

**LACKAWANNA COUNTY LAND BANK
RESCHEDULED MEETING MINUTES
August 15, 2018**

The rescheduled meeting of the Lackawanna County Land Bank was held on Wednesday, August 15, 2018 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
Commissioner O'Malley (Chairman) – Present
Henry Deecke - Excused
Linda Aebli – Present
Marion Gatto – Present
Terrence McDonnell – Present
Steve Pitoniak – Excused

Also present were Atty. Joseph Colbassani, Land Bank Legal Counsel, Ralph Pappas, Business Relations Manager, and Laura McGowan, Housing Financial Analyst.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

There were no comments made at this time.

MINUTES

A motion was made by Ms. Marion Gatto and seconded by Ms. Linda Aebli to approve the minutes of the July 13, 2018 regular meeting as prepared and presented.

All in Favor

PRESENTATION of VOUCHERS for EXAMINATION and APPROVAL

A motion was made by Ms. Marion Gatto and seconded by Mr. Terrence McDonnell to approve voucher expenditures of July 14, 2018 through August 15, 2018, as presented.

All in Favor

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a.) **Land Bank Website Update:** Mr. Kelly explained that the website is now up and running. It is still a work in progress, all of the Land Bank properties are listed, however they are still working on listing the repository properties to help the tax claim office sell those properties. For the time being, the information will still be kept on the Lackawanna County website as well, until the Land Bank website is finalized.

- b.) **Blight to Bright LSA Grant Update:** Mr. Kelly explained the Land Bank held four town hall meetings throughout Lackawanna County, encouraging local people to volunteer to form a task force. They have received about 15 volunteers from the meetings and an additional 10 volunteers from an article run by the Scranton Times. There will be 4 meetings with the blight task force with the plan being to come up with the top ten issues or reasons for blight, with the intent to develop a tool set to help people such as quality of life ordinances to share and leverage what's working in communities. The first meeting will take place next month. There is a \$65,000 grant for this, about \$20,000 will be delegated to Chris Gullotta for his consulting fee, leaving the remaining \$45,000 available to be utilized in taking down two houses. Mr. Kelly went on to explain that the Land Bank will most likely look to pursue gambling money again to add to the Blight to Bright fund since the end target is to demolish 10 homes across Lackawanna County.
- c.) **1445 Meylert Avenue Update:** Mr. Kelly explained how the developer has agreed to take the structure down at their own cost. The Land Bank would pay the tipping fees up to \$5,000. The reason being that the engineering firm cannot complete the Phase 2 environmental until the debris and what's left of the roof is removed. Demolition is supposed to start this week or early next week. Additional buildings have already begun to be demolished, Meylert Avenue had to be held off on until now because the addendum was not approved by the board. After the Phase 2 is complete, if the remediation is less than \$100,000, they are responsible for it, otherwise, we have agreed to lease it to them for up to 5 years while we handle the remediation by going after funding to assist in this endeavor.
- d.) **Bid Openings:** Mr. Pappas asked if everyone wanted to go through the sheet in order, everyone agreed.

PROPERTY DISCUSSIONS

PROPERTIES TO BE ACQUIRED FROM THE REPOSITORY OF UNSOLD PROPERTY:

1833 Block Street

Mr. Pappas explained that one application was received from Ms. Maryann Ortiz. This property is to the rear of her property and she would like to purchase the parcel to extend her property. Ms. Ortiz submitted a bid of \$500 for the parcel.

921-923 Eynon Street

Mr. Pappas explained that one application was received from Mr. & Mrs. Luther Griffiths, who own and reside in the adjacent property 1001 Eynon Street. They would use this lot to expand their property. Mr. & Mrs. Griffiths submitted a bid of \$500 for the parcel.

972 John Avenue

Mr. Pappas explained that one application was received from Ms. Heather Jones, who owns and resides in the adjacent property 970 John Avenue. She would use this lot to expand her property. Ms. Jones submitted a bid of \$500 for the parcel.

660 Wales Street

Mr. Pappas explained that one application was received from Mr. William Ritter Jr. Mr. Ritter owns and resides in the adjacent property 656 Wales Street. He would use the lot to expand his property. Mr. Ritter submitted a bid of \$620 for the parcel.

1750 Nay Aug Avenue

Mr. Pappas explained that one application was received from Mr. Arthur Philip. Mr. Philip owns the adjacent property 1748 Nay Aug Avenue as well as the property to the rear. He would like to rehab the property and create a rental unit. However, the Tax Claim Office already received bids for the property from other interested parties,

August 15, 2018

Mimutes

Page 2

the first being from a person with a condemned home in the city. In the event the other bids are rejected, the Land Bank would like to acquire the property and then the board can act on the applications and bids received.

919 Eynon Street

Mr. Pappas explained that one application was received from Mr. & Mrs. Luther Griffiths, who own and reside in the adjacent property 1001 Eynon Street, and whom placed another bid earlier. They would like to clean up this lot and expand their yard. Mr. & Mrs. Griffiths submitted a bid of \$100 for the parcel.

505 Oak Street

Mr. Pappas explained that one application was received from Ms. Maryann Ortiz. Ms. Ortiz owns and resides in the adjacent property 515 Oak Street. She would like to clean up this lot to use as a yard for her daughter. Ms. Ortiz submitted a bid of \$100 for the parcel.

1406 West Gibson Street

Mr. Pappas explained that one application was received from Mr. & Mrs. Anthony Crapella, who own and reside in the adjacent property 1402 West Gibson Street. They would like to expand their property and maintain greenspace. Mr. & Mrs. Crapella submitted a bid of \$500 for the parcel.

Motion for all properties except for the rehab was made by Linda Aebli, seconded by Terrance McDonnell

All in Favor

PROPERTY PURCHASE APPLICATIONS RECEIVED:

1350 & 1344-146 Bryn Mawr Street

Mr. Kelly explained that the property in question is 1350 & 1344-1346 Bryn Mawr Street, which is a burned out restaurant that has been on the books for a year. Tom Navich and George Pliska from TGF Properties would like to buy it and construct two single family homes on each lot, once it's cleared through demolition. The estimated demolition cost is \$20,000. Commissioner O'Malley and the Mayor of the City of Scranton have been working together to resolve this. The Land Bank has agreed to give \$5,000 toward the tipping fees, the city will then send over DWP to take it down. HUD funds cannot be used since it is a commercial building. This is a public-private partnership, which is also being considered for a LERTA. If this is a success, it will probably be used as a model for other properties in the city.

Motion by Linda Aebli

Seconded by Terrence McDonnell

All in Favor

STAFF RECOGNITION:

Mr. Kelly mentioned how when the Land Bank was originally set up, they didn't realize how much work and turnover would come with it. Atty. Joseph Colbassani has helped with 64 properties from start to finish, with another dozen in the process. With that in mind, the Land Bank proposes raising Atty. Colbassani's fee from \$1,000 a month to \$1,250 a month for all the work he never anticipated to get involved in.

Motion by Marion Gatto

Seconded by Terrence McDonnell

All in Favor

August 15, 2018

Minutes

Page 3

Mr. Kelly discussed that it customary for an Authority to provide a stipend for the Executive Director. The Land Bank does not have an Executive Director. Since Mr. Ralph Pappas has been doing such an exceptional job with everything the Land Bank entails, it is proposed that in lieu of the Executive Director stipend, Mr. Ralph Pappas be give a one-time stipend of \$5,000.

Motion by Terrence McDonnell

Seconded by Marion Gatto

All in Favor

ACTION ITEMS

Resolution NO. 18-022

Mr. Kelly explained that this resolution was for the approval of a memorandum of understanding with the City of Scranton pertaining to the demolition of certain Land Bank owned condemned structures in the City of Scranton. This memorandum of understanding pertains to the property at 1350 & 1344-1346 Bryn Mawr Street. It references just this one property, if we were to do this same thing with other properties in the City of Scranton, we would just append this memorandum at that time.

Motion by Terrence McDonnell

Seconded by Linda Aebli

All in Favor

Resolution NO. 18-023

Mr. Kelly explained that this resolution was for the approval of the acquisition of additional property from the Tax Claim Office repository list of unsold property.

Resolution NO. 18-024

Mr. Kelly explained that this resolution was for approval of the conveyance of certain Land Bank owned property under the Land Bank Property Purchase Program.

Resolution NO. 18-025

Mr. Kelly explained that this resolution was for the approval of the conveyance of certain Land Bank owned property under the Land Bank Side Lot Program.

Resolution NO. 18-026

Mr. Kelly explained that the resolution was ratifying the sale and conveyance of 1137-1139 Eynon Street. This was the one with the trump bid, a formal resolution was not done at the meeting.

Resolution NO. 18-027

Mr. Kelly explained that the resolution was approving Amendment #3 to a Legal Service Contract for Atty. Colbassani.

Motion made for all above resolutions by Marion Gatto, seconded by Linda Aebli

Terrence McDonnell abstained from NO. 18-026; Rest in Favor for all

OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

Michelle Martinez who lives next to 1619 Price Street, a Land Bank owned property, addressed the board at this time. She claims her husband has been cutting the grass there for years but people are taking wheelbarrows full of garbage and dumping it there. She's getting rats, skunks, snakes, etc. at her property. She has a pool and deck she can't use because of the smell. She has contacted the City, who told her they no longer own it so she has to speak to the Land Bank. She started contacting Ralph, as she is willing to buy the side lot, but needs the house on it taken down. Atty. Colbassani explained that the City of Scranton has agreed to keep the house in a safe condition so it is their responsibility to address the issue. Commission O'Malley asked Ralph to look into the matter further.

After the public finished addressing the board, Commissioner O'Malley wanted a motion to be made to purchase 100 more Land Bank signs.

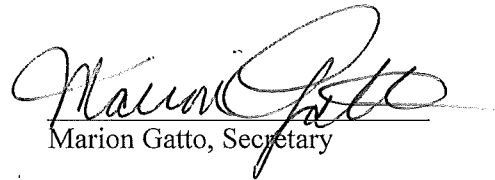
Motion by Terrence McDonnell

Seconded by Marion Gatto

All in Favor

ADJOURNMENT

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



Marion Gatto, Secretary

Prepared by Laura McGowan