



## GREATER MOHAWK VALLEY LAND BANK

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### GREATER MOHAWK VALLEY LAND BANK - GMVLB Minutes from: Thursday, January 4, 2018 @ 5:00 PM

#### **In Attendance:**

Karl Gustafson – Chairman, Mark Domenico - Director, Brian Thomas - Secretary, Tolga Morawski - Interim Executive Director, Kurt Ackerman – Director, Joe Marino – Treasurer, Christina Brown - Community Advisory Board Representative, Robert Albrecht – Community Outreach Coordinator, David Dardzinski – Little Falls Main Street First, John Mazarella & Janine Thompson – MVEDD

Meg Kennedy – Director, Judy Pangman – Director & Steve Wilson – Director; were unable to attend due to weather. Judy & Steve called in and were on the line for 30 minutes but were not put through.

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Karl Gustafson called the meeting to order @ 5:14 pm.

Karl then proceeded with the introductions of all those present at the meeting. Introductions were then made for John Mazarella who will be taking on the role of Project Manager.

**Adopt Meeting Agenda:** motion to accept the agenda as presented was made by Brian Thomas, seconded by Mark Domenico and so moved.

- The documents provided for the meeting were;
  - Agenda
  - Minutes from GMVLB meeting held Thursday, November 2, 2017, rev.1
  - Authorities Budget Office Policy Guidelines
  - Appraisal report for 56 and 60 West Main Street, Little Falls, NY
  - Lee & Mason Insurance
  - Lee & Mason “The Proper Care and Feeding of an REO”
  - Windy Hill Restoration Proposal
  - Donation Letter Requests
  - MVEDD Expense sheets for November & December 2017
  - Barton & Loguidice – GMVLB – Strategic Plan Workshop – SWOT Analysis & Values Exercise
  - List GMVLB Board meeting through December 2018

**Review & Vote on Minutes from the November 2, 2017 meeting;** motion to accept was made by Joe Marino, seconded by Kurt Ackerman and so moved.

#### **Old Business:**

- **Required ABO training for BOD members** – Kurt still needs to complete his, Joe needs to email his to Tolga. Tolga will send the next dates to Kurt.
- **Letters to FGUS regarding Appointments for seats that expired in 2017:** the seats were in Herkimer, Otsego, Rome & Utica. Please follow-up with your respective FGUs. There were 2 year & 1 year seats but the new ones will be 2 years. Need to get back to the board as soon as possible as the terms expired the end of December.

- **Videoconferencing update** – Tolga mentioned Webx and go to meeting. Problem is everyone has different hardware. Zoom does work with most hardware. Tolga will get back to everyone, no vote needed as a threshold was already approved.
- **Strategic Planning visioning workshop** – Tolga is working with Ryan Weitz on email survey to build upon the 9/23 workshop. Tolga asked for everyone to please complete the SWOT Analysis Worksheet that was handed out and return them to him by November 20<sup>th</sup>. Ryan Weitz to present to the Board at the February 1<sup>st</sup> GMVLB Board Meeting.
- **Report of Committees:**
  - **Executive Committee:** Karl mentioned that they have been meeting with LISC every other week. Discussions have been held with Helene on the outcome of getting the money and getting on track with the program. We did finally get a check.
  - **Finance & Audit Committee:** Joe Marino mentioned he has been working with Eric Acuri @ Adirondack Bank on a line of credit. Need to get a form from LISC for the Land Bank to sign and return to the bank. Once this form is received then Joe will work with Adirondack Bank to get the account set-up.
    - Joe has been working with Rocco Acuri on check bouncing insurance up to \$100,000. Tolga will follow up with Helene and get back to Joe & Karl. Helene did come around and recognize where we are at and will start over fresh.
    - Forced Phase Insurance coverage and costs of contractors if doing work. Forced Place Insurance on inventory, when we hold foreclosed properties. Hazard & Liability insurance. How much coverage do we want? State Insurance Co. at the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month would have to report this information. Tolga stated the other Land Banks are just doing liability insurance. If property burns down – oh well! Tolga used the tax assessed value, it was suggested that he should use the land value. 503 Clapson Circle is still occupied so it would need a little more insurance.
    - Helene took things as accusatory so Tolga explained what our goals are and how we want to move forward. Fingerlakes Land Bank has the same grant, they already went through their grant funds by staffing, and office space cost was covered by FGU's.
    - John asked if there was a "pool" insurance policy, Tolga said that yes there is but we need to have insurance per property. \$1 million per instance, \$2 million aggregate.
    - Karl mentioned going with the costs as Tolga has on spread sheet minus the land. Keep hazard insurance as a fire demo would cost \$10-\$15,000.
  - **Hiring & Search Committee:** will be discussed in executive session
  - **Space Committee:**
    - for the 56-60 West Main St., Little Falls property, Tolga stated the appraised value is \$75,000. We have \$100,000 for rehab on apartments from the Little Falls Community. Tolga says to offer \$70,000 or \$75,000 LISC would put in something. Owner wants \$160,000 for the property. Karl stated we originally looked at it for offices but we are now looking at the Adirondack Bank. Or do we just want to spend the time looking for another property to spend the \$100,000 on? Tolga mentioned that the Adirondack Bank is just a rental; we should look for a property that would generate revenue. Wanted to take a building that is in rough shape, a building that no one else wants. Karl asked if the property would still have room for office space. Tolga stated that it did and it has parking which is rare in Little Falls. A question was asked on how much money will it take to do the renovations? First phase would be the 1<sup>st</sup> floor. Need sustainability. Mark asked if there were any other properties in Little Falls that we could consider for the \$100,000? Karl stated that the concept was great, mixed use, but we don't want to jump into a problem that will take more money than we have. Karl also asked that since the \$100,000 was awarded in 2017 would the funds still be available in 2018? John mentioned that it would probably take about \$300,000 for the renovations. Would need to get a structural engineer as the bank may be shifting in the

back of the building. Karl recommends: 1-contact the Community Foundation and find out if there is a drop dead date to utilize these funds – Tolga stated he would find out. 2-Task our new project manager to select a committee to explore other areas in Little Falls and come back to next meeting with a report. Tolga asked if Kurt could look at the property again for a fair offer. Kurt will have something by the next meeting.

- Adirondack Bank space: everyone but Kurt looked at the space prior to the meeting. Joe said that the property manager Joanie Grande stated that the rent might be between \$1,000 to \$1,100 range with rent & utilities. They would do what they can to work with us. We need to know the square footage, who owns the flooring, air conditioning and window treatments? Bob proposes that the Bank take care of the windows, floor and air conditioning. There is a single toilet – could be satisfactory but would need a rest room that is ADA compliant. Joe will talk to Joanie; suggest the 2 small toilets to a handicapped, ADA compliant bathroom. There would be 3 rooms and a conference room. Joe stated that we need to come up with a punch list; Kurt, David, Joe & Bob to get with property manager and hammer out what space we need and what renovations need to be done. Chris mentioned that we go with a year lease not a month to month.
- **Project Selection Review Committee:**
  - Donation sample letters were included in the packet for the meeting. Tolga mentioned that in the next few weeks these will be finalized.
  - **Herkimer County:** the 7 County properties have transferred successfully to the Land Bank. Chase CCRP closing on the 330 North Prospect St., Herkimer property is completed and the deed has been received.
    - The 1347 Top Notch Drive, Little Falls property that was fire damaged, we would like to take the property. There was a donation offer from Wells Fargo along with \$10K and we countered with a request for \$25K. We are waiting for contractor evaluations/estimates for demolition which won't be over \$25K. A motion was made to take the property with the \$25K donation; motion by Kurt Ackerman seconded by Joe Marino and so carried. Tolga to let Wells Fargo know we are interested and get estimates.
    - West Winfield, 503 Clapson Circle; this property is currently being occupied. How should we proceed? This property has lots of codes violations, would be a demolition. Need to evict the people that are occupying the property. Work with the village to enforce the code issues and proceed with an eviction if we need to. Motion to proceed by Kurt Ackerman seconded by mark Domenico and so carried.
    - 135 North Main Street Herkimer; this was approved at Project Selection Committee to do the clean out. Motion to approve the clean out up to \$1,000 in cost was made by Joe Marino and seconded by Kurt Ackerman.
    - Ilion properties are on a hill and all need to be demolished. County will give them to the Land Bank cut the Village of Ilion wants to comment on this. Ray, Tolga and Kurt will attend a Village meeting on January 10<sup>th</sup>. Looking at other funding and give us time to do this and they haven't come back with a contributed cost. Project Selection committee approved the target area. Guidance to committee for preapproval on acquisition amounts these would be "auction" properties. At the next committee meeting hammer out and bring back to the board at the next meeting.
- **Montgomery County:**
  - Tolga mentioned the Car Wash in Fort Plain was sold to another buyer before we could make a bid.
  - There are three other properties up for REO sales in target areas. Project Selection committee approved the target area. Guidance to committee for preapproval on acquisition

amounts these would be “auction” properties. At the next committee meeting hammer out and bring back to the board at the next meeting.

- **Otsego County:**
  - City of Oneonta Properties/Project, working with the City on report re ~8 properties for consideration. Will work with Judy on expediting these.
  - There is a potential donation on 26 Canadarago St., Richfield Springs that would likely be a demo. Waiting on the donation letters to be finalized. Tolga will reach out to Meg and/or Craig Gelbsman for follow-up.
- **City of Rome:** update re 3 properties (rehab) and a landlocked lot (Mike). Looking at putting the new signage on all three properties.
- **Schoharie County:**
- **City of Utica:**
  - Rescind original motion on the bid from Windy Hill Restoration on the clean-out of 613 Columbia Street of a cost up to \$5,300 as the bid cost had changed. The 1<sup>st</sup> bid was \$6,150, 2<sup>nd</sup> \$27,000 and the 3<sup>rd</sup> \$28,900. A new motion to approve spending up to \$8,150 for the project was made by Brian Thomas seconded by Kurt Ackerman and so carried. Will need an insurance certificate to include the Land Bank and the City of Utica Urban Renewal Office. Joe asked if we had a deconstruction policy? Tolga will work with Sam Russo and will look at a case by case basis.
  - Tolga still waiting on estimates for the two Bank/REO Properties; 1163 Mohawk St, 1128 Hammond Ave. Tolga mentioned to see if Brian &/or Joe could contact codes to see if they can be more responsive. Meet with them to let them know what the Land Bank is about and what we are looking for.

#### **New Business:**

- Motion to pay the MVEDD November invoice at \$859.92 was made by Joe Marino seconded by Brian Thomas and so carried. Tolga has had conversations with Alice Savino & Joe Caruso (MVEDD) in regards to reducing the monthly fee paid by the Land Bank to MVEDD as we are no longer utilizing the space since the AmeriCorps members are done with their terms. Tolga has offered to pay \$200 per month as storage and board meetings. Alice was okay with the change. Tolga then asked Janine if she could provide a revised bill for December 2017.
- Tolga asked if we wanted to make a donation to the Senior Center for allowing us to hold our meeting here. A figure of \$50.00 was decided on. Kurt was going to make sure that figure was okay.
- Board Self Evaluations – please complete these by the next Board meeting.
- Resolution establishing signing authority for Executive Director re approved board actions/resolutions. Tolga mentioned that Helene brought this up. The board wants to see at the next meeting, something in writing that shows this.
- Title search and insurance? Establishing a policy? Tolga talked to a few companies they would charge by the year. \$500 to \$600 if it was a 40 year search. All but 1 Land Bank does it on all properties, Syracuse does not do them on demo properties or ones they are going to hold onto. A motion was made to do Title Insurance on the 8 properties we own was made by Kurt Ackerman seconded by Karl Gustafson and so carried. We should do an RFP for title insurance. It was asked if Tolga ran this by any attorneys and Tolga advised he talked to Charles Talent and he recommend it. Tolga will discuss the rates at the next project selection committee meeting.
- Should do an RFP for lock changes, a motion was made by Joe Marion seconded by Mark Domenico and so carried.

- Recent NYCOM workshop on Vacant & Abandoned Property, 2 have been held in the City of Utica, local edec Oneida County, HCCC and 3<sup>rd</sup> in Schoharie County with NYCOM. Chris stated he received positive feedback.
- Web Domain; GMVLB.org – Tolga advised everyone to take a look at the site. He just renewed it this week for another year. All documents for meetings are posted on the site.
- HCR – Homes & Community renewal – State Office. They are urging us to apply for a pot of money that has been inscribed. Has about \$3 million to lend out. Gap fund number per project that they will put towards.
- There is a TEDEX – FMCC – that Tolga was invited to speak at
- The next meeting will be Thursday, February 1<sup>st</sup> at 1:00 pm at the MVEDD office. And a handout was provided with a schedule of board meetings for 2018.
- Adjourn Board Meeting
- to Executive Session
- Karl asked what the process was for the position of Executive Director. Brian asked if Tolga was still interested in the position as the committee had not received his resume. Tolga stated that he was still interested and would get his cover letter & resume to Brian in the next couple of days.
- As for the Administrative Assistant – they had made the offer to Heidi but she declined the offer as she is moving out of state. As for the others that submitted resumes, there was not a good selection for a #2 candidate. The description they used was posted as a part time position, should post as a full-time position. Tolga should re-do the job description. By the February 1<sup>st</sup> board meeting, the committee needs to have a candidate(s) picked for board approval. Joe suggested a wage of \$35,000 per year.
- Move to Executive session @ 7:17 pm was made by Brian Thomas seconded by Kurt Ackerman, so carried
- Enter Executive Session @ 7:17 pm
- Motion to adjourn Executive Session @ 8:14 pm was made by Brian Thomas, seconded by Mark Domenico, so carried.
  - Motion to do a new search for a Full-time Administrative Assistant with a pay range of \$27-\$35K, to commence ASAP. Motion made by Brian Thomas, seconded by Mark Domenico and so carried.
  - Motion to hire John Mazzaella as Project Manager for the Land Bank for 20 hrs per week for no more than \$30.00 per hour, made by Brian Thomas, seconded by Joe Marino and so carried.
- Motion to adjourn Executive Session @ 8:20 pm was made by Brian Thomas

Respectively submitted by Janine Thompson