

**LACKAWANNA COUNTY LAND BANK  
SCHEDULED MEETING MINUTES  
February 10, 2021**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Lackawanna County Land Bank was held virtually on Wednesday, February 10, 2021. The meeting was held via ZOOM and broadcast live on the Electric City Television (ECTV) YouTube channel. Members of the public were requested to submit any comments to Ralph Pappas at [pappasr@lackawannacounty.org](mailto:pappasr@lackawannacounty.org) by 9:00AM the day of the meeting.

At 11:00 AM, Chairwoman Debi Domenick called the meeting to order.

**ROLL CALL**

Roll Call was taken by Ralph Pappas, Staff  
Commissioner Debi Domenick – Present  
Commissioner Chris Chermak-Present  
Al Chelik - Present  
Marion Gatto – Present  
Brenda Sacco – Present  
Mary Jo Sheridan-Present

Also present were Atty. Joseph Colbassani, Land Bank Legal Counsel, Ralph Pappas, Business Relations Manager, Jesse Ergott, Advisory Committee Representative, Todd Pousley, NeighborWorks Community Revitalization Manager

Mr. Pappas reported that he received an email from Henry Deecke regarding his term of service on the Land Bank Board of Director. He forwarded the email to Chairwoman Domenick and Mrs. Sacco. Mr. Deecke's term expired on December 31, 2020 and wants to give someone else a chance to serve on the Board. Chairwoman Domenick stated there would be a replacement named by the County Commissioner's at the next Commissioner's meeting.

**OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO ADDRESS BOARD (AGENDA ITEMS ONLY)**

Mr. Pappas reported he had not received any comments or questions prior to the meeting.

**PRESENTATION OF MINUTES FOR APPROVAL**

A Motion was made by Mr. Chelik and seconded by Mrs. Sacco to approve the minutes of the January 12, 2021 meeting.

**All Voted in Favor**

**PRESENTATION OF VOUCHERS FOR EXAMINATION AND APPROVAL**

Mr. Pappas reviewed the vouchers with the Board.

A Motion was made by Mrs. Gatto and seconded by Commissioner Chermak to approve the voucher expenditures of January 13, 2021 through February 10, 2021, as presented.

**All Voted in Favor**

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **Land Bank General Update**

Mr. Pappas stated that, in the City of Scranton, as of this date, the Land Bank has conveyed 141 properties. By the end of today's meeting, there will be an additional ten (10) properties in the process to be conveyed to private interests. There are currently 65 properties in the City of Scranton inventory. In the City of Carbondale, the Land Bank has conveyed 4 properties. One property that was sold to a private interest. After today's meeting, there will be an additional six (6) properties pending to be sold to private interests. One property was conveyed to the City of Carbondale to alleviate an outstanding sewer easement issue.

Mr. Pappas also informed the Board that the Land Bank received their 50% share of the 2020 tax revenue for the former Land Bank owned properties that were sold in the City of Scranton. He thanked Maria Costanzo from the Single Tax Office for getting the checks to the Land Bank in a timely manner. Mr. Pappas also stated that some purchasers of Land Bank property have become delinquent in paying their property taxes. Staff is in the process of drafting letters to these property owners regarding their delinquencies.

Mr. Pappas also stated that he and Mrs. Sacco are discussing a policy for potential buyers of repository properties with structures. The thought is to have the buyers of a repository property with a structure place a certain amount of money in escrow until the property is brought up to code. In addition, the deed would be placed in escrow until a certificate of occupancy is issued. This policy is only in the talking stage currently.

### **New Interest /Land Bank**

Mr. Pappas stated that this morning he received a message from the Old Forge School District that they passed their Resolution electing to join the Land Bank. Old Forge Borough had previously elected to join the Land Bank. Once a copy of the Resolution is received, he will prepare the Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement to be signed by all parties. He then proceeded to update the Board as to the current School Districts and Municipalities that are members of the Land Bank. The School Districts are: Scranton, Dunmore, Carbondale, Lakeland, Valley View, Mid Valley, North Pocono, Forest City and now Old Forge. The Municipalities are: Scranton, Dunmore, Carbondale, Fell Township, Mayfield, Blakely, Archbald, Throop, Covington Township and Thornhurst Township. Chairwoman Domenick stated that due to a snowstorm our previously scheduled meeting with the Scott Township Supervisors was rescheduled to February 16, 2021.

### **Blight Task Force Update**

Jesse Ergott from NeighborWorksNEPA gave an update on the Blight Task Force. Mr. Ergott stated that as these new municipalities come on board, the objective of the task force is to keep the positive press of the Land Bank within these new areas. Some of the ways to get the word out about the Land Bank could be targeted social media within these new municipalities. Todd Pousley, NeighborWorksNEPA, Community Revitalization Manager, then spoke about their continued work on vacant lot management program. He also reported that they are working with Mrs. Sacco and Mr. Pappas to make some changes to the Land Bank website. The Blight Task Force is also in discussion to schedule another code enforcement workshop.

### **Directors Liability Insurance**

Mr. Pappas notified the Board that the Directors Liability Insurance has been renewed for another year until February 1, 2022.

### **Bid Openings/if Necessary**

Mr. Pappas reported that the Land Bank has not received any bids to be opened at this meeting.

