



ALBANY COUNTY LAND BANK CORPORATION

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

APRIL 18, | 5:30 PM

WATERVLIET SENIOR CENTER | 1501 BROADWAY, WATERVLIET, NY

Present: Charles Touhey, Pam Harper, Sam Wells, David Traynham, Jeffery Collett, Philip Calderone, Christopher Spencer

Staff: Adam Zaranko, Irvin Ackerman, Amanda Wyckoff, Christina Wiley

AmeriCorps Members: Virginia Rawlins, Sylvia Hahn Berman

Counsel: Catherine Hedgeman

The meeting was called to order at 5:35pm by Chair Charles Touhey, with a quorum of Directors present.

1. Public Comment

Tom McPheeters: Spoke of the number of vacant lots in the City of Albany and many of them being undevelopable. He would like to have the Land Bank revisit the “Clean & Green” program to enable people in the neighborhood to manage gardens and green space.

2. Approval of Minutes: Minutes of the March Board Meeting were approved as presented (P.Harper/J.Collett).

3. Financial Statements

The financial statements were reviewed by the Finance Committee and were provided to the Board: There are no material changes to the financials; awaiting the next distribution of funding from the Office of the Attorney General to support ongoing work to Land Bank properties; news that a new grant from the Attorney General has been awarded to the Land Bank was recently received.

4. Authorizing a Resolution to Adopt the 2017-2018 Annual Budget

ACLB has developed the Annual Budget, as required by the NYS Authorities Budget Office for Public Authorities, for the 2017-2018 fiscal year. A balanced budget is presented and a brief overview includes:

Proposed income: additional OAG grant funding for full-rehab projects, Albany County’s approved funding to support the Land Bank of \$250,000 and estimated property sales proceeds (based on ACLB real estate sales history).

Proposed expenses: property improvements; operating expenses include ongoing, regular property maintenance and day-to-day activities of the Land Bank; notable increase in full-rehabilitation project expenses includes “Neighbors 4 Neighborhoods” OAG initiative; expense for current year property taxes, which is relatively minimal compared to the amount that is extinguished by Albany County in the foreclosure process.

A motion to approve the 2017-2018 Annual Budget passed unanimously (P. Harper/C.Spencer). This budget will be submitted to the New York State ABO and be posted on the Land Bank’s website.

5. Adopting a Resolution authorizing the Executive Director to enter into a contract with Bowers and Company CPA for Accounting Services

Due to the increase in Land Bank property inventory and the activity associated with it, the Finance Committee proposes to engage with a firm that provides bookkeeping and auditing services that includes a broader scope of services. Bowers & Company, CPA possesses experience with land banking activities and has the ability to pay approved-vendor invoices electronically with the same oversight and will enable Land Bank staff to shift focus toward core functions. The proposal includes a trial period to determine the actual amount of time spent on ACLB work which will be billed accordingly.

A motion to approve the resolution passed unanimously (S.Wells/D.Traynham).

6. Adopting a Resolution authorizing the Executive Director to enter into contract with Kingdom Services Unlimited, LLC for property clean out services

In the effort to increase marketability, many Land Bank properties require a full clean-out before they can be shown to prospective buyers. The Land Bank is re-procuring these services annually via an RFP. Kingdom Services presented a competitive bid with good rates and meets the additional insurance requirements for land banks. Kingdom has hired local employees to meet the increased volume to maintain Land Bank inventory. A motion to approve the resolution passed unanimously (P.Harper/C.Spencer).

7. Adopting a Resolution authorizing the Executive Director to enter into contract with Avery, Teach and Co. in connection with property content redistribution and related services

With recent property transfers, the Land Bank has received property with a wide variety of content, some of which may have some value. To help eliminate what is put into landfills the Land Bank desires to engage the services of a company to evaluate the contents of properties and redistribute or resell items of value. Avery, Teach and Co., well established in this area and in Texas, will sell items of value and generate revenue for the Land Bank. Property contents can be evaluated without a significant time delay in preparing the property to be marketed for sale. A motion to approve the resolution passed unanimously (S. Wells/C.Spencer).

8. Resolution authorizing the Executive Director to enter into an agreement for professional services with the Center for Community Progress in connection with the national Technical Assistance Scholarship Program TASP

As an acknowledgement of its efforts, Albany County Land Bank is one of only three recipients of a nation-wide grant awarded by the Center for Community for Progress, nationally recognized experts in addressing vacant and abandoned buildings. The grant includes heavily discounted expert consulting services to explore ways land banks and land trusts can draw upon their strengths, identify their weaknesses and develop an innovative collaborative pilot program to help turn around blighted neighborhoods. The result of this study could present a model for other land banks and land trust across the country. The grant requires an initial investment that will be shared by the Albany Community Land Trust, payable to CCP.

A motion to approve the resolution passed unanimously (P.Calderone/D.Traynham)

9. Adopting a Resolution to Approve the Sales of Multiple Properties

Sales summaries which include details for each property were distributed to the Board in advance of the meeting, and have also been reviewed by local advisory entities and the Acquisition and Disposition sub-committee.

Discussion/ highlights:

- 5 Willowbrook Avenue, Bethlehem: three applications for this property were received. Applicant #3 is recommended by staff, A&D committee and supported by the town. Applicant #2 is approved as a back-up offer.
- 359 Elm Avenue, Bethlehem: The Land Bank held an open house at this property which generated much interest. Nine applications were received and eight advanced to the A&D committee review. Taking into consideration proposed residency, offer price, investment and experience, staff and the A&D committee recommends approval of applicant #5, then #3, then #2 as back-up offers, respectively.
- 1398 Cass Hill Road, Berne: Three applications were presented, all with different proposals. Recommended for approval was applicant #2, who will clear the land and relocate a trailer to be occupied as a primary residence. Applicant #1 is approved as a back-up offer.
- 69 Overlook Avenue, Colonie: a vacant lot to be sold to a contractor for new construction that will be resold.
- 8 Krystal Lane, Voorheesville: Two applications were received and applicant #1 is recommended for approval due to offer price and proposed investment. A&D committee found the offer from applicant #2 to be too low.
- 480 Elk Street, Albany: This property is part of a block designated for redevelopment by a refugee welcome entity to provide decent, affordable housing to refugees new to Albany. The mission of the organization is deemed commendable and the neighborhood is a focus neighborhood of the Land Bank.

- Second Avenue Lots, Albany: 76, 78 & 80 Proposal is to merge the lots and construct new multi-family modular affordable housing. The applicant's family has new construction experience; and Land Bank approval is contingent upon bank financing (which is pending), and City of Albany Planning approval.
A motion to approve the sales of multiple properties passed unanimously (S. Wells/ C.Spencer).

10. Governance Committee Update -- Dr. Harper

Initial Board Member training is provided online by PARIS and is to be completed by all Board Members
Resumes are being accepted for candidates to fill Board Vacancies
A Board Member training session will be scheduled (looking at June)
Land Bank staff is collecting toys/games for the office/off-site events to entertain children of applicants while completing documentation or gathering information.

11. Executive Director Updates:

- A new milestone: The Land Bank has exceeded 100 approved sales since its inception
- Posting for the newly created realtor position has generated great response for our immediate need
- A new program in the City of Albany to provide funding to stimulate rehabilitation of vacant buildings has been established. Many Land Bank buildings are eligible for this funding which can be layered with additional grant funds.
- We are holding Open Houses for market-ready Land Bank properties
- Breathing Lights Documentary aired yesterday
- A recent health report notes the impacts of literacy, public health and the correlation to other health issues
- With the efforts of AmeriCorps members, ACLB has deployed and implemented
 - Roaming ACLB Application Workshops
 - "Drop-in-hours" for one-on-one help
 - Attendance at more meetings throughout our neighborhoods

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:55pm.

NEXT MEETING:

May 16, 2017 at 5:30 pm
Watervliet Senior Center
1501 Broadway, Watervliet, NY

Respectfully submitted,
Christina Wiley
Executive Assistant
Albany County Land Bank Corporation

Attested:

