost not to exceed \$1,936,984.00 for lease year 11 and \$1,225,000.00 for lease year 12.

A motion to approve Resolution R2025-336 was made by J. Stanley and seconded by P. Torres. The public was given the opportunity to comment. No public comment was received. Resolution R2025-336 was approved by a vote of 5-0.

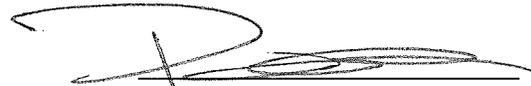
6. Executive Director's Report.

S. Bamford reported there are three projects within the NIZ that were selected as finalists in three different award categories by the Philadelphia District Council of the Urban Land Institute (“ULI”): (1) The Allentown Streetscape Improvements from the 500 block to the 1100 block of Hamilton Street; (2) Da Vinci Science Center; and (3) City Center’s Downtown West projects. ULI will announce the 2025 Awards for Excellence winners later this month.

7. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 6:21 p.m.

Next scheduled ANIZDA Board Meeting: Wednesday, June 04, 2025, at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pedro Torres, Jr.', with a large, stylized flourish above the name.

Pedro Torres, Jr., Secretary