

Tri-COG Land Bank
Board of Directors Meeting March 9, 2023 5:30pm
Steel Rivers Council of Governments – HSC Conference Room

Call to Order: 5:31pm by E. Skiba

Roll Call

Jim Fisher: Present
Crystal Jennings-Rivera: Present
Tony Kurta: Present
Richard Livingston: Present
David Pasternak: Present via ZOOM
Maureen Quinn: Present
Amanda Settelmaier: Present
Elaina Skiba: Present
Louis Weyand: Present

Others Present

Natalie Boydston
Joel Garceau
Gary Hitchins
An Lewis
Vannie Wang
Alan Sisco
Kayla Geahry
Mandi Culhane, GRB Law

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Comments

Matt Williams of 415 Main St, Irwin, PA explained that he's the owner of both Equity Real Estate and Equity Preservation Services and would like to work with TCLB. He primarily works on foreclosed properties and is familiar with the challenges of blight. He also explained that he's the Founder and Chairman of Fight The Blight, which is a nonprofit organization that focuses on addressing community blight by assisting homeowners who are unable to maintain their properties through lawn care, debris and trash removal, and minor handyman repairs. Since December 2020, his organization has been able to complete \$10,000 in maintenance at no cost to residents in Westmoreland County and he'd like to bring the program to Allegheny County by working with TCLB.

Financial Report/Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the Minutes dated February 9, 2023.

Motion moved: R. Livingston

Seconded: C. Jennings-Rivera

All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

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Motion to approve Financial Report and List of Bills as dated.

Motion moved: M. Quinn

Seconded: L. Weyand

All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

Executive Session – Property/Application Information Session

Motion to enter executive session at 5:38pm.

Motion moved: M. Quinn

Seconded: R. Livingston

All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

Executive Session ended at 5:49pm.

Property Application Deliberation

211 Wilkins Ave – Chalfant

Application #1 – Fortunae LLC (Luke Palamara)

Redevelopment plan to rehabilitate and operate property as rental.

The work plan and application summary from Fortunae LLC (Luke Palamara) were available to the Board for review via Govenda.

The board felt that the application, work plan and budget from Fortunae LLC (Luke Palamara) satisfied all requirements, were consistent with the TCLB policies on disposition, and the proof of financing to support the purchase and rehabilitation of the property was sufficient.

Motion to authorize A. Lewis and staff to offer *211 Wilkins – Chalfant* for sale to the applicant, Fortunae LLC (Luke Palamara) with the TCLB Enforcement Mortgage in second position.

Motion moved: A. Settelmaier

Seconded: M. Quinn

All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

Organizational Updates

Property Management System

N. Boydston explained that TCLB currently uses eProperty Plus as the main dashboard system for property information. She explained that the current system is not task-based, which can make it difficult to track properties through TCLB's process. After some research, it is clear that a switch to Tolemi as the main dashboard and informational system would be helpful as TCLB grows. This system allows better delegation of work, more exact tracking of a higher number of properties, task-based process checklists, processing of online payments and applications, and safekeeping of personal data. TCLB would like to enter into contract with Tolemi for \$25,000 per year and a one-time implementation fee of \$4,500. Costs are all-inclusive of support and programs.

Motion to authorize A. Lewis and staff to enter into contract with Tolemi per terms of agreement received, pending solicitor's review.

Motion moved: R. Livingston

Seconded: J. Fisher

All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

Property Purchasing Process Discussion

A. Lewis explained that in some instances in the future, TCLB may want to consider purchasing property from owners in order to move them to responsible ownership. The Board discussed how that process would work and was amenable to the idea.

Review of Engineering Services

A. Lewis would like to submit an RFP for a new engineer. The Board approves.

Landscaping Bid for Summer Season 2023

G. Hitchins explained that TCLB received two bids for the summer landscaping season with City Source as the lowest bidder. Explained that the organization has been consistent and reliable in the past.

Motion to approve City Source Associates as landscaping contractor for the 2023 summer season.

Motion moved: R. Livingston

Seconded: C. Jennings-Rivera

All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

Chevy Van Purchase

Motion to approve Resolution #1/2023R, authorizing the Tri-COG Land Bank to approve the purchase of the 2005 Chevrolet Express Cargo Van from the Steel Rivers Council of Governments for an amount not to exceed \$4,200.00.

Motion moved: L. Weyand

Seconded: M. Quinn

All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

Property Submission Deadlines

A. Lewis explained that property submission deadlines will now be quarterly, which will allow for the creation of more cohorts.

Bird Friendly Communities Program

N. Boydston explained that the Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania and the Mon Valley Environmental Conservation Initiative launched the Bird Friendly Communities Program, focusing currently in the McKeesport Area School District. TCLB will be working with them on developing a vacant lot into a bird friendly habitat.

Strategic Plan

The Board received copies of the Strategic Plan.

Property Pipeline

TCLB has handled 153 total properties at this time. There are 54 properties in the acquisition process, 55 owned properties, 5 property applications approved (3 houses, 2 vacant lots), and 44 properties sold (39 houses, 1 commercial building, 2 vacant lots, 2 side lots). Nine enforcement mortgages to date have been satisfied. TCLB has owned 95 properties to date.

TCLB Sold Properties

409 Fieldstone Dr – Monroeville

Closed on February 21, 2023.

1601 Summit Dr – White Oak

Closed on February 21, 2023.

590 4th St – Pitcairn

A. Lewis explained that the buyers of 590 4th St – Pitcairn are renovating themselves and have done more work at a higher level than the initial budget and work plan. In order for them to finish, they'll need to borrow money, however the TCLB Enforcement Mortgage is making that difficult. They've requested that TCLB release/satisfy the Enforcement Mortgage. M. Culhane to craft an agreement which will still hold the buyers accountable to some of the terms and penalties for damages.

Motion to release/satisfy the Enforcement Mortgage for 590 4th St – Pitcairn with an agreement drafted by the Solicitor.

Motion moved: R. Livingston

Seconded: A. Settelmaier

All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

First Buyer 203(k) Loan Property

J. Garceau explained that the first buyer using a 203(k) loan will be moving in within the week. TCLB will tour the house once move-in is complete.

TCLB Owned Property Update

TCLB currently owns 55 properties: 39 houses and 16 vacant lots.

211 Pennsylvania Ave – Clairton

Acquired at March Sheriff Sale.

1003 Broadway Ave – East McKeesport

Acquired at March Sheriff Sale.

311 Tintzman Ave – North Versailles

Acquired at March Sheriff Sale.

2800 Woodstock Ave – Swissvale

Acquired at March Sheriff Sale.

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Listed Property Update

842 Delaware – Braddock Hills

Still listed for sale.

105 Lynnwood Ave + vacant lots – Chalfant

Still listed for sale.

211 Wilkins – Chalfant

Still listed for sale.

306 Sherman Ave + vacant lot – Dravosburg

Still listed for sale.

35 Washington St – Etna

Still listed for sale.

2114 Duquesne – McKeesport

Still listed for sale.

1700 & 1702 Wesley St – McKeesport

Still listed for sale.

199 Oxford Dr – McKeesport

Still listed for sale.

1042 North Ave – Millvale

Still listed for sale.

713 Negley Ave – Wilkins

Still listed for sale.

37 Lawrence Ave – Millvale

Still listed for sale.

DCED Grant Update

2322 Buena Vista St – Swissvale

Recently demolished.

283 Park Ave – Braddock Hills

Recently demolished.

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1172 Grandview Ave – North Braddock, 2342 Buena Vista St – Swissvale, 650 Mortimer Ave – Wilkins, 658 Mortimer Ave – Wilkins

Bids were requested but received no responses. TCLB staff to process in-house and request bids for a second time.

PHARE Funding Request Update

145 Pennsylvania Ave – Clairton, 426 Baker Ave – Clairton, 211 Pennsylvania Ave – Clairton, 514 Walnut Ave - Clairton

TCLB will renovate up to four of these properties to the point that they will pass an occupancy inspection. Funding requires at least \$55,500 of the funds to repair and sell at least one home to a buyer whose income is below 50% of Area Median Income (AMI).

Disposition Process Update

Four properties in Cohort 10 are in the Quiet Title process.

Six properties in Cohort 11 are in the Quiet Title process.

Six properties in Cohort 12 are waiting to start the Quiet Title process.

We are waiting for deeds for four properties.

Approved Application – Property Update

430 Morris – Edgewood

Agreement of Sale executed; closing contingent upon receiving appropriate permits.

113 Center Ave – East Pittsburgh

Scheduled to close March 15.

609 Sunnyside Ave – East Pittsburgh

Scheduled to close March 15.

34 Chartiers Ave – Rankin

Scheduled to close March 15.

36 Chartiers Ave – Rankin

Agreement of Sale executed.

Tentative Sheriff Sale Schedule

TCLB is set to acquire one property at the April Sheriff Sale and one property at the May Sheriff Sale.

There are 40 properties TBD; working their way through the Sheriff Sale process.

TCLB has stopped the Sheriff Sale process on three properties located in Port Vue.

TCLB has stopped the Sheriff Sale process on two properties as taxes have been paid in full.

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Properties in Process

Willow Drive (640-K-118) – Monroeville, Main St (168-K-034) – Sharpsburg, Main St (168-K-035) – Sharpsburg, 1833 Main Street (168-M-348) – Sharpsburg, and 406 Depot St (759-S-380) – South Versailles

60-Day Acquisition Notices mailed – deadline to respond March 28, 2023.

147 Washington St – Edgewood

Will be filing new Conservatorship petition next week.

568 Stokes Ave – North Braddock

Donation - Deed mailed.

702 Union Ave – McKeesport

Donation agreement in progress.

Properties for Consideration

717 N 6th St (657-N-229) – Clairton, 427 N 4th St (764-C-084) – Clairton, 410 Mitchell Ave (879-M-103) – Clairton, Mitchell Ave (879-M-114) – Clairton, Grandview Ave (464-H-119) – McKeesport, 1034 Logan Rd (751-F-163) – North Versailles, Logan Rd (751-F-162) – North Versailles, 1153 North Ave (746-B-118) – Pitcairn, 419 2nd St (747-A-100) – Pitcairn, 3203 Muse Ln (648-M-328) – White Oak, Muse Ln (648-M-323) – White Oak

Motion for TCLB Staff to pursue the acquisition of the above properties, contingent on title search results, and mail out 60-Day Acquisition Notices.

Motion moved: M. Quinn

Seconded: R. Livingston

All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

Adjourn

Motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion moved: R. Livingston

Seconded: L. Weyand

All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 6:33pm.