



# Mohawk Valley Economic Development District, Inc.

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## **GREATER MOHAWK VALLEY LAND BANK - GMVLB**

**Minutes from: Tuesday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2017 @ 4:00 PM**

### **In Attendance:**

Kurt Ackerman, Director, Mark Domenico, Ray Johnson, Director, Margaret Kennedy, Director, Brian Thomas, Secretary, Tolga Morawski, Interim Executive Director, Christina Brown, Bob Albrecht, Supervisor AmeriCorps workers, Cabryn Gurdo, AmeriCorps, Heidi Sourwine, AmeriCorps, Susan Weber, AmeriCorps, Joseph Caruso, Exec. Director MVEDD, Janine Thompson, Administrative Director MVEDD

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Ray Johnson in Karl Gustafson's absence called the meeting to order @ 4:08 pm followed by an introduction of those present.

- The documents provided for the meeting were;
  - ❖ Agenda
  - ❖ Minutes from GMVLB meeting held Tuesday, March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017
  - ❖ City of Little Falls School District Resolution
  - ❖ Village of Palatine Bridge Resolution
  - ❖ GMVLB Organization Chart
  - ❖ GMVLB Code of Ethics
- Ray asked everyone to review the minutes from the previous meeting held on March 30<sup>th</sup> and if there was any discussion. The minutes were approved on a motion made by Mark Domenico, seconded by Meg Kennedy. The motion passed unanimously.
- Tolga asked to add something at the end of the agenda. He requested to have an executive session at the end of the board meeting to discuss two personnel issues.

**LISC Call – Helene Caloir:** LISC had made a visit to the MVEDD office on Thursday, April 20<sup>th</sup> and Tolga had asked her to call and give a brief update on the meeting.

- we are working under the Morgan Stanley settlement. We need to comply with the settlement of the Department of Justice and the Office of the Attorney General
- we have the most FGU's and cover the widest area for a Land Bank
- conditions – the Land Bank needs to have at least 1 full time staff position for a grant of this size
- for each grant disbursement the LB needs to show what you have spent the money on before the next disbursement is given
- need to see the "brick & mortar" plans of the LB. In receiving the grant there is the expectation that progress will be made
- can create an abbreviated policy to get up and running, then we can expand it. We would be covered in the meantime
- need to have projects already started even though the LB is still working on the start-up, start with easy projects like demolitions. Make sure to check with the LB lawyers before we get involved with any demos.

- Helene suggests that while you are working on the Project Selection Committee, should have a discussion on the mechanism by which we could start work before we acquire properties due to time frame. Helene suggests we check with the lawyers.
- a question was asked of Helene – if the title needs to transfer to the LB before the work can be performed in order to use LISC funds. She does believe that the title needs to be in the LB's name but she will confirm before we begin work. We need to have a specific plan for that property, like part of a site assembly
- as far as office space, LISC does not have a preference as to where the office is located, just that the AmeriCorps workers have a place to work and in a safe environment. It is the LB's decision to move the office or not. We need to consider the sharing of the space and the expenses
- Everyone thanked Helene for calling in and speaking at the meeting.

**Meeting Dates:** while we had everyone in attendance at the beginning of the meeting, discussion was held on the next meeting date. Trying to stay with the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays of the month and rotating between 1:00 pm & 6:00 pm meeting times. The next date was set for **May 23<sup>rd</sup> @ 1:00 pm.**

**Old Business:**

- **Public Authorities/Organizational:**
  - **Update on NYS Open Meetings Law Compliance:**
    - Tolga mentioned that if the board members have not completed the required training that they need to sign up for it and once completed let Tolga know.
  - **List of required committees, etc** – Christina stated that she had looked into this and cannot see any that the LB were missing
- **Report of Committees:**
  - **Disposition Committee** – LB is still in need of a chairperson for this committee. Tolga to email more information on this.
  - **Project Review Committee** – Brian Thomas & Mark Domenico chairs, spoke about the meeting they held. They provided a draft of a flow chart which is a starting point for how projects should flow. They should meet with the Albany & Schenectady Land Banks to see what the working parts would be for the forms needed and LB staff. Will be coming up with a submission form for properties.
    - Susan asked if we would be doing a title search, Tolga stated that we would be doing them along with a few other tests needed such as hazmat, engineering report, etc along with a typical cost for acquisition.
    - Bob Albright asked how a municipal government participates, Tolga advised that there will be a Partners Module to be considered later
    - Bob also brought up that there should be three parts of the mission to obtain the properties that are to be selected;
      - 1<sup>st</sup> municipalities should be able to provide nominations
      - 2<sup>nd</sup> not-for-profit or citizens should be able to report issues of properties for nominations
      - 3<sup>rd</sup> the Land Bank should have nominations
  - **Hiring Committee** – Ray Johnson, chair, has been waiting for Tolga to provide the job descriptions needed before he can proceed. Tolga stated he will get them to Ray soon. Ray in the meantime will reach out to others to see what he can obtain so that he can get the process moving.

- **Chris Brown** was nominated as non-voting Community Advisory Board (CAB) Board Member to update Bylaws and other framing documents to reflect KMVB as pool for Community Advisory Board (CAB) seat with KMVB Chair nominating. KMVB is not part of GMVLB Board as it is a committee under MVEDD
- **Report of Video Conference Systems:** Tolga mentioned that he has spoke with Brian Pokorny, IT Director of Otsego County and will be working on this to be able to do the conferencing soon. Tolga stated that each FGU has offered to help out with the cost and/or equipment to do the video conferencing.
- **Accounting/Financial:**
  - Tolga said that Joe Marino, chair of the Finance Committee, is looking at the chart of accounts that Bowers had come up with and he is going to tweak them a little
- **Legal Documents:**
  - Chris Brown & Meg Kennedy have been working on Policies & Procedures, reviewing the legal/government areas that they need to cover. They have reviewed the documents and have good feedback from attorney John Sidd. John Sidd is looking for up to \$10,000 to get these done by the May 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting. Tolga had other quotes of up to \$23,000 and stated that the Syracuse LB paid around \$70,000 to \$80,000 for their beginning documents. There are approx. 15 required policies that will be needed.
    - A motion was made to pay for the legal services of John Sidd to prepare the legal documents for the GMVLB for up to and not to exceed \$10,000.00; the motion was made by Brian Thomas, seconded by Mark Domenico and passed unanimously.
- **Indemnification/Insurance:**
  - Tolga stated the Directors & Officers insurance would cost around \$2,000.00 per year. He has obtained one quote and is waiting on 2 more. Discussion was then held and stated that we should have an Insurance Committee. It was mentioned that the Syracuse LB spends \$300,000 per year on insurance. The information should be obtained & forwarded to the Finance Committee
- **Searches, Hiring, staffing::**
  - Tolga stated that the apologized that he had sent out the proposed organization chart but it was the wrong one.
  - As stated in the phone call with Helene, LISC stated LB should have at least one (1) full time employee so Tolga suggested increasing his hours to at least 30 hours per week. Discussion was then held.
    - Again, it was brought up that Tolga needs to send Ray Johnson the job descriptions for any positions needed for the GMVLB
    - a motion was made to increase Tolga's hours from 20 to 30 hours per week for the time being, Meg Kennedy made the motion, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Brian Thomas and was so carried.
    - Hiring of an Administrative person @ 20 hrs per week and Hiring of a Project Manager @ 20 hrs per week was then discussed. Kurt mentioned that the process should be to bring the information to the Hiring Committee/Ray Johnson who would move forward and in conjunction with the Finance Committee/Joe Marino to review then bring the information to the Board for discussion, approval or denial. Cannot go backwards.

- Contract extension for Tolga: discussion was held and a motion to extend it until the next board meeting to be held on May 23<sup>rd</sup> was made by Kurt Ackerman, seconded by Brian Thomas and was so carried.
- Update & status reports of the AmeriCorps workers – Bob Albrecht, Cabryn, Heidi and Susan provided handouts for their reports. Nothing was discussed due to the time lapse of the meeting.
- **Purchasing:**
  - Discuss Contracts vs MOUs – Tolga has asked for John Sidd's input on which should be the better move for the LB
  - MOU/MOA with MVEDD – Regarding moving the office- discussion was held how the board of directors was taken by surprise at the last meeting as they were unaware that this was even a consideration. Bob Albrecht stated he had an email from Karl stating to go ahead with the purchase of the desks and the rental of the space in Little Falls. He stated that the furniture was in storage in Little Falls. It was then asked where and Bob stated in the rental space where the office was to be. Tolga mentioned that the proposed rental space in Little Falls is big enough for the desks but not for a conference room. He would be looking at sharing the MVEDD's conference room. No discussion was held with MVEDD in regards to this though. Board requests that they want to see one for one cost comparisons before they will consider moving from MVEDD's space.
  - Bob Albrecht mentioned that a decision needs to be made for the storage of the desks as the time limit was up on May 1<sup>st</sup> to store them in the office rental space. Discussion was held that a storage locker would be under \$100 but would then have to pay to move them there and then move them again when an office space was determined. He stated that he paid for the rental space out of his money which was \$450.00 for the month of April.
    - A motion was made to rent the space for the month of May and leave the desks there for now and to reimburse Bob for the \$450 for April & pay the rent on the Little Falls space at \$450 for May. Motion was made by Mark Domenico, seconded by Ray Johnson and passed unanimously.
  - Purchasing of the 4 chairs – they were not purchased because they were more than the amount that was approved at the last board meeting. It does not make sense to purchase them now seeing that we have no where to put them. Table further discussion.
- **Planning/Projects:**
  - Strategic plan, update and proposal- two programs- Chase and National Community and Stabilization Trust. Once application materials are provided from these programs, the materials should go to the Finance Committee/Joe Marino to review prior to being brought to the board. A resolution was made for the list to be provided to the Treasurer to sign. Motion made by Kurt Ackerman, seconded by Meg Kennedy and passed unanimously.
  - LISC suggested establishing 2-tier project & revenue pipelines;
    - move forward with shovel ready projects now to get projects moving or risk losing funding as they cannot fund admin/overhead expenses without projects being accomplished. Tolga mentioned that there are three (3) projects that we could move forward with to get us started. Two in West Winfield (359 East Main Street & 503 Clapson Circle) One in Palatine Bridge (15 East Grand Street). These are all demolition projects. The quote for the demo in Palatine Bridge is for \$24,000 with the Village giving \$10,000 cash. They are checking with the County to do the back fill. This is under the assumption we are not taking title to as they are less of a risk to the LB if we do not take title. It was mentioned again that Helene from LISC mentioned that

we should be taking title to properties that we are going to be working on. A motion was made to proceed if we have written approval from LISC about taking Title to properties before we move forward. The motion was made by Kurt Ackerman, seconded by Meg Kennedy and was carried unanimously.

Due to the time of the meeting, the remainder of the Agenda was tabled for another meeting. A motion to adjourn was made by Ray Johnson, seconded by Mark Domenico, so carried. Adjourned at 5:47 pm.

Respectively submitted by Janine Thompson