



ALBANY COUNTY

LAND BANK CORPORATION

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

July 21, 2015, 5:30PM

200 HENRY JOHNSON BLVD, 2ND FLOOR, ALBANY, NY

Present: Mike Jacobson, Pamela Harper, Todd Curley, Corey Ellis, Ralph Pascale, Chris Spencer, Kathleen Bronson, Amanda Wyckoff, Christina Wiley, Kate Hedgeman.

Guest: Samuel Wells

Excused: Charles Touhey, Michael Keegan, Philip Calderone

Meeting called to order at 5:35pm by Vice Chair Pamela Harper, with a quorum of Directors present.

1. Public Comment

- Tom McPheeters invited Land Bank Board Members to the South End Neighborhood Association meeting on Tuesday July 28th at 6pm at the Howe Library. At the meeting they will discuss what they would like to see in their neighborhood for development.
- Roger Markovics spoke about the property located at 308 1st St in Albany and some of the work that is needed to rehabilitate the property and the anticipated cost of the project. Mr. Markovics noted that he is still looking for a way to take on the project financially.

2. **Minutes of the June 16th Board Meeting:** Approved as presented (T. Curley/ C. Ellis).

3. **Resolution to appoint a Treasurer for the Board:** The Finance Committee recommended Michael Jacobson for the position of Treasurer for the Land Bank Board. Jacobson has served on the Finance Committee and is well versed in the financials of the Land Bank. Approved (R. Pascale/ C. Spencer). Jacobson invited other Board Members to serve on the Finance Committee.

4. **Financial Documents:** M. Jacobson presented the Balance Sheet and Profit & Loss statement that were forwarded to the Board previously. Cash out expenditures reflect vendor bids being paid and net amount remaining on account in the bank.

5. **Resolution to Approve Public Authority Budget and Annual Land Bank Budget.** Public Authority Law requires an annual budget be completed in a format dictated by PAL. The Public Authority Budget is done on a calendar year which differs from the Budget, which is based on the Land Bank's fiscal year (July-June). Counsel maintains that when receiving money from the state, it dictates moving toward a calendar year to keep budget figures in line. The Land Bank could file a short return to the IRS for half the year resulting in the Land Bank's fiscal year adjusting to Jan-Dec. Discussion to include projected sales revenue to be reflected in the budget as income. Approved (T. Curley/ C. Spencer).

6. **Resolution Adopting a Policy on Public Access to Public Meetings** to align with PAL. Approved (C. Spencer/ M. Jacobson).

7. **Resolution Adopting a Policy on Public Access to Records** to align with PAL, is very important as it will set the guideline for freedom of information requests. Hard copy requests may require a charge for photocopying. Approved (C. Ellis/ M. Jacobson).

8. **Resolution to approve the sales of multiple Land Bank Properties** which are being recommended for approval by the Acquisition & Disposition Committee as well as the Community Advisory Committee. Approved (C. Spencer/ C. Ellis). The properties are described below:

- 34 and 32 Osborne St are two vacant lots located in a R3-B in the South End. The applicants would like to purchase these two properties and place a modular home on the site for homeownership. The home will be a one-story home, approximately 1,400 to 1,500 square feet and similar in style to the Habitat homes on the street. The anticipated cost of this project is \$180,000 - \$200,000. The applicants will self-finance the project with personal finances and a pre-qualified loan. Applicants are Eric and Debra Fagans.
 - 254 First Street is a vacant lot is located between Henry Johnson Blvd and Lexington Avenue. It is zoned R-2B. The applicant is the adjacent property owner and he is interested in acquiring this lot for increased yard space and a garden. He owns and resides in 252 First Street and he feels that by owning this property he will help beautify the neighborhood. Applicant is Robert Palmer.
- 9. Resolution to approve the acquisition of 454 First Street, Albany** which is being recommended by staff and the CAC. Approved (T. Curley/ M. Jacobson)
- The property is currently owned by an out of town individual who, as of last year, stopped paying for and maintaining the lot in the hopes that the county will foreclose on the property. He is looking to donate the property the Land Bank. Taking this lot will give the Land Bank five contiguous properties, three with buildings of which two are set to be torn down due to deteriorated condition. Current property owner is Ralph Sirico.
- 10. Resolution to approve the Purchase and Sales Contract**, developed by counsel, which the Land Bank will use as a standard contract for sales transactions. Endorsements and deed restriction addendums will be used as needed for each sale. The contract will be posted on the Land Bank website for public review along with all application documents and property lists. Approved (M. Jacobson/ T. Curley).
- 11. Resolution to sign contract with Keller Williams Realty for professional Real Estate Services.** Peter McKee, the Agent who responded to the RFP, is familiar with the Land Bank's focus neighborhoods and has a proven sales history within the past year. Amanda and Katie have met with McKee to discuss the marketing of Land Bank properties. The negotiated contract cost for services appears reasonable. Not all properties will be listed with the agent, specifically side lots. Discussion to invite McKee to the next board meeting for a presentation to the board. RFP was sent to MBWE agents but no bids were received. The CAC continues to provide such leads to the Land Bank staff. Approved (R. Pascale/ C. Spencer).
- 12. Resolution to enter into a contract with DiTonno and Sons for the Demolition of three Land Bank properties.** Approved (C. Ellis/ R. Pascale). The properties are listed below:
- 450 First Street, Albany: Property is in a state of collapse and abatement cannot be performed safely, so demolition will occur with asbestos in place.
 - 458 First Street, Albany: A section of the foundation has fallen apart and the property is unsafe to enter. Demolition will occur with asbestos in place.
 - 194 Colonie Street, Albany: Property is in a state of collapse and abatement cannot be performed safely. There is a park next door which is at risk of being negatively affected by the deteriorated condition of the building. Demolition will occur with asbestos in place.
- Discussion: Accepted bid is below budgeted costs. All demolitions will be performed to City of Albany specifications and standards. Foundations will be removed to below grade and back-filled.
- 13. Resolution to enter into a contract with ALCES, LLC for Air Monitoring Services** for current demolition projects and future needs. RFP's went out, was posted on the website and circulated. Several bids were received, one from a local company, but were significantly higher in price. Approved (R. Pascale/ C. Ellis). Discussion: The Land Bank has to hire out for these services and air monitoring cannot be subcontracted out by a contractor due to a conflict of interest. Bids were received from other, local companies. References were checked and the lowest bidder was awarded the contract.

- 14. Resolution to enter into a contract with Bonadio Group for audit and accounting services.** Only two proposals were received and Bonadio Group was the most cost effective. Approved (T. Curley/ M. Jacobson).
- 15. Resolution to approve the Mission Statement** was presented by Governance Committee member, Corey Ellis. The rewriting of the Mission Statement was a request of the CAC and other board members' input was obtained and considered. Discussion: This draft of the mission statement is a modified version of the Community Advisory Committee's statement which was recrafted to be concise and encompassing.
- 16. Governance Committee update** given by committee member Corey Ellis. A checklist was distributed to all board members to complete a board evaluation as required by New York State, due October 1st. Copies of completed checklists will be compiled and used as a tool during a board training session. Counsel, Kate Hedgeman, has conducted such board training sessions and will conduct the ½ day off-site training session early September.
- 17. Executive Director/ Staff updates: K. Bronson**
- Property acquisition strategies being explored are REOs with Wells Fargo, Chase, and Bank of America. New County foreclosures are being posted and the public has started to call the Land Bank for availability of these properties. Additional County Properties, outside of the foreclosure process, may be made available to the Land Bank in the near future.
 - New Board members were approved at the last meeting of the County Legislature and the Land Bank welcomes David Traynham and Samuel Wells. New Board member training will begin shortly.
 - Public relation strategies and improving Albany County Land Bank name-recognition are top priorities: Improved ways to promote the land bank include the use of a Realtor; holding a press conference at the end of August to announce the work we've been doing; publicizing the annual report which will be part of the audit; the new website which is scheduled to have its final draft ready for the next board meeting; exploring opportunities with public relation specialists; and distributing an "e-newsletter" via mailchimp.
 - In June, New York State approved Land Banks to follow the Land Bank disposition policy and not that of Public Authority Law.
 - To conduct board meetings at the Land Bank's new location would require moving the day to the fourth Tuesday of the month, as there is a meeting room conflict on the third Tuesday.
- 18. New Business:** None noted
- 19. Next Board Meeting:** August 18, 2015, 5:30pm at 200 Henry Johnson Blvd, 2nd floor Community Room.

Meeting adjourned 7:13pm to go into Executive Session

Minutes respectfully submitted by:

Christina Wiley
Executive Assistant
Albany County Land Bank

Attested:


Ralph Pascale, Secretary