

**LACKAWANNA COUNTY LAND BANK
SCHEDULED MEETING MINUTES
February 8, 2019**

The scheduled meeting of the Lackawanna County Land Bank was held on Friday, February 8, 2019 in the Commissioners' Conference Room, 123 Wyoming Avenue, Fifth 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 Commissioner O'Malley (Chairman) – Present
George Kelly –Excused
Henry Deecke – Present
Linda Aebli – Present
Marion Gatto – Present
Terrence McDonnell – Present
Steve Pitoniak – Present

Also present were Atty. Joseph Colbassani, Land Bank Legal Counsel, Ralph Pappas, Business Relations Manager and Barbara Arens, Administrative Assistant.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

There were no comments made at this time.

MINUTES

A motion was made by Henry Deecke and seconded by Linda Aebli to approve the minutes of the January 11, 2019 meeting as prepared and presented.

All in Favor

PRESENTATION OF VOUCHERS FOR EXAMINATION AND APPROVAL

A motion was made by Marion Gatto and seconded by Terrence McDonnell to approve voucher expenditures of January 11, 2019 through February 8, 2019, as presented.

All in Favor

DISCUSSION ITEMS

New Interest /Land Bank- Dunmore, Old Forge, Mid Valley SD

Mr. Pappas explained that he and Mr. McDonnell were working with Dunmore. Efforts to schedule a meeting with the Dunmore school district have been unsuccessful to date. It appears Dunmore Borough Council are in favor of joining the Land Bank, but have not yet approved a resolution to that effect. Mr. Pappas and Mr. McDonnell will continue to pursue efforts to get Dunmore on board. Hopefully, the entire process should be completed in a month or two. Commissioner O'Malley asked about Old Forge and Mid Valley. Mr. Pappas stated that he spoke to Rick

Notari, an Old Forge Borough councilman. Mr. Notari informed Mr. Pappas that that the Old Forge Council has passed a resolution to join the Land Bank but the School Board had not yet done so. Commissioner O'Malley asked Mr. Pappas to reach out to the School Board to see if would be possible to meet to discuss the Land Bank. The Mid Valley School District has passed a resolution to join the Land Bank and had sent letters to the Boroughs of Throop, Olyphant and Dickson City but had not heard back from any of them yet. Mr. Pappas is going to follow up and try to get on the work session schedule for each of the municipalities.

Blight to Bright LSA Grant Update

Mr. Pappas stated that there was a Blight taskforce meeting the previous evening at NeighborWorks. He then asked Todd Pousley from NeighborWorks to update the Board on the meeting. Mr. Pousley spoke regarding how the action team was formed. The action team will now follow up on the recommendations of the Taskforce's final report. There were good discussions about some of the strategies the Taskforce recommended and they are looking to put together a plan for the next six months. Such discussion included what is needed to be done, who is going to do it and what additional resources are needed to carry out the recommendations. Mr. Pousley stated that there is a lot of momentum and NeighborWorks wants to continue that and implement the plan the Taskforce worked so hard to put together. Mr. Pappas stated that funding for NeighborWorks to assist with the Land Bank website maintenance and General Land Bank marketing is coming from the original LSA grant. Funding for NeighborWorks assistance with the Blight Task force is coming from the Blight to Bright grant. These are two separate agreements that are in place but have to be signed by the Land Bank and NeighborWorks officials.

Fell Township Update

Mr. Pappas met with Fell Township officials last week. He reported that \$20,000 from the Land Bank LSA grant has been committed for the demolition of the 13 Ontario Street property, the site of an old abandoned school house. Fell Township is in the process of getting bids to take down the structure. They are working with Sandra Opshinsky from Lackawanna County Economic Development to achieve this goal. The Inter-Governmental Agreement has been signed but the Land Bank has not taken possession of the property yet. Commissioner O'Malley asked that perhaps before the demolition is started if it would be possible to salvage some of the wooden staircases, chalk boards or old flooring so that the Land Bank could make some money to be used in future projects.

Mayfield Borough Update

\$20,000 has been committed from the LSA grant to take down a property located at 513 Lackawanna Avenue. Mayfield has three problem properties. Two of which are coming down with CDBG funds and the third the Land Bank has committed \$20,000 from the LSA grant. There may however, be some environmental issues there which the Borough is looking into.

1445 Meylert Avenue Update

Mr. Pappas stated that he has to get in touch with Attorney Rinaldi to see where they are with the environmental situation. They are in Phase 2 on that and he does not know how far they have gotten with it.

Bid Openings/if Necessary

There were no property purchase bids received prior to this meeting.

Advisory Committee Discussion

Because there were no bid openings, there was no advisory committee meeting today.

ACTION ITEMS

PROPERTY DISPOSITIONS

Resolution NO. 19-002 – Amending the Purchase Agreement and Deed of Conveyance with TGF Properties

An agreement amending the purchase agreement with TGF Properties was reached last week. Originally, the TGF Properties Purchase Agreement involved three principals but Attorney Hagen is not a part of the Agreement so the Agreement and Deed was changed to just the two principals and signed by all parties. Attorney Colbassani wanted

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to make sure it was done right. The Land Bank had originally agreed to sell the property to TGF Properties and is now selling it to only the two individuals as Attorney Hagen is not involved in this transaction. The goal was to keep this project going smoothly. The properties have been razed and are ready to go. The property has not been conveyed yet as the parties were waiting for the LERTA to be approved by the City of Scranton, which has now been done. A motion to approve this Resolution was made by Linda Aebli and seconded by Steve Pitoniak

All in Favor

2018 YEAR END AUDIT

Resolution NO. 19-003 – Ratifying a Professional Services Contract For Audit Services

As requested, Mr. Pappas reached out to Michael Kohanski seeking a fee proposal for auditing services. His fee would be \$4,000. At the last Land Bank meeting, Mr. Pappas stated that Joseph Alu, who performed the 2017 audit would again perform this year's audit for the same cost, \$1,700. It was agreed that the Land Bank would keep the services of Mr. Alu. A Motion was made by Marion Gatto and seconded by Terry McDonnell.

All in Favor

Resolution NO. 19-004 – Accepting the Resignation of a Member of the Board of Directors

At the last Land Bank meeting, Board Member Linda Aebli announced that she is retiring from her position as Executive Director of Scranton's Office of Economic and Community Development, effective February 28, 2019. Therefore, she will also leaving her position as a member and Treasurer of the Land Bank Board of Directors. Regretfully a motion was made by Henry Deecke and seconded by Terrence McDonnell.

All in Favor

Opportunity for Public to Address the Board:

None at this time

Adjournment – Motion to adjourn made by Terrence McDonnell seconded by Linda Aebli

All in Favor

Next Meeting: Friday, March 8, 2019



Marion Gatto, Secretary

Prepared by Barbara Arens