

Minutes of the Fairfield County Land Reutilization Corporation

Meeting Date: February 9, 2016 at 2:00 PM

Location: Fairfield County Commissioners' Hearing Room

Members of the Board:

James Bahnsen, Fairfield County Treasurer, Statutory Director/Chair
Mike Kiger, Fairfield County Commissioner, Statutory Director
David Levacy, Fairfield County Commissioner, Statutory Director
Steve Davis, Fairfield County Commissioner, Selected Director
Brian Kuhn, City of Lancaster, Municipal Director/Vice Chair/Designee
Harry Myers, Jr, Violet Township, Township Director
Zack DeLeon, Secretary/Selected Director

Board Members Present: Bahnsen, Levacy, DeLeon, Myers, Kuhn

Individuals Present: Michael Kaper, Carri Brown, Donna Fox-Moore, Holly Mattei, Jon Slater, Josh Horacek

Quorum: Five of seven Board Members were present. Quorum was attained.

A. Call to Order and Welcome: Jim Bahnsen at 2:02 PM

B. The January 12, 2016 Meeting Minutes were reviewed. Mr. Bahnsen noted one necessary change. The Treasurer's Report should not be construed to indicate that the cash balance on hand was \$13K. This was simply the difference between the income with DTAC transfers and the expenses on this activity report. Motion to approve the amended minutes by Myers. Second by DeLeon. Minutes approved by unanimous vote.

C. Treasurer's Report

a. The Monthly Activity Report was presented by Mr. Bahnsen, who reported a current balance of \$187,188.90 (Attachment B). A full reimbursement for the NIP for \$126,694 was received in January. Expenses of ~\$73K for seven demolitions, ~2K for legal filings, and \$1,109.25 for tree removal will be reimbursed through the NIP grant. Mr. Levacy reported that he had spoken with a Lancaster City Council member regarding waiving demo permit fees to the City due to the fact that the Land Bank is improving the City through these efforts. Motion to approve the Treasurer's Report was made by DeLeon. Second by Myers. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

D. Board Openings: Mr. Kaper reported that, per the Land Bank bylaws, three board positions have 2-year terms which expire on February 11, 2016. Davis and DeLeon are two of these three, and to fill the positions we must first post them as available. If no

submittals are received, then the current members may be reappointed. All postings and deadlines should be complete by the next regular meeting.

E. Old Business

- a. NIP Update: Mr. Kaper reported on NIP properties in process. We have completed 15 of 21 scheduled demolitions, seven of which have been reimbursed through the NIP grant. Six new properties were reviewed on 2/8/2016 with demolition and asbestos abatement contractors. This will be the final large group of demolitions in the foreseeable future, as one or two will be handled at a time in the near future. All but one of these properties are in Lancaster, with the other being at Fairfield Beach. Mr. Kaper reported the majority of tax delinquencies are on vacant lots, which do not qualify for NIP funds, and ~130 of which are at Buckeye Lake. Mrs. Mattei reported that RPC continues to look at Fairfield Beach for CDBG opportunities. They have interest in coordinating with the Land Bank on possible Neighborhood Revitalization Program grants.

Mr. Kaper added that most demolitions in the Buckeye Lake area involve more cost in tree and brush removal than in demo of structures because these areas have many lots which are overgrown. Donna Fox-Moore indicated that tires and other refuse items have been dumped on many lots, and suggested a multi-disciplinary team should be formed to consult on the cleanup of many of these sites. Mr. Kaper reported that land bank legislation technically gives land banks code enforcement authority, and perhaps we should consider this in communities without code enforcement personnel. Mr. Slater also added that many of these lots have no real value or purpose as individual lots, because in many cases it takes as many as five lots to create a legal building site. Therefore, he suggested identifying minimum "economic units" for the purpose of creating value.

Mr. Kaper reported there have been some complaints from civic organizations in Franklin County that there have been too many demolitions and not enough rehabilitations considered. We have three properties being considered for rehabilitation, and we do not have a carte blanche policy promoting demolition. Ms. Brown suggested a strategy should be considered for each neighborhood and/or site. Mr. Kaper also suggested the Land Bank could pair with Community Action or Habitat For Humanity, whereby the property could be transferred to one of these entities after work has been completed. Ms. Fox-Moore indicated the County has ~130K in remaining NSP funds on deposit, and the State would rather see those funds put to use instead of being returned.

- b. Clarence Miller Building: Mr. Kaper thanked Mr. Horacek for his work in securing ownership of the building for the Land Bank as of 2/3/2016. Clark Insurance has provided a 6-month policy on the building at a cost of roughly \$3,000 with a \$5K deductible. This is based on a value of \$100K. Mr. Kaper and Mr. Bahnsen have been working with Fairfield Homes Inc. (FHI), which has agreed on an option to purchase the property for \$60,000 with a non-refundable option fee of \$5,000. FHI can collect additional funding application points by purchasing the property below

50% of the \$130K appraised value. FHI agrees to pay up to an additional \$15K in utility expenses, which is based on prior billings over a similar time period and may be paid in advance or reimbursed depending on which method works best for all parties. Brian Boltz has reviewed and amended the option from FHI, and revisions have been submitted to FHI. FHI must submit their application for funding by 2/18/2016, so the suggestion was made by Mr. Kaper to give Mr. Bahnsen or Mr. Kaper authority to sign the option once changes have been approved by both parties. FHI does not have to apply for historic designation until funding has been approved, and Ms. Brown added that the County may have additional liability if an historic designation were to be granted and the property ownership reverted back to the County.

Ms. Fox-Moore stated that this project scores in a high tier initially, but there is no indication of the strength of competing projects at this time. Having a land bank property is a focus in this round, plus adaptive reuse and the need for senior housing make this project very competitive. It will take an extraordinary project to beat this application.

A motion was made by Mr. Levacy to authorize Mr. Kaper to sign the option for Fairfield Homes to purchase. Second by Myers. Motion passed with an abstention from DeLeon.

F. Around The Horn

- a. Ms. Fox-Moore reported on meeting with Zack Space. Fairfield County has the only Ohio land bank working with a Community Action agency. Space is looking for other opportunities to involve related agencies. With brownfield redevelopment funds being depleted, the State is looking for new funding opportunities for commercial properties.
- b. Mr. Kuhn talked about the great collaboration between Sean Fowler, City of Lancaster code enforcement officer, and Mr. Kaper. Together they are working on a target list of properties, such as Workingman's Friend on East Main Street. Mr. Levacy asked if this property would be affected by BUSTR regs, and Mr. Kaper said that had been checked and did not appear to apply. The property is tax delinquent, although instead of the property owner being non-existent, they are simply uninterested in the property.
- c. Ms. Brown worked with Ms. Mattei and found cases where subdivision fees had been waived by municipalities, which may be a precedent for the City of Lancaster to waive demo permit fees.

G. Summary of Action Steps

- H. Upcoming Calendar: The next meeting of the Fairfield County Land Reutilization Corporation was set for March 8, 2016 at 2:00 PM.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by DeLeon. Second by Kuhn. Motion passed by unanimous vote and the meeting adjourned at 2:45 PM.