



## GREATER MOHAWK VALLEY LAND BANK

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### GREATER MOHAWK VALLEY LAND BANK - GMVLB Minutes from: Thursday, September 7, 2017 @ 5:00 PM

#### In Attendance:

Ray Johnson – Vice Chairman, Margaret Kennedy – Director, Joe Marino – Treasurer,  
Brian Thomas - Secretary, Tolga Morawski - Interim Executive Director, Robert Albrecht – Community  
Outreach Coordinator, Christina Brown - Community Advisory Board, Cabryn Gurdo – AmeriCorps, David  
Dardzinski – Little Falls Main Street First & Janine Thompson – MVEDD

#### On Conference Phone:

Karen Sullivan –Otsego Co. Planning

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Ray Johnson in the absence of Karl Gustafson called the meeting to order @ 5:05 pm.

- The documents provided for the meeting were;
  - Agenda
  - Minutes from GMVLB meeting held Tuesday, June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2017, rev.1
  - Minutes from GMVLB meeting held Monday, August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017, rev.1
  - GMVLB Accounting Summary
  - Schedule of GMVLB Board Meetings through December 2018
  - MVEDD August Invoice
  - 2017\_06\_13-GMVLB-3-Personnel Policy-rev1\_JM
  - 2017\_06\_13-GMVLB-4-Investment Policy-rev1\_JM
  - 2017\_06\_13-GMVLB-5&11-Travel and Discretionary Funds Policy-rev1\_JM
  - 2017\_05\_22-GMVLB-10-Internal Control Policy-DRAFT
  - Rome Main Streets, draft of property donation request letter
  - Update from Bob Albrecht
  - Updates from AmeriCorps workers

**Adopt Meeting Agenda:** will proceed with agenda provided

Due to the fact that there is not a quorum for this meeting, anything that needs a vote will be moved to the October 5<sup>th</sup> meeting. Meeting changed to informational meeting.

- Minutes from the June 13<sup>th</sup> & August 15<sup>th</sup> meetings: The June minutes are complete, the August minutes - need to complete the motions made during the executive session. They both were Ray Johnson & Kurt Ackerman. Janine will update the minutes and have them for the next board meeting.

#### Old Business:

- **Required ABO training for BOD members** – Meg still needs to complete the training and is currently scheduled for 9/22.
- **Strategic Planning visioning workshop** – Ryan Weitz of Barton & Loguidice will facilitate this workshop to be held on Saturday, 9/23/17 from 9:00 am to Noon @ the Travel Lodge in Little Falls. All are encouraged to attend as this is a requirement to have a Strategic Plan.

- **Report of Committees** - All committees must have three (3) board members on them. At the next meeting we will have to make sure that we confirm each committee's members.
- **Executive Committee** – remaining policies were approved, sent to the full board. The Internal Controls Policy has to conform to the by-laws, recommendation that items over \$20,000 limit to have two signatures required.
- **Finance Committee** – did anyone have any questions on the draft budget that was circulated again after the last meeting. Joe wanted everyone to be aware that even though the “Draft Budget” was adopted does not mean that it is set in stone. Adjustments can be made at anytime; these figures are not locked in. We do not have any policy or procedure on changing the budget. Joe explained that this gives us a “framework” based on the \$1.64 million that was given to the Land Bank.
  - A question was raised as to the line item called “Vehicle & Equipment” as to what this exactly covers. It was asked if this was for a vehicle for Tolga. Joe stated that this line item is for mileage, gas, tolls, travel, rental equipment that may be needed at a site, etc. but not for the rental or purchase of a company vehicle.
  - **Bills.com/Quickbooks** – Tolga mentioned that Sarah Eyre has been entering the information into Quickbooks for the Land Bank. At the next meeting we need to confirm a process to electronically enter, approve and pay bills to vendors. We have an MVEDD invoice that needs to be approved so that will be moved to the next meeting. Tolga explained that the process is that an email gets sent to gmlb@bill.com which puts the bill in queue. Tolga then goes in to approve/disapprove the bill. Once he approves it, it goes into queue for Karl or Joe to do the final approval. If approved a check gets cut and mailed. Joe asked if Bowers is all set with the account codes and Tolga advised they are.
- **Hiring/Search Committee** – are we ready to hire?
  - Tolga mentioned that he has posted Help Wanted Ads in each of the FGU's for the positions. Ray had sent out email with final selections to consider for all three positions. Ray asked if we should consider a cutoff date for resumes and Tolga said we should consider that to be today. Ray asked if anyone had any questions to use in the interviews and if so to forward them to him. It was discussed and decided to hold interviews for the Admin. Assistant on Thursday, September 14<sup>th</sup>. Was asked who could be available and at what times. It was decided to do interviews from 12:00 to 3:00 and 5:00 to 7:30 with the interviews being no longer than ½ hour each. Christina, Meg & Tolga will do the afternoon ones and Brian, Ray and Tolga will do the evening ones. A question was raised on the pay for the Admin. Assistant and it will be based on experience and part time at 20 hours per week. A question was raised as to how LISC would be on the hiring process and it was said that they are concerned with projects rather than personnel.
    - Ray mentioned that we have to make sure we watch the individuals that have applied for these positions as there cannot be any conflict of interest.
    - Janine asked if we had given thought to when a person is hired how we were going to handle the HR forms, etc. that are required and also how we were going to process payroll. Joe mentioned using Quickbooks verses other software for Payroll. Joe mentioned ADP and Paychecks as an option. Joe will get his contact come in and give us a pitch on their products unless we find someone that has qualifications.
    - As far as payroll, Joe mentioned that we need to decide on the frequency of the payroll, weekly vs. bi-weekly. He would recommend bi-weekly. Chris mentioned that if we hire someone, we have a week or two before they start, then they have to work 2 weeks till we have to pay them so we have a little bit of time to work on a payroll system.

- It was brought up at the August meeting it was decided to extend Tolga as the Acting Executive Director for two more months or until the end of October.
- **Space Committee** – Little Falls property has already been sold at asking price & rented. Tolga explained the ongoing discussions with Helene (LISC) in regards to funding process and the next steps. The 330 North Prospect St., Herkimer property is a potential for offices & rental. Tolga stated he has sent in the paperwork this week and will probably take 30 to 45 days prior to closing, maybe by mid-October.
  - Chase to use/show the property. Tolga asked LISC about office use with apartments. REO companies assure taxes are pro-rated and paid to date of transfer.
- **Policies & Procedures** – Policies were handed out at the meeting, Tolga asked that all review them prior to the next BOD meeting so that we can move forward with the voting of them. Brian mentioned that the Personnel Policies handed out is not the correct version based on changes that were to be made. Tolga said he may have sent the wrong version and would send out the correct version prior to the next meeting along with a list of all policies noting what ones still need to be voted on.
  - Tolga stated he had a discussion of conflicts with Attorney Sidd, and his recommendations (i.e. recusal from discussion on related issues as well as voting), review of MVEDD, City of Utica, Syracuse Land Bank and others' forms, processes, best practices for reporting of other board memberships (use of a form each meeting...too cumbersome perhaps?) and potential conflicts.
  - Christina Brown – the donation letter by Main Streets should go to a lawyer and Tolga agreed. He stated that we are just working as a team to gather information, do a draft with revisions, then send to a lawyer.
  - Joe wanted to make sure this is available to the Public. Tolga stated that the property information, maintenance, codes, etc. must be publishes on the website
  - Discussion was then held on bad investors/buyers and how to prevent them from getting involved with the Land Bank.
  - Bob Albrecht mentioned the MOU/MOA/worthy partners' progress. He has met with Rome Main Streets and SALT and will be meeting with Main Street First, Little Falls on Monday. Suggested system that has some order, template of tasks like snow removal, cleaning, etc. Get a draft MOU/MOA template to be used to the lawyer by October 1<sup>st</sup>. Christina asked if there are other community groups and Bob advised that these were early supporters. These were the pilot then we can accept others once a system is established.
- **Project Selection** – discussion was held on trying to come up with a submission form, donation letter template and exploring property management software. Suggestion was made to have a lawyer look at officially once there is a draft. Will also look into what funds may be available via LISC Code Enforcement grants cities locally have received to help cover the cost of software for the property inventory.
  - The committee has been looking at "Property Management/Inventory Software, still reviewing options. They will have a recommendation for the board at the October meeting.
- **Herkimer County** –
  - Tolga briefly mentioned 5/50% adoption and those to be voted on soon. He wants to show LISC that we can get targeted communities on board with the 5/50% agreements. Please encourage your counties to do a 5/50% agreement as well. Those who have partnered with us are the communities we will work with first.
  - We need a resolution on the 4 Herkimer County properties so Tolga will send out an electronic email for a BOD vote.

- Herkimer County Limbo list with a lien = homeowner still owns, 2 yr foreclosure process before County takes over. Can a homeowner do a donation – yes but with a resolution from the County to forgive a lien if it is given to the Land Bank. Project Selection Committee has asked Ray to come/call to their next meeting to discuss these.
- **Montgomery County** – The limestone from the Wagner House is slated to be moved to MVC's West Hill School in Canajoharie through October 2018 for no cost.
  - Village of Fort Plain – Awaiting appraisal of old car wash.
  - Town of Mohawk property outside of Fonda, 891 State Route 334, Mohawk, NY 12068. Donation offer from Wells Fargo offering the property with \$10K. Awaiting contractor evaluation/write-up of the property. Tolga will send an electronic vote to counter with up to \$25,000 instead of \$10K to be donated with the property.
- **Otsego County** – Tolga met with the City of Oneonta on a report consisting of 8 properties for consideration. Will need a motion to take on one demo and one rehab in the City.
- **Rome** – 3 properties pending, two rehabs, one demo (possibly). Awaiting City vote. They are working on transfer legislation.
- **Schoharie County** – Report on development of local project committee. Two potential donations from Chase Bank in the County being evaluated; 2634 Creed Rd, Esperance and 160 Lantern Dr., Sharon Springs.
- **Utica** – pursuing three properties with Brian & Joe, 613 Columbia Street; two bank REO properties – 1163 Mohawk St & 1128 Hammond Ave. For the Columbia St. property they have contacted the Development Company for access to the site to knock down and when they do sell it we hold a state in property so we get our money back. Tolga would like to send a letter to donate. Joe asked if we had heard anything from them yet and stated we hope to have later next week.
  - **The Hammond Ave.** property has been sold was bought for \$18K now is being offered for \$29K. Tolga to send a letter that we will be interested if they do not sell.
- **Update on Video Conference Systems** – Brian Pokorny, IT Director of Otsego County is now going to work on the system again and Tolga will have an update at the October meeting.
- **Written Reports** – were provided from Bob, Susan, Cabryn & Heidi

#### **New Business:**

- There is a trip scheduled to NYC by AmeriCorps Members & Supervisors for LISC "Capstone Day". This event is September 25, 2017. Tolga has booked a room for Susan & Heidi @ \$170/night, there would be travel expenses of approx. \$100 to \$120 each for the train trip. LISC will reimburse part and the Land Bank will be responsible for the balance. Bob Albrecht would also like to attend and Tolga wanted to let everyone know that he may go over his allotted 20 hrs/wk if he does.
- Pending Bills – one for MVEDD for August, \$1144.98. Will move this to the October meeting for approval.
- Tolga mentioned that we need to look for a new member for Otsego County as Eric Scrivener has backed out today.
- Next meeting will be held at 1:00 pm on Thursday, October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017.
- Motion to Adjourn @ 6:31 pm was made by Ray Johnson, seconded by Meg Kennedy

Respectively submitted by Janine Thompson