



GREATER MOHAWK VALLEY LAND BANK

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GREATER MOHAWK VALLEY LAND BANK - GMVLB Minutes from: Thursday, September 6th, 2018 @ 1:00 PM

In Attendance:

Karl Gustafson – Chair, Margaret “Meg” Kennedy – Vice Chair, Brian Thomas - Secretary, Joe Marino (Called-in) – Treasurer, Judy Pangman – Director, John Piseck – Director, Shane Nickle – Director, Christina Brown - Community Advisory Board, Robert Albrecht – Community Outreach Coordinator, Tolga Morawski - Interim Executive Director, David Dardzinski – Little Falls Main Street First, John Mazzarella – Project Manager, Jocelyn Mosher – Administrative Assistant

Karl Gustafson called the meeting to order @ 1:04 PM.

Adopt Meeting Agenda:

- The documents provided for the meeting were;
 - Agenda
 - Minutes
 - Financial Statements
 - Staff reports from John Mazzarella, Robert Albrecht, and Jocelyn Mosher
 - NCST Contracts
 - **Meg K. made a motion to adopt the agenda as it is written, Judy P. seconded, and the motion passed unanimously**

Draft minutes for August 2018 have been posted on the website

- August 2, 2018
 - **Meg K., made a motion to approve the minutes from August 2, 2018, Judy P., seconded, and the motion passed unanimously**
- August 2, 2018 – Special Meeting Minutes
 - Tabled for next meeting

Time for Visitors:

- No Visitors

Old Business:

- **Required ABO training for BOD members**
 - John Stephens still need to complete training
 - Still trying to coordinate schedule
 - Shane Nickle needs to complete training
 - Has up to a year to complete
- **Staff Reports:**
 - Provided at meeting
 - No questions
 - John P. offered the assistance of the Herkimer IDA in regards to questions about Quickbooks, filing, and other admin work.

– **Strategic Planning visioning workshop**

- Next steps
 - Action plan needed
 - Bob A. to work with Ryan Weitz

– **Community Outreach**

- The land bank has 3 new Worthy Partners:
 - Little Falls Main Street First
 - Rome Main Streets Alliance
 - Oneida Square Projects/Cornerstone Church
- All have signed the MOU
- Tolga inquired about the best way to handle expenses relating to Worthy Partner's and MOU's
 - Annual expenses may exceed threshold for Tolga's ability to approve expenses without needing board approval, however monthly expenses are below that threshold
 - Each MOU will vary as some organizations are willing to participate more and take on more tasks than others
 - It was discussed that it is more practical to leave the MOU's more broad with the ability to edit for individual and special cases
 - As long as someone is checking to confirm that work is being completed, it was decided that there isn't a need for additional board approvals for expenses as the board has approved the original MOU for the Worthy Partner

– **Report of Committees:**

- Karl G. reminded the board that a minimum of 3 directors are required for each committee
 - It is Karl's responsibility to appoint members to the committees
 - Committee meeting minutes should be directed to Jocelyn M. to be put on the organization's website and saved with the land bank's files

○ **Executive, Finance & Audit Committee (Officers):**

- Brief summary of last meeting is needed
 - Herkimer County members had requesting a meeting prior to submitting letter of support that we had requested for our CRI III grant application
 - Held with:
 - Bernard Peplinski, Legislative Chair
 - Jim Wallace
 - Robert Mallone, County Attorney
 - Productive and successful meeting
 - Questions pertaining to the land bank's progress were answered
 - Tolga M. provided an overview of the land banks progress, but specifically focused on projects in Herkimer County
 - Attorney Mallone noted some areas in our by-laws that may need to be reviewed
 - Prior Herkimer County members had not properly relayed information which created some confusion
 - This meeting served to resolve some of this
 - Letter of support was signed and submitted to us
 - It was mentioned that having more meetings like this with other FGUs might prove to be beneficial
- CRI III
 - Due tomorrow, September 7, 2018

- Some resolutions from FGU's still needed
- LISC "hired" Enterprise as a third-party grant administrator
 - LISC was only involved prior due to the amount of land banks applying
 - Land Banks are still a relatively new concept
 - Funds are coming exclusively from Enterprise this round
 - Elizabeth Zeldin has been our point-of-contact
 - We had applied for an additional \$700K for rental properties with our last application, but we weren't approved as we weren't far enough along with our processes
 - Elizabeth Zeldin said that if we had been more up-to-speed, we would have been approved
- Karl G. noted that we need to get things completed further ahead of the deadlines and to have more involvement from the board
- Tolga noted that after the last Attorney General resigned, the funding rounds began receiving more scrutiny
 - Time for applications has become more limited
 - Only notified of grants 3-4 weeks in advance
- ABO/PARIS Report
 - Completed, submitted, and certified
 - Waiting for a response from the State
 - John P. noted that the State is very helpful with these processes
 - He also noted that the requirements will be changing and more reporting will be required
 - Jack Spaeth from Utica has been helpful to Tolga and Jocelyn
 - This was the first report for Tolga and Jocelyn and has been a learning process
- Bonadio Invoices
 - It was initially discussed that Bonadio & Co. would bill the land bank \$5,000.00 if a 2 year agreement was made, or \$7,500 for a single-year agreement
 - After requesting a lower amount, Bonadio agreed to \$5,000 for a single-year agreement
 - The bill ended up being \$9,500
 - Tolga is to check the Engagement Letter for the fee included
 - Excessive testing performed by the firm
 - Joe M. feels they were "overly thorough"
 - John P. noted that the first audit is generally more expensive as there is more to be looked at
 - Joe M. feels that it would be beneficial to have the auditors attend an Executive Committee meeting to discuss fees
 - Tolga inquired about paying \$2,000 progress invoice
 - **Meg K. made a motion to pay the \$2,000 progress invoice from Bonadio & Co., but to hold payment for the remainder of the audit fees pending a meeting with the auditors, Brian T. seconded, and the motion passed unanimously**
- Corporate Card
 - Jocelyn to inquire with Adirondack Bank
- Accounting/Bookkeeping Firm
 - Joe M. and Jocelyn met with Ron Wargo from Gustafson and Wargo, CPA firm.

- Ron Wargo to come to Little Falls office to further assess our needs once we are settled
- John P. inquired if we would eventually reach a point where we wouldn't need an external accountant considering Joe M. is an accountant and Jocelyn is finishing her degree in accounting.
 - Jocelyn noted that the land bank should only need their help initially to get the accounts better organized and to assist with some of our accounting practices
- Financial Reports
 - Joe M. and Jocelyn met to discuss financial reporting to the board and committees
 - To provide Profit and Loss statement, Balance Sheet, Statement of Cash Flows, and Budget to Actual Comparison at each meeting
 - The chart of accounts in Quickbooks was set-up poorly
 - Joe M. and Jocelyn to work to fix this
 - **Meg K. made a motion to accept the financial reports, Shane N. seconded, and the motion passed unanimously**
- **Hiring & Search Committee:** Brian Thomas, Chris Brown & Karl Gustafson
 - Tolga was offered the Executive Director position following meeting in August
 - No response
 - Tolga requested another meeting with the committee
 - Bob's Timesheets
 - There was a delay in receiving timesheets from Bob as he wasn't originally requesting to be paid
 - Karl G. noted that Bob should be paid for his time
 - Now that Bob is acclimated to ClickTime he has been submitting his timesheets
 - Some of the weeks he worked over his 12 hour limit
 - Conversely, some weeks he worked significantly less
 - Need approval for the weeks he worked over 12 hours
 - Jocelyn to submit a spreadsheet of Bob's hours to create an average
 - Tolga to pay Bob for all the weeks he worked under 12 hours, and to hold the rest pending review from the Executive Committee
- **Space Committee:** John Stephens, Chris Brown, John Piseck & Karl Gustafson
 - Little Falls Office Building for Purchase
 - Chris B., David D., John M. met with the property owner at his barn
 - Owner offered to include other items and pieces that had been removed from the space and stored in his barn
 - Doors
 - Building supplies
 - Tile, etc
 - Ready to move ahead with "clean" offer
 - Chris B. needs to know the amount of unrestricted funds available that can be used to make an offer on this building
 - Community Foundation funds for rehabbing rental properties
 - Not for acquisition costs
 - Not for renovation of office area
 - To speak to Helene from LISC about using funding from them
 - Almost \$4K available from funds received from the City of Utica for the demolition of 613 Columbia St.

- Approximately \$12K available from unrestricted funds received as a concession from Wells-Fargo for 1347 Top Notch
 - Potential concessions from NCST
 - To use available funds and request the rest from LISC
 - What we don't receive from LISC will have to be financed
 - Sam Russo helping with business plan for the building
 - Little Falls Office Rental
 - Almost all moved in
 - Thank you to David D. for helping to move furniture and get us set-up
- **Policy & Procedures Committee:** Meg Kennedy, Chris Brown & Shane Nickle
 - Met August 20th
 - Need to check-in with Joe M. regarding how to move forward with Credit Card Policy
 - Confidentiality of Interest Disclosure Forms
 - Discussed last year
 - Needed for ABO
 - Need 1 signed each year for each board member
 - John P. to provide an example
- **Project Selection Review Committee:** Brian Thomas, Mark Domenico and Chris Brown
 - Met on August 27th
- **Herkimer County:**
 - 55 Glen Ave., Little Falls
 - Parking now available
 - Pooniel Healy has offered to sell adjacent lot for parking for \$1,200
 - 208 Loomis St., Little Falls
 - Neighbor has submitted an offer for the property contingent upon the demolition of the structure
 - **Per the Project Selection Committee's recommendation, Brian T. made a motion to acquire 55 Glen Avenue located in Little Falls, NY at no cost, and the adjacent lot for parking for \$1,200, John P. seconded, and the motion passed unanimously**
 - **Per the Project Selection Committee's recommendation, Brian T. made a motion to acquire 208 Loomis Street located in Little Falls, NY at no cost to the land bank, John P. seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously**
 - Herkimer Deeds have been received for the 4 properties that were pending
- **Montgomery County:**
 - Tax Foreclosure Auction
 - Waiting for invoices from the county
 - Tolga attended the auction and received 5 of 8 properties of interest
 - Spent \$17,000 in total for these properties
 - Well under the \$30,000 spending cap that was approved
 - Some of the properties of interest sold for a very high amount
 - Beech Nut
 - Tolga met with Matthew Ossenfort, the county executive
 - Wants to meet next week with developers
 - Tolga to follow-up at the next meeting
 - 21 Lydius St.
 - Grandview Baptist Church as offered \$7,500

- **Otsego County:**
 - No Updates
 - Tolga to have meeting with county members to establish uniform methods for handing tax auctions so that we can avoid issues in the future
 - 26 Canadarago Street
 - Meg K. received an email from the county Treasurer that the county doesn't own this property
 - Back-taxes are owed
 - Privately owned
- **City of Rome**
 - 119 Turrin St.
 - Close in proximity to other Rome projects
 - Owned by M&T Bank
 - Attempting a short-sale
 - Listed at \$32,000
 - Unable to get a donation from the bank
 - Trying to contact realtor
- **City of Utica**
 - 613 Columbia St.
 - Demolished
 - Costs assessed
 - Land Bank to be reimbursed approximately \$4,000 from the city for funds saved
 - No motion required to accept funds
 - Environmental reviews
 - John M. and Jocelyn put together RFP templates
 - Went with a local company for 20-22 West Ave. in Ilion, NY
 - Partnering company was upset that they weren't offered a chance to bid
 - Discussed following models created by Albany and Syracuse
 - Offer jobs to higher bidders at the same amount of lowest bid
 - Allows us to have more contractors available
 - To follow-up at next meeting

New Business:

- **NCST Contract**
 - Provided at the meeting
Judy P. left the meeting at 2:45 PM
 - Collection of banks created a nonprofit organization to deal with foreclosed properties
 - \$5million in properties and funding available
 - First-come-first-serve basis
 - No fees required to sign-on
 - **John P. made a motion to apply for properties and funding via the NCST contract, Shane N. seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously**
 - Discussion included:
 - Approval of this agreement will only allow us to view properties available
 - From there the normal acquisition processes would be followed
- **2019 Budget**
 - Joe M., Jocelyn, and Tolga working to complete the budget a week before October 1st
 - Committee meetings needed
 - Discussed moving the board meeting up to September 27th
 - Jocelyn to send out a Doodle Poll

- There being no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 2:55 PM by a motion made by John P., and seconded by Brian T.

Respectively submitted by:
Jocelyn Mosher