



E·C·G·R·A
ERIE COUNTY GAMING REVENUE AUTHORITY

**EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR'S
REPORT
FOR
SEPTEMBER
2021**

Sparber, James

From: RV, BFM Gaming <RA-BFM-Gaming@pa.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, July 28, 2021 9:58 AM
To: Sparber, James
Subject: Local Share Assessment Payment Notification - Erie County

Dear Mr. Sparber:

In accordance with the Pennsylvania Race Horse Development and Gaming Act 42 of 2017, the Department is required to distribute quarterly the Local Share Assessment collected for interactive gaming and slots to the municipalities in which a licensed gaming entity is located. This distribution is based on the interactive gaming and slots local share assessment amount collected plus the slot machine license operation fee amount collected over Summit Township's budget limitation.

Erie County: \$2,755,968.78
Land Bank Jurisdiction: \$261,301.78

An ACH for the 2nd quarter of 2021 payment in the amount of \$3,017,270.56 should be deposited in your bank account within 7 - 10 business days. This payment includes the interactive gaming local share assessment of \$19,328.87, the slots local share assessment of \$497,941.69 and the slot machine license operation fee of \$2,500,000.00. Any reductions to the Gross Interactive Gaming Revenue (GIGR) and Gross Terminal Revenue (GTR) for promotional items is the result of the Gaming Bulletin 2015-01 and the Pennsylvania Supreme Court's April 28, 2014 decision in Greenwood Gaming and Entertainment Incorporated v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Revenue (90 A.3d 699 (Pa. 2014)).

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Thank you.

Jennifer Heckert | Division Chief
PA Department of Revenue
Bureau of Fiscal Management | Gaming Division
1147 Strawberry Square | Harrisburg PA 17128
Phone: 717.346.4004 | Fax: 717.787.6738
E-mail: jeheckert@pa.gov
www.revenue.pa.gov

Our mission is to fairly, efficiently and accurately administer the tax laws and other revenue programs of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Bank 067
① Erie County 067-021010-042100
\$2,755,968.78 X .55 = \$1,515,782.83
② ECGRA 067-021050-042100
\$2,755,968.78 X .45 = \$1,240,185.95
③ Land Bank 067-021018-042100
\$261,301.78

AUGUST 2021

Meeting with Executive Director
Ongoing Social Media Management
Ongoing Consulting
August Comms

IMPLEMENTED

19 August posts
Press Release | Renaissance Block Grant, Multi-Municipal Collaboration Round 1, Parks Field Trails
14 Grant Recipient Graphics
Annual Report

IN PROGRESS

Holiday Graphics
Parks Fields & Trails 2 Year Report
ECGRA Playbook
ECGRA Playbook Event
Roadshow Tours with ECAT, PACA, and Train Station Corry

IN PROGRESS | 2021 Grant Releases and Graphics

Anchor Building Grant
Multi-Municipal Collaboration Round 2 grant
Community Assets - Arts Culture Heritage
Community Assets - Community Centers

Tammi Michali

From: Bridgeway Capital <kchamberlain@bridgewaycapital.org>
Sent: Thursday, August 26, 2021 7:59 AM
To: Tammi Michali
Subject: Building a Supportive Ecosystem to Launch and Grow Businesses in Erie

[View this email in your browser](#)



**BRIDGEWAY
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Sierra Williams, Owner of Star Kids Boutique

**The Erie Minority-Owned Business Accelerator Builds a
Supportive Ecosystem to Launch and Grow Businesses**

Sierra Williams, a graduate of the Erie Minority-Owned Business Accelerator, came into the program with a dream she's had since junior high school to open a children's boutique where Erie parents could find affordable and stylish clothes. Through the Erie Minority-Owned Business Accelerator, she was able to turn that dream into a reality to launch Star Kids Boutique. The program helped her pivot to consider changing market conditions and adapt her business model to incorporate an online retail store in response to the pandemic.

In the nine-month program, Sierra worked alongside fellow entrepreneurs and learned vital concepts that would help them succeed, such as customer discovery, market validation, and financial management. The program's business coaching sessions fostered meaningful relationships that Sierra maintains to this day. Now, Sierra's Star Kids Boutique is a growing online retailer poised to serve Erie in style.

"Participating in the Erie Minority-Owned Business Accelerator took my business to the next level. The access to professional mentors and workshops on marketing and business strategy helped me build the brand and bottom line of Star Kids Boutique," said Sierra Williams, Owner of Star Kids Boutique.



The Erie Minority-Owned Business Accelerator, led by Bridgeway Capital and financed by the Erie County Gaming and Revenue Authority (ECGRA), has been valuable for early-stage entrepreneurs as they navigate the pandemic. During a time of uncertainty, the Accelerator program offered a supportive space to develop, test, and launch new business ventures with a trusted network of advisors and peers.

"The business support offered by the Erie Minority-Owned Business Accelerator was there for entrepreneurs at a crucial time during the pandemic when communities of color faced

barriers in accessing resources to sustain small businesses. As the pandemic evolves and businesses are looking to reposition and grow, the Erie-Minority Business Accelerator will be there again for entrepreneurs to welcome its 3rd cohort," says Cathryn Easterling, Director of Bridgeway Capital's Erie Office.

Star Kids Boutique is just one of the exciting new Black-owned businesses bolstered by the Erie Minority-Owned Business Accelerator. The accelerator has graduated 10 entrepreneurs from the program and welcomes 7 entrepreneurs to begin the program in late August 2021. Participants will engage in nine months of extensive mentoring and one-on-one tailored assistance focused on business planning and strategy.

Introducing the 3rd COHORT

- Terri Paeley, **Galaxy Beyond Walls Childcare**
- Julie Barry, **JMB & Associates**
- Natika Lofton, **Beautiful Kurve LLC**
- Juanita Smith, **The Lamad Group LLC**
- Sharonda Jones, **Blink with flyness**
- Caraneesha Morris, **Xstrawdonairy Treats**
- Starla Speed Starocci, **StarBerry's Juice Box Fresh Fruit Smoothies**

The supportive ecosystem the Erie Minority-Owned Business Accelerator provides comes at a time when increased business ownership is needed to help communities recover from the pandemic. We look forward to working with the next cohort of entrepreneurs to help them build successful businesses that strengthen Erie.

[**Read the Press Release**](#)

Historic preservation



The Erie Masonic Temple building at 32 W. Eighth St. opened in June 1910. The building has undergone major renovations and has been awarded placement on the National Register of Historic Places by the National Park Service. JACK HANRAHAN/ERIE TIMES-NEWS

Renovations transform Erie Masonic Temple building

Jack Hanrahan
Erie Times-News
USA TODAY NETWORK

The luster has been restored. It took a lot of hard work and fundraising, but a group of volunteers from the Erie Masonic Temple Preservation Foundation are close

to completing renovations on the building, which was built in 1909 and opened a year later at 32 W. Eighth St. In September it was awarded placement on the National Register of Historic Places by the National Park Service.

The renovations started in November 2019. The organization

raised \$70,000 and received a matching Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority grant. The group also received a City of Erie grant of \$7,500 for the facade.

Much of the building's interior has been repainted, and a new

See **RENOVATIONS**, Page 2A



Renovations are taking place at the future home of the Purrista Cat Cafe, located inside the Erie Masonic Temple building at 32 W. Eighth St., in Erie. An original marble floor was revealed when old carpeting was removed.

PHOTOS BY JACK HANRAHAN/ERIE TIMES-NEWS

Renovations

Continued from Page 1A

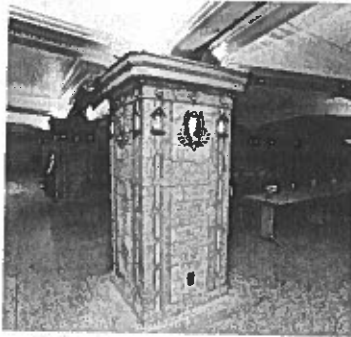
kitchen is being installed in the basement and will be operated by Cali's West Catering. New LED lights have been placed in the pendant fixtures in the fourth floor Lodge Room and second floor Grand Ballroom. The building's electrical service was also upgraded.

The six-story building offers office space on the second, third, fifth and sixth floors, 80% of which is occupied. It also has six retail spaces on the ground floor. A new business, the Purrista Cat Cafe, hopes to open later this year or early in 2022.

The building could not host weddings or other functions during the height of the pandemic.

"It was the perfect time to start renovations," said Kraus. "We had a consistent group of eight people that came on a regular basis to help."

Events resumed at the building when it hosted a wedding on July 31. A murder mystery dinner theater, "Mid-Evil Faire Mayhem" will be performed by the In-All-Seriousness Troupe as a fundraiser in the Grand Ballroom on Oct. 30.



Arcadia Hall, located in the basement of the Erie Masonic Temple building, features decorative tile from the turn of the century. The space is now open for events.

"We would like to preserve this building for future generations," said Bill Rabbitt, chairman of the Erie Masonic Temple Preservation Foundation. "This building has been a meeting place for banquets and proms and weddings and we would like to continue that tradition. We are hoping the renovations will attract more people."

Contact Jack Hanrahan at jhanrahan@timesnews.com. Follow him on Twitter: @ETNHanrahan.

Masks

Health

UC sets trick-or-treat hours; OKs grants for blight fight

BY MARYANN MOOK
Staff writer

UNION CITY — Union City Borough Council has set its Halloween hours. During its Aug. 24 meeting, Council set trick-or-treating from 6 to 8 p.m. on Oct. 31. Since Halloween falls on a Sunday this year, Council is hoping business owners will participate if the Parks and Recreation Commission hosts its annual costume parade along Main Street prior to the costume contest.

In another matter, Council accepted a draft of the Active Transportation Plan and a public review period. The plan is available for review on UnionCityPA.us until Sept. 8. The Active Transportation Plan involves having walking and biking routes and related amenities throughout the community.

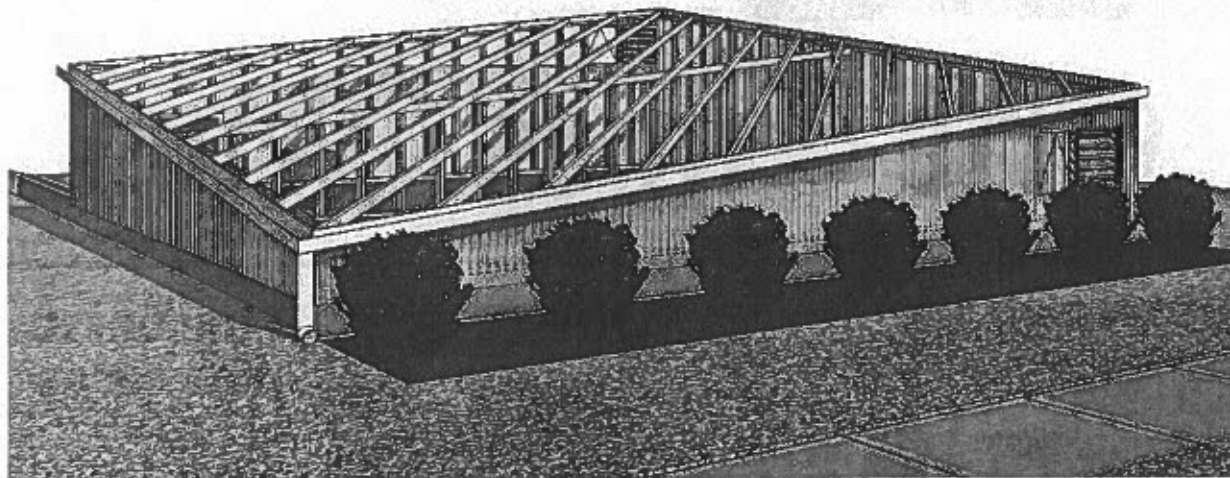
In other business, Council approved five more applications to be awarded funds through the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority (ECGRA) Renaissance Grant for 2021-2022.

The borough received seven applications totaling \$24,625, but there is only \$18,325.19 available for 2021.

The five applications will total \$17,225 and will be based on projects that make the biggest impact in the fight against blight. Borough Manager Cindy Wells said there is \$1,725 left from previous applications.

◀ See UC, P.3

NEWSROOM NOTEBOOK



The Sisters of St. Joseph Neighborhood Network plans to build a new greenhouse, shown in this rendering, on property the organization owns in the 400 block of West 19th Street. The greenhouse will help support the organization's urban agriculture and food security programs. CONTRIBUTED IMAGE/BOSTWICK DESIGN PARTNERSHIP

Erie Greenhouse plan aims for 'durable beautification'



Kevin Flowers
Erie Times-News
USA TODAY NETWORK

Charles Buki called it "durable beautification."

Buki lobbied that term at me more than four years ago during an email exchange as I sought data and context for an article on long-term plans to improve the city.

Buki — the founder and principal consultant at Alexandria, Virginia-based CZB and the key architect of the Erie Refocused comprehensive plan — has been a go-to source over the years regarding what any meaningful renaissance in Erie would truly take in terms of buy-in, cash and force of will, as well as what an invigorated city might look like. It was April 2017.

Our topic was urban agriculture. I asked Buki whether the city should pursue urban farming-related zoning changes and other allowances that would make it easier to effectively reuse long-vacant properties, help curb crime, promote neighborhood unity, provide education and job-training opportunities and increase residents' access to healthy foods.

City officials would eventually sign off on new rules that help push urban agriculture forward.

Buki said "yes." But he stressed the importance of durable beautification, which means that urban farming plans need to be sturdy, well-crafted and widely beneficial.

The Sisters of St. Joseph Neighborhood Network's latest project seems to fit that description.

The nonprofit neighborhood organization plans to build a largely underground, 1,000-square-foot greenhouse in the 400 block of West 19th Street in Erie's Little Italy neighborhood.

A crumbling single-story house once occupied the property.

But that structure has been demolished by the Neighborhood Network, which intends to bring what's known as a walipini greenhouse — an underground greenhouse with a transparent or translucent roof that is naturally heated and cooled by the earth — to the site.

The Erie Zoning Hearing Board in July signed off on a variance for the project. Its approval was needed because under city zoning rules greenhouses are not typically permitted in residential areas like the 400 block of West 19th



The Erie Zoning Hearing Board has approved a use variance that will allow the Sisters of St. Joseph Neighborhood Network to construct a largely underground greenhouse in the 400 block of West 19th Street, shown here on July 14.

KEVIN FLOWERS/ERIE TIMES-NEWS



Charles Buki, founder and principal of Alexandria, Va. Consulting firm CZB

University of Michigan professor Steven Mankouche about the best ways to move forward with its project in Erie.

Mankouche was instrumental in creating the sunken greenhouse in Detroit, a project that used the foundation of a battered, fire-ravaged house.

"It is neighborhood improvement," Caspar said of the Erie greenhouse project.

I suspect Buki would agree. "Greenhouses would be a smart way to go," Buki said via email back in 2017. "I would argue this is a very wise avenue for people to be thinking about in Erie. It can work, but it takes real focus."

Contact Kevin Flowers at kflowers@timesnews.com. Follow him on Twitter at @ETNflowers.

Street. The project's exact cost is still being determined but Heather Caspar, the Neighborhood Network's executive director, said the group has secured about \$100,000 in funding and the greenhouse could be finished as early as the end of this year.

The greenhouse utilizes the former home's foundation, which is still intact.

Caspar said the new building will be used to grow produce, herbs and other plants year-round to support the Neighborhood Network's weekly farmer's market, urban agriculture education and food insecurity programs.

"There are so many vacant and blighted properties in our neighborhoods, and you can only have so many (outdoor) gardens and green spaces," Caspar told Zoning Hearing Board members. "We're always trying to find alternate ways to use these spaces."

A similar project in Detroit, a city that has embraced urban farming as a way to resuscitate decayed neighborhoods and bring healthy foods to city residents, inspired the Neighborhood Network's plan.

During our email exchange, Buki cautioned that urban agriculture is not a revitalization panacea.

"One really needs to be intentional about it, and durably so," Buki said, adding that commitments to maintenance and a long-term sustainability strategy are paramount.

Further, Buki said, any project should include lots of conversation with local residents to gauge concerns and secure

buy-in. Caspar gets that. She pointed out that the Neighborhood Network reached out to adjacent property owners about the project to secure support and has consulted with

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