

LACKAWANNA COUNTY LAND BANK
SCHEDULED MEETING MINUTES
May 13, 2020

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Lackawanna County Land Bank was held virtually on Wednesday, May 13, 2020. The meeting was held via ZOOM and broadcast live on the Electric City Television YouTube channel. Members of the public were requested to submit any comments to Ralph Pappas at pappasr@lackawannacounty.org by 9:00AM the day of the meeting.

At 11:00 AM Chairman Debi Domenick called the meeting to order and all joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Domenick requested a moment of silence for Kevin Shaughnessy. Mr. Shaughnessy passed away suddenly this past Saturday. He was valued employee of the County and will be missed.

ROLL CALL

Roll Call was taken by Ralph Pappas, Staff

Commissioner Debi Domenick – Present

Commissioner Chris Chermak-Excused

Al Chelik - Present

Wayne Beck – Present

Henry Deecke - Present

Marion Gatto – Present

Brenda Sacco – Present

Also present were Atty. Joseph Colbassani, Land Bank Legal Counsel, Ralph Pappas, Business Relations Manager, Jesse Ergott, (NeighborWorks) Advisory Committee Representative, Todd Pousley, (NeighborWorks), Community Revitalization Manager, and Gerard Hetman, (NeighborWorks), Community Development Specialist.

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO ADDRESS BOARD (AGENDA ITEMS ONLY)

Mr. Pappas stated that he did not receive any comments prior to the meeting.

PRESENTATION OF MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

A Motion was made by Mr. Chelik and seconded by Mrs. Gatto to approve the minutes of the March 13, 2020 meeting as prepared and presented.

All in Favor

PRESENTATION OF VOUCHERS FOR EXAMINATION AND APPROVAL

Mr. Pappas reviewed the vouchers with the Board. He reported that due to the pandemic, he had some of Land Bank invoices paid from the County General Fund. Mr. Pappas will coordinate with the Board members to have Land Bank checks signed to reimburse these costs to the general fund. Chairman Domenick also offered the assistance of her Executive Assistant, Brian Doughton, if we need help with anything Land Bank related.

A Motion was made by Henry Deecke and seconded by Mr. Chelik to approve the voucher expenditures of March 13, 2020 through May 12, 2020, as presented.

All in Favor

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Land Bank General Update

Mr. Pappas stated that as of this date, the Land Bank has conveyed 129 properties. 128 properties in the City of Scranton. One property in the City of Carbondale. There are 5 additional properties that are in the process of being conveyed. These properties are also located in Scranton and Carbondale.

Year End 2019 Audit

Mr. Pappas reported that the audit was completed on time. Copies had been forwarded to all the board members with no feedback. He reported that copies of the audit were also forwarded to the County finance department and the Pa. Department of Economic and Community Development, as required.

New Interest /Land Bank- Dickson City, Scott Township, Blakely, Olyphant

As Commissioner Domenick stated at the last meeting, it was her intention to meet with the school districts boards and municipal representatives to explain the benefits of being part of the Land Bank. However, due to the pandemic, any in-person meetings for the time being have been placed on hold. She reported that Mr. Pappas placed the Land Bank information for each school district and municipality on a jump drive. Her plan is to start sending this information to the school districts and municipalities within the next few weeks. Hopefully, in the future, we can follow up with either ZOOM meetings or in person visits once the pandemic recovery moves on to another phase. She also invited any other board member to get involved as well. Mr. Pappas also stated that NeighborWorks has been a big help in this endeavor. He referenced a Land Bank one-page information sheet that was forwarded to the board prior to the meeting.

Interest Free Loan Repayment

Mr. Pappas stated that when the Land Bank was formed, the County Economic Development Office offered the Land Bank a \$50,000 interest free loan for startup costs. Ms. Sacco, as Director of the office, explained the origin of the loan funds. Due to property sales, real estate tax revenue and grant funds, the Land Bank is now in a position to pay off the full amount of the loan. The Board will be requested to act on a resolution regarding this repayment later in this meeting.

601 Prospect Avenue, Scranton Update

Mr. Pappas stated that it is an ongoing project. Brenda Sacco, Veterans Resource Coalition Vice President, developers of the project, again addressed the Board. Ms. Sacco reiterated to the Board that they were not approved for this round of the grant money they sought through Wells Fargo Foundation. However, they are seeking grant money from other sources for the rehabilitation of the structure. The coalition received LSA grant funds. Using those funds, the structure has been cleaned out and secured. using They have also been working with Johnson College on designs for the building. Once the design is completed, they feel they will be in better position to seek additional funding for rehabilitation of the structure. Once completed, it will be permanent supportive housing for our veterans.

Scranton Demolitions

Mr. Pappas again reminded the Board of the Agreement with the City of Scranton to raze Land Bank owned structures. To date, three structures have been razed. The properties are located at 1344-1346 Bryn Mawr Street, 225 Putnam Street, and 1024-26-28 Snyder Avenue. The properties are being demolished by the Scranton Department of Public Works with the Land Bank contributing \$5,000 toward the tipping fees for each of the structures. The next property to be razed will be the structure located at the rear of 1619 Price Street. As stated at past meetings, Mr. Pappas will be working with the City to get a right of entry on the front of that property in order to get access to that rear property.

West Scranton Revitalization/Luzerne Street Area

Mr. Pappas requested Jesse Ergott inform the Board about this project. Mr. Ergott stated the Land Bank owns a series of properties along the eleven hundred block of Luzerne Street, a block before West Scranton High School. As part of West Scranton Revitalization Plan, NeighborWorks has targeted this area for cleanup. They have also been working with residents and stakeholders for a long-term plan for this specific area. Mr. Ergott then requested Todd Pousley, NeighborWorks Community Revitalization Manager, review some of the initial concepts that were sent to the Board prior to the meeting. Mr. Pappas informed the Board that the Land Bank owns three out of five of the properties. NeighborWorks hopes to cleanup the properties over the summer. Mr. Pappas informed the Board that, in the past, the Land Bank was able to get prison help to clean up some of our properties. He will be contacting Warden Betti to see if that help is available again this year, Commissioner Domenick offered to speak to the Warden as well.

Ontario Street Property/Fell Township Update

No new updates on this project. We continue to work with the Township to get this building razed.

Blight Task Force Update

Jesse Ergott, NeighborWorks NEPA, CEO reminded everyone that his organization has been partnering with the Land Bank for the last few years to support the work of the Land Bank. They had hoped to have another code enforcement workshop this spring but due the pandemic, that cannot happen. They have been looking into a web-based workshop about how to respond to the pandemic. Hopefully, in the fall, organize another in-person workshop.

Bid Openings/if Necessary

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

Advisory Committee Discussion

Mr. Ergott gave a brief explanation and purpose of the Advisory Committee. The mission of the Committee is to advocate for the purpose of the land bank. They also inform the Land Bank board of anything they hear regarding the impact the Land Bank has on the community.

Mr. Pappas reviewed and explained the property purchase applications that were received with the advisory committee prior to this meeting. The applications state the intent of prospective purchase for the property. Mr. Ergott stated that advisory committee voted to approve the property conveyance to the respective applicants for the intent stated on the applications.

Commissioner Domenick then proceeded to the Resolutions to be acted upon at today's meeting,

ACTION ITEMS

PROPERTY ACQUISITION

Resolution No. 20-004– Approving the Acquisition of Additional Property from the Tax Claim Office Repository

List of Unsold Property

Parcel Address: 600 Blk. Moltke Avenue Scranton

Parcel Pin #: 16805030014

Parcel Address: 118 Archbald Street, Carbondale

Parcel Pin #: 05509110017

Parcel Address: 54 Farview Street, Carbondale

Parcel Pin #: 04509040041

A Motion was made by Mr. Chelik and seconded by Ms. Sacco to approve this Resolution

All in Favor

May 13, 2020

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PROPERTY DISPOSITION

Resolution No. 20-005 – Approving the Conveyance of Certain Land Bank Owned Property Under the Property Purchase Program –

a.) Property Located at 118 Archbald Street, Carbondale
Purchaser: Joseph Tolerico

Parcel Pin # 05509110017
Price: \$500.00

A Motion was made by Mr. Deeke and seconded by Mrs. Gatto to approve this Resolution

All in Favor

Resolution No. 20-006 – Approving the Conveyance of Certain Land Bank Owned Property Under the Land Bank Side Lot Program –

a.) Property Located at: 600 Blk. Moltke Avenue, Scranton
Purchaser: Daniel Craddock and Barbara McDonough

Parcel Pin # 16805030014
Price: \$100.00

A Motion was made by Mr. Chelik and seconded by Mrs. Gatto to approve this Resolution

All in Favor

Resolution No. 20-007 – Resolution Authorizing the Repayment of the Zero Interest Loan to the Lackawanna County Department of Planning and Community Development

A Motion was made by Ms. Sacco and seconded by Mr. Beck to approve this Resolution

All in Favor

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

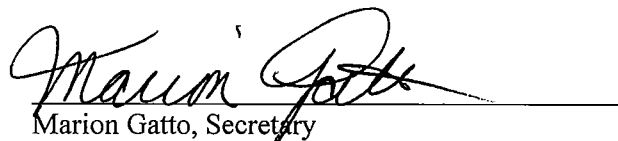
Again Mr. Pappas stated he did not receive any emails from the public regarding Land Bank issues or concerns,

All in Favor

ADJOURNMENT

A Motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Sacco and seconded by Mr. Chelik..

All in Favor


Marion Gatto, Secretary

Prepared by Ralph Pappas