

**LACKAWANNA COUNTY LAND BANK  
SCHEDULED MEETING MINUTES  
August 11, 2020**

The rescheduled meeting of the Lackawanna County Land Bank was held virtually on Tuesday, August 11, 2020. The meeting was held via ZOOM and broadcast live on the Electric City Television YouTube channel. Members of the public were requested to submit any comments to Ralph Pappas at [pappasr@lackawannacounty.org](mailto:pappasr@lackawannacounty.org), by 9:00AM the day of the meeting.

At 10:00 AM Chairman Debi Domenick called the meeting to order and all joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL**

Roll Call was taken by Ralph Pappas, Staff  
Commissioner Debi Domenick – Present  
Commissioner Chris Chermak-Excused  
Wayne Beck – Present  
Al Chelik - Present  
Henry Deecke - Present  
Marion Gatto – Present  
Brenda Sacco – Present

Also present were Atty. Joseph Colbassani, Land Bank Legal Counsel, Ralph Pappas, Business Relations Manager, Jesse Ergott, Advisory Committee Representative

**OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO ADDRESS BOARD (AGENDA ITEMS ONLY)**

Mr. Pappas stated that he did not receive any comments or questions prior to the meeting

**PRESENTATION OF MINUTES FOR APPROVAL**

A Motion was made by Mrs. Sacco and seconded by Mr. Beck to approve the minutes of the July 8, 2020 meeting as prepared and presented.

**All in Favor**

**PRESENTATION OF VOUCHERS FOR EXAMINATION AND APPROVAL**

Mr. Pappas reviewed the vouchers with the Board.

A Motion was made by Mr. Beck and seconded by Mr. Chelik to approve the voucher expenditures of July 9, 2020 through August 9, 2020, as presented.

**All in Favor**

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **Land Bank General Update**

Mr. Pappas stated that, as of this date, 207 properties have been acquired by the Land Bank. In the City of Scranton, the Land Bank has conveyed 136 properties. Some of these 136 properties were conveyed to the City at their request. Some others were conveyed to local nonprofit community development corporations. In the City of Carbondale, Mr. Pappas reported that four properties were acquired. Two properties were conveyed. The Land Bank is in the process of conveying one more. The other property will be razed by the City of Carbondale.

### **New Interest /Land Bank**

Mr. Pappas informed the Board, that as a result of Commissioner Domenick's emails to Lackawanna County School Districts and Municipalities, Commissioner Domenick, Mrs. Sacco and Mr. Pappas held a virtual meeting with a majority of the school superintendents to explain the benefits of becoming part of the Land Bank. Commissioner Domenick felt the meeting was informative, since most of the Superintendents did not have knowledge of the Land Bank's purpose and mission. Commissioner Domenick also felt that some superintendents may want the municipalities within their district to join first. The plan going forward is to reach out to the municipalities to meet with them in person or virtually.

Mr. Pappas stated that Throop Borough has elected to join the Land Bank. Since the Mid Valley School District is already part of the Land Bank, he informed the Board that the Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement will be prepared and executed with Throop Borough.

Mr. Pappas also informed the Board that Dickson City Borough requested he attend a virtual work session meeting with them that night to give them an overview of the Land Bank. Commissioner Domenick stated she would like to attend this virtual meeting as well. Mr. Pappas stated that he will forward the meeting information.

### **Scranton Demolitions**

Mr. Pappas stated that the property at the rear of 1619 Price Street is going to be demolished. This structure was part of the first 100 properties acquired by the Land Bank. A Right of Entry agreement was secured from the owners of the front property in order to gain access. Demolition should be started within the next week and should only take a few days to demolish.

### **601 Prospect Avenue**

Mr. Pappas explained that the Land Bank has an option to purchase agreement with the Veterans Resource Coalition for this property. Mrs. Sacco reported that Sandi Opshinsky, County Grant Manager, is applying for a grant through the Federal Home Loan Bank in order to rehabilitate the structure. The grant request is for \$400,000. This project is for permanent supportive housing and will consist of eight units. There are several partners on this project and the Coalition is hopeful that it will be funded.

### **Blight Task Force Update**

Mr. Pappas asked Mr. Ergott to give an update on HUD Regional Director, Joe DeFelice's, recent meeting in Scranton. Mr. Ergott stated a few weeks ago, NeighborWorks hosted a roundtable discussion on blight with Mr. DeFelice at Scranton City Hall. It was a good opportunity to get representatives from the City, the County, the Land Bank and some Community Development agencies together in order to keep the topic of addressing blight high on our priority list. Mr. Ergott also referred to the Blight Remediation grants that are

currently available through the state. He stated he knows the County, the City and NeighborWorks have all submitted grant applications. Mr. Pappas stated the County has applied for \$300,000 to be used for acquisition, rehabilitation and demolition of tax delinquent and blighted properties in all of Lackawanna County

**Bid Openings/if Necessary**

There were no property purchase applications or bids received prior to this Meeting.

**Advisory Committee Discussion**

Mr. Pappas stated that since no new property purchase application were received since the last meeting. The Advisory Committee discussed the same topics as being covered at this Land Bank Meeting.

Chairman Domenick then proceeded to the Resolutions to be acted upon at today's meeting,

**ACTION ITEMS**

**Resolution No. 20-009-** Ratifying the Reacquisition of a property in the 100 block Merrifield Avenue Tax Map # 14412040052 from Hillsboro Inlet LLC

Mr. Pappas explained that due to flooding issues, the Land Bank reacquired this property from the purchaser, Hillsboro Inlet, LLC. The property will eventually be conveyed to the City of Scranton.

A Motion was made by Mr. Beck and seconded by Mrs. Gatto to approve this Resolution

**All in Favor**

**Resolution No. 20-010-** Approving Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreements with Lackawanna County and any all School Districts and Municipalities within Lackawanna County that elect to partner with the Land Bank

Commissioner Domenick stated that the County Commissioners passed a similar Resolution at their last meeting. This is a blanket resolution approving Intergovernmental Agreements with the County and all School Districts and Municipalities within the County that elect to join the Land Bank. The Land Bank Board would like to see all school districts and municipalities be part of the Land Bank. This Resolution negates the need for the Land Bank to approve an Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement every time a school district or municipality elects to join the Land Bank.

A Motion was made by Mrs. Gatto and seconded by Mrs. Sacco to approve this Resolution

**All in Favor**

**Resolution No. 20-011**-Authorizing an Option to Purchase a Certain Land Bank owned property with the Veterans Resource Coalition

Mr. Pappas explained that the previous Option to Purchase Between the Land Bank and the Veterans Resource Coalition has expired. This Resolution gives the Coalition another year to seek funding for the project.

A Motion was made by Mr. Chelik and seconded by Mrs. Gatto to approve this Resolution

**All in Favor**

**OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD**


No emails were received prior to the meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Chelik made a motion to adjourn and the motion was seconded by Mrs. Sacco

**All in Favor**

Chairman Domenick stated next scheduled meeting is Wednesday, September 9, 2020 at 11:00AM.

  
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Marion Gatto, Secretary

Prepared by Ralph Pappas