

LACKAWANNA COUNTY LAND BANK
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
July 20, 2017

The regular meeting of the Lackawanna County Land Bank was held on July 20, 2017 in the Commissioners' Conference Room, 200 Adams Avenue. Sixth Floor, Scranton, Pennsylvania.

At 10:00 am Chairman O'Malley called the meeting to order and all joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Roll Call was taken by George Kelly (member)
Commissioner O'Malley (Chairman) - Present
Henry Deecke –Present
Linda Aebli – Present
Marion Gatto – Present
Terrence McDonnell – Present
Steve Pitoniak – Excused Absence

Also present were Atty. Joseph Colbassani, Land Bank Legal Counsel, Ralph Pappas, Business Relations Manager, Department of Economic Development, Ron Koldjeski, Deputy Director of Tax Claim and Margaret Piccotti, Assistant to George Kelly.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

MINUTES

A motion was made by Ms. Linda Aebli and seconded by Ms. Marion Gatto to approve the minutes of the June 8, 2017 regular meeting as prepared and presented.

All in Favor

PRESENTATION of VOUCHERS for EXAMINATION and APPROVAL

A motion was made by Mr. Henry Deecke and seconded by Mr. George Kelly to approve voucher expenditures of June 8, 2017 through July 20, 2017, as presented.

All in Favor

DISCUSSION ITEMS

a) Land Bank Website

An intern from Marywood is working on the website. We are having trouble getting it up and running. We are trying all economical options before outsourcing to a Web company. We are still using the County Land Bank website which is being kept up to date.

b) Scranton Advisory Committee Update

The advisory committee reviewed several properties. The following properties were suggested to be approved as part of the side lot program: 11 Throop Street, 515 Electric Street, 360 N. Garfield Ave., 504-506 Deacon Street, 1712 Luzerne Street and 2428 N. Main Ave., Scranton.

c.) Property Disposition Update

The Land Bank has received an application for Short Avenue. It was received from James Finger. Mr. Finger owns a rental property at 1258 Short Avenue which is adjacent to this Land Bank property. He would like to purchase property for access to the rear of his property. He would also like to fence the property to prevent dumping on the property. He states he has been maintaining the property for about 2 years. His purchase offer for the property is \$2500.00. The advisory committee recommended it be approved and agreed it was a fair price. The Board approved it.

A property purchase application for 1726-1728-1730 Prospect Ave. has been received from Joseph Evans. Mr. Evans would like to purchase this property for his primary residence. His timetable to build is estimated at 3 to 5 years. Prior to building, he will maintain the property which will include fencing around all or part of the property. Mr. Evans knows all taxes and municipal fees must be current prior to conveyance. His purchase offer is \$5,000.00. The advisory committee said they recommend that any approval be contingent on him paying to date all taxes and/or municipal fees owed. The Board agreed.

d.) Property Acquisition Update:

The Land Bank would like to acquire the following properties from the Tax Claim Office Repository of unsold properties: 1512 Preston Place, 537 Willow Street, 612-614 Gibbons Street, and 134 S. Bromley Avenue.

e.) Additional Properties for Discussion:

The Land Bank received an application from Sean McCormick to purchase 1413 Dickson Avenue. According to Mr. McCormick's application, he would like to clean and update the lot and use it to store a boat and camper. In the future, if zoning allows, he would like to build a garage. Advisory committee recommends holding off and looking into buying the house next to the property which is on the repository list and adding it to the property.

A property purchase application has been received for a property at 1619 Rear Price Street from Robert Bonaccolta on July 13, 2017. Mr. Bonaccolta lives out of the area. According to Mr. Bonaccolta's application, he would like to restore and rent for investment purposes. Mr. Bonaccolta submitted a purchase offer of \$300.00 and feels it will cost about \$12,000.00 to rehab it. The Advisory Committee feels we should seek offers closer to the assessed value of \$9100.00. The Board agreed.

The Land Bank Board approved the sale of the properties at 920-922 Madison Ave. to United Neighborhood Community Development Corporation (UNCDC) at the May 12, 2017 Board meeting. At the time, it was agreed to sell the parcels at their assessed values and the land bank would file an Action to Quiet Title. Due to time constraints on the grant monies UNCDC plans to use for project, they must have site control on the properties as soon as possible. Atty. Drew Hailstone, legal counsel for UNCDC, stated they will accept a quit claim deed, then they will proceed with the action to quiet title. However, due to the costs involved in an action to quiet title, he is requesting a reduced price for the two parcels. The Advisory committee recommended we reduce by \$2500.00 from the original assessed value. The reduced price would then come down to \$3900.00. The Board approved.

ACTION ITEMS

Resolution No. 17-015, Authorizing the Conveyance of Certain Land Bank Owned Properties under the Land Bank Side Lot Program as listed in the attached Exhibit A

Motion by Henry Deecke

Seconded by Linda Aebli

All in favor

Resolution No. 17-016, Authorizing the Conveyance of Certain Land Bank Owned Property under the Property Purchase Program.

Motion by Terrance McDonnell

Seconded by Henry Deecke

All in favor

Resolution No. 17-017, Approving the Acquisition of additional properties from the City of Scranton's Tax Claim Repository List of Unsold Property

Motion by Henry Deecke

Seconded by Marion Gatto

All in favor

Resolution No. 17-018, Approving a Lump Sum Payment to Attorney Joseph Colbassani for Supplemental Legal Services

Motion by Marion Gatto

Seconded by Henry Deecke

All in favor

Additional Information


To date the Land Bank sold 20 properties and have 14 in the pipeline. These sold properties will bring in approximately \$10,000 in taxes per year.

OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

Ron Koldjeski asked about expanding the Land Bank. He is personally getting inquiries on the Land Bank. Commissioner O'Malley said we will be looking into expanding. George Kelly stated he would reach out to other municipalities.

ADJOURNMENT

As all business had been conducted, a motion to adjourn was made by Linda Aebli with a second by Terrance McDonnell. The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned.


Marion Gatto, Secretary

Prepared by Margaret Piccotti