



GREATER MOHAWK VALLEY LAND BANK

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GREATER MOHAWK VALLEY LAND BANK - GMVLB Minutes from: Thursday, January 3rd, 2019 @ 1 PM

In Attendance:

Karl Gustafson – Chair, Margaret Kennedy – Vice Chair, Mark Domenico – Director, Judy Pangman – Director, John Piseck – Director, John Stephens – Director, Christina Brown - Community Advisory Board, Tolga Morawski - Executive Director, David Dardzinski – Little Falls Main Street First, John Mazzaella – Project Manager, Jocelyn Mosher – Administrative Assistant, Elaine Sperbeck (Guest), Cabryn Gurdo – (Called In)

Karl Gustafson called the meeting to order @ 1:00 PM.

-Pledge of Allegiance

-Roll Call

-Financial Reports

Adopt Meeting Agenda:

- The documents provided for the meeting were;
 - Agenda
 - Minutes
 - Financial Statements
 - Staff reports from John Mazzaella, Robert Albrecht, and Jocelyn Mosher
 - John Mazzaella's recommendation for bids

Draft minutes have been posted on the website

- December 6, 2018

****John P. made a motion to adopt the minutes as written, Brian T. seconded the motion, John S. abstained from voting as he wasn't present at the last meeting, all other members voted to adopt the minutes****

Financial Statements:

- Provided at the meeting
- Joe M. was not present to give updates on the financial reports

****John P. made a motion to adopt the Financial Reports as written, John S. seconded, and the motion passed unanimously****

Time for Visitors:

- None

Presentations:

- None

Staff Reports:

- Included in packet
- John S. inquired about the status and progress of the West Winfield properties
 - John M. noted that they are each at different stages of progress, but they are moving forward
- 156 Main Rd, Herkimer
 - Located down the road from the trailer park
 - Demo
 - Was targeted as a rehab prior to discovering sewer issues
 - Bill Rabbia OHSWA program
 - John P. mentioned that a sewer district is being added in that area which could potentially return the property to a rehab status

(Margaret Kennedy – Vice Chair arrived)

Old Business:

- Worthy Partners
 - No new Worthy Partners
 - Cherry Valley working on creating/finding an organization
 - Has insurance questions
- **Committee Reports:**
- **Executive, Finance & Audit Committee (Officers):**
 - Payroll discussion
 - Tolga provided email from Gustafson & Wargo confirming that payroll will be set-up on Quickbooks
 - Planning to meet on Tuesday to finalize
 - Tolga is not currently on the payroll system as he was previously a contractor and only became a regular employee in August 2018
 - To go back and reconcile taxes
 - Will pay back-taxes where necessary
 - Trying to get everyone on the same payroll system, with the proper set of internal controls
 - Capacity Building Grant Spend-Down
 - The land bank has approximately \$12K available remaining from the Capacity Building grant previously received from LISC
 - Tolga would like to use these funds to purchase the video conference system equipment that was previously approved
 - This would allow members and the public to view and attend the meetings remotely
 - It was previously approved that the GMVLB would provide the necessary equipment to each of the participating FGUs as each FGU had some of the equipment, but none of them had all of the necessary equipment
 - Tolga knows specifically which each FGU needs
 - A full video conferencing system costs approximately \$3,500 which would be the maximum amount needed by any FGU

- The land bank office in Little Falls would serve as the Herkimer County location
- **John S. made a motion to allocate up to \$2K per FGU for video conferencing equipment from the LISC Capacity Start-Up grant within the guidelines of the procurement policy, Meg K. seconded, and the motion passed unanimously**
 - As part of the discussion, Judy P. requested that the Otsego County equipment be set-up in Cooperstown instead of Oneonta as it is already present at their City Hall
- **Hiring & Search Committee:** Brian Thomas, Chris Brown & Karl Gustafson
 - Health Insurance Update
 - Excellus is waiting for or premium check which is in the mail
 - Cell Phone Benefit
 - Discussed the option of either owning a phone or receiving a reimbursement
 - Discussed the benefits of leasing versus buying the hardware
 - Tolga to submit his recommendation at the next meeting
- **Space Committee:** John Stephens, Chris Brown, John Piseck & Karl Gustafson
 - 562-564 E. Main St., Little Falls
 - Have not heard from the owner of the property since the verbal agreement was made
 - Chris B. and John M. to stop by the owner's residence to try to speak with him
 - Next report to the Community Foundation due in March
- **Policy & Procedures Committee:** Meg Kennedy, Chris Brown & Shane Nickle
 - Personnel Policy – Probationary Period
 - NYS requires a maximum of 90 days to provide health insurance to employees
 - Our current policy requires a total of 6 months which is illegal
 - To amend the probationary period for health insurance, but to leave it the same for all other benefits
 - **John S. made a motion to amend page 7 of the Personnel Policy to reduce the probationary period for health insurance from 6 months to 90 days, Meg K. seconded, and the motion passed unanimously**
 - Time-off Policy
 - Executive Director cannot carry-over time off per the current Personnel Policy
 - Regular staff can carry over up to 5 days into the next year
 - Tolga would like to amend the policy to allow all staff to carry all of their time over through the end of January
 - John S. suggested the policy be amended to allow for a pay-out of unused time-off
 - Meg K. noted that this would deter people from using their time-off and they want to encourage staff to take time-off
 - Jocelyn noted that she has 12 days off remaining
 - Tolga noted that time-off was not used due to a hectic year
 - Staff was too busy to take time-off
 - **John S. made a motion to amend the Personnel Policy to allow the Executive Director to use any remaining time-off through January 31st, John P. seconded, and the motion passed unanimously**

****John P. made a motion to allow Jocelyn Mosher to carry-over her remaining 12 days of time-off through the end of 2019 as a one-time arrangement as a result of 2018 being particularly straining, John S. seconded, and the motion passed unanimously****

- Conflict of Interest Policy
 - Working on
- Document Retention Policy
 - Working on
- **Project Selection Review Committee (PSC):** Brian Thomas, Mark Domenico and Chris Brown
 - Discussed the process of opening bids publicly
 - No one showed up for the first public bid opening
 - RPF results
 - Asbestos proposals were not “apples to apples”
 - Giving small extension to have a better comparison this time only
 - Going forward, bidders will be disqualified if required documents are not provided
 - **John S. made a motion to empower John M. to accept a bid for the asbestos testing at a rate not to exceed \$30,000 for a maximum of 8 properties, Mark D. seconded, and the motion passed unanimously****
 - Clean-outs
 - John M. creates proforma budgets for each project
 - Tolga would like the Board to vote on these proformas and allow John M. to work within the approved numbers
 - More efficient process than having to vote for each expenditure
 - John M. recommended to have John Granza perform the clean-out at 46 Division St., Fort Plain for a total of \$2K and to have Windy Hill Restorations perform the clean-outs at 219 Canal St, Fort Plain, 21 Lydius St., Fort Plain, and 132 W. Grand St., Palatine Bridge
 - **Brian T. made a motion to accept John M.’s recommendation, Mark D. seconded, and the motion passed unanimously****
 - Stabilization
 - John M. working on RFP
- **Otsego County:**
 - John M. waiting for update from attorney regarding 26 Canadarago St. and 177 Main St., Richfield Springs
 - Oneonta
 - Judy P. out for last week and a half
 - No updates on committee
 - Has property to discuss with John M.
 - Tolga set-up all with County Treasurer tomorrow
- **City of Utica**
 - 1128 Hammond Ave.
 - Tree removal proposals received
 - Tree branch and pine needle issues
 - John M. recommends D. Reese Tree Service for a total of \$3550.00

****Brian T. made a motion to accept John M.'s recommendation, John S. seconded and the motion passed unanimously****

- As part of the discussion, Karl G. noted that he would prefer to find a way to preserve the trees

- 1441 Sunset Ave.

- Good property
- Rehab
- Roof leak, small fire
- John M. recommends acquisition by owner donation
 - John M. has been in contact with the owner who has interest in donating

****John S. made a motion to accept John M.'s recommendation to acquire the property via donation by owner, John P. seconded, and the motion passed unanimously****

- 1201 Nielson St.

- Demo
- Flood damage, roof issues
- Unsafe
- Potential donation from owner

****Brian T. made a motion to accept this property as a donation, John S. seconded, and the motion passed unanimously****

- **Herkimer**

- Ilion

- Ray Johnson's committee voted down the property transfer of 208 Loomis St., Little Falls, 82 Lester Ave., Ilion, and 55 Glen Ave., Little Falls

- John S. spoke with Ray

- Ray is unhappy with the land bank's progress in Herkimer County
- Need votes to get the property transfer to move forward
- John S. is supportive of the land bank with these acquisitions as he would like to see them demolished quickly
 - Properties were not being addressed previously
 - Lester Ave. properties are particularly problematic from flood damage
 - John S. to speak to Ray's committee
 - Meg K. inquired if one of the Board Members should attend one of their meetings
 - John S. commented that it wouldn't hurt

- Dolgeville

- 14 Spencer

- Waiting for update
- Just transferred to a new company

- 156 S. Main St.

- Dolgeville's #1 priority
 - Using 19A to acquire
 - Having issues with Code Enforcement Officer

- Trailer Park

- NYS notified us of issue

- Owner of trailer park has not been paying taxes or water bills

- Water is about to be shut-off and the park will be tax foreclosed in February
- Room for 10 trailers in the park, 6 are occupied
- Owes approximately \$10K for the water and \$18K in back-taxes
- NYS asked if we could acquire and manage the trailer park temporarily until a resolution is found
 - Potentially to be reimbursed for paying outstanding expenses
 - Discussed different options being considered
 - Potential for the tenants to each own shares of the trailer park
 - Programs available for them to get newer mobile homes with reduced heating/electric costs
 - Don't want the current tenants to lose their homes as a result of the park owners decisions
 - John P. has concerns about this project aligning with our mission
 - Bob A. says it does in regards to our strategic plan as we would be working with the community to help assist people in an poorer area
 - Karl G. stated that we should gather the required parties, establish a game plan, and present to the Board.
 - Land Bank currently doesn't know what it is being asked to do and to what extent
 - Can have a special meeting, if necessary
- **Montgomery County:**
 - Fort Plain
 - 63 Center Street
 - Occupied
 - Residents to be out by the end of the month
 - 11 Ann St., Fultonville
 - Legislator Headwell contacted the land bank regarding this property that was of interest to the Land Bank at the last tax auction
 - The property still has not successfully been sold or transferred
 - To discuss at PSC
 - Palatine Bridge
 - Stone Lodge, 132 West Grand Street
 - Stained glass windows removed
 - 110 Charleston St., Charleston
 - Tax foreclosure
 - Trailer/"eye sore"
 - Vacant since 2005
 - Received a quote to remove it which was significantly less than the others
 - John M. to request more quotes
 - To discuss at PSC

New Business:

- Signs
 - Some are present at the meeting
 - Others are pending
 - Governor Signed Bill
 - Exempts the land bank from paying taxes and fees during the lag-year
 - To send a letter regarding tax payments going forward to municipalities
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- There being no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 2:37PM by a motion made by John S., and seconded by Karl G.

Respectively submitted by:
Jocelyn Mosher