ECLB Board Meeting

Erie County Land Bank
Tuesday, October 22, 2024 at 9:00 AM EDT to 10:30 AM EDT
1230 Townhall Road West, Suite 500, Erie, PA 16509

Meeting Details:
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87564493882?pwd=L0k0VE9JSVhZVE9sQ2pibU9IVWRydz09

Phone: 1-309-205-3325

Meeting ID: 875 6449 3882

Passcode: ECLB2024

Minutes

I. Call to Order & Attendance at 9:00 a.m.

Board: Brian McGrath, Jack Lee, Christine Rush, James Cardman, Dave Mitchell, Suzanne Weber, Tim Bogdanets, Sandy Morrow, Susannah Faulkner

Additional: Jennifer Hirneisen, Christie Mahany, Aaron Snippert, Rachel Jessup, Krista Arnold

Absent: None.

A. Welcome new member Susannah Faulkner

II. Review Minutes from Previous Meeting

- Motion to approve minutes from previous meeting by J. Lee, seconded by S. Morrow; all in favor.

III. Financial Report

C. Mahany reviewed the Financial Reports.

Budget pretty much the same.

We generated about 5x the amount of expected income in property sales; hoping for a few more this year.

One point: the Monthly Analysis fee was incorrectly charged twice, so the second charge was refunded.

Demolition Fund

https://eriecopa.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/3977a1a65b4d4e9b83eb45ac86cc3954

Or go to ErieCountyLandBank.org > Programs > Act 152 Demo Fund

No demo fund report; the individual in the Planning Department who works on that was off last week. This will be updated next month.

S. Weber requested clarification on line 700 of the "Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual" document, Property Acquisitions; we spent significantly less than was budgeted, correct?

C. Mahany confirmed this. We are very under budget this year due to lighter tax sales than usual and having received several property donations.

Should we anticipate more money for property acquisition this year?

The Judicial Sale is light at the moment. We'll be spending but not much.

Clarification was requested on line 799, Misc. Expense.

$400,000.00 are a CCLT grant. This was mistakenly entered under Misc. Expense; C. Mahany to check with accountant regarding an appropriate label for CCLT funds.

These are not our funds.

S. Weber inquired about item 621 – Travel in the "Trial Balance" document. Does this include all travel reimbursement?

C. Mahany confirmed this, and can provide a full breakdown next meeting.

There may be some amount from the Hershey conference.

D. Mitchell put in that the conference (Homes Within Reach) "is a great opportunity."

Interest was shown in information about the conference, which is organized by the Pennsylvania Housing Alliance in Hershey. This year it will be from December 4-6.

C. Mahany can email info and make arrangements for anyone interested in attending.

➢ Motion to approve financial report by S. Morrow, seconded by D. Mitchell; all in favor.

IV. Hearing of the Public

None.

V. Erie Land Bank

Erie Land Bank requests were explained to S. Faulkner and reviewed by the Board.

➢ Motion to approve disbursement to Erie Land Bank in the amount of $19,990.72 (2023 WP $2,161.74 and 2024 WP $17,828.98), moved by D. Mitchell, seconded by J. Cardman.

Roll call vote:

- C. Rush: Yea
- S. Faulkner: Yea
- S. Morrow: Yea
- J. Lee: Yea
- D. Mitchell: Yea
- J. Cardman: Yea
- S. Weber: Yea
- T. Bogdanets: Yea
- B. McGrath: Yea

A. 2025 Proposal

There were initially 26 properties on the Judicial Tax Sale, but 2 were removed, so the ELB is now looking at 24.

6 properties on the Blighted Property List, including West 19th Street.

B. McGrath asked if the ELB assesses properties after acquisition.

A. Snippert responded yes, though there is a Phase 1 appraisal.

D. Mitchell asked if any RDA properties were zoned industrial.

A. Snippert replied that there are 7 with the Erie County RDA.

C. Mahany has added this proposal for a November review.

B. McGrath inquired whether it should be approved at the next meeting.

C. Mahany asked if it should be handled with the next Executive Director.

B. McGrath wondered if that would be in time for the budget, and requested that C. Mahany have the budget prepared for the November Board meeting.

J. Cardman suggested that the Governance Committee workshop the last two budgets, then recommend approval at the next regular Board meeting.

There is no November or December Governance Committee meeting currently scheduled.

B. McGrath requested that C. Mahany communicate with Committee members to schedule a meeting before the next Board meeting.

B. 2022 Rollover

Nothing to approve, just updated information.

VI. Solicitor Updates

A. Bylaws

J. Hirneisen hasn't received any further proposed changes.

S. Weber distributed her comments.

J. Hirneisen distributed the Enabling Act for the Land Bank.

J. Hirneisen noted that the main issue in S. Weber's comments involved Section 207, Ethical Standards.

Statute allows for removal of a Board member through Board act. This is within the Enabling Act.

S. Weber requested more time to review proposed changes, asked to wait until next month to vote. This was generally agreed.

J. Hirneisen requested that comments and concerns be sent to her.

D. Mitchell recommended holding off on voting until the new Executive Director has a month in office, and to let the new Board member get familiar with the process.

Clarification was again asked regarding the red sections.

Anything in red is new. Strikethrough denotes removal.

Anything in yellow is in question, as it doesn't follow what we're currently doing.

S. Faulkner inquired whether review and approval of Bylaw updates would be for the Governance Committee.

B. McGrath explained that the Governance Committee could review updates first and take comments to the full Board. He also noted that the Board will be busy between the budget and the new director.

J. Cardman suggested the Governance Committee meeting in January.

B. McGrath requested that Board members please review the proposed changes.

C. Rush commented that "this has been floating around for several months now" and it needs to stop being pushed back. She continued that the Board needs to "stay diligent and get things accomplished", and that members should be making time to review the proposed changes if they haven't already done so.

D. Mitchell put in that "we hadn't foreseen the changes that have come up recently" and that he wants "to see the organization in full swing, then tweak" the bylaws. He doesn't think there will be an emergency with the bylaws.

B. McGrath replied that the proposed changes are "nothing critical" but that the Board has been discussing it for months, and "it would be nice to have this off our plate."

J. Hirneisen noted that the proposed changes are mostly "tidying up operations". We did run into a hold up with a conveyance since the bylaws didn't allow it to be done in the manner the law firm required, so adjustments were needed then.

C. Rush expressed concern about "stagnance" with this decision not being made.

VII. Unfinished & New Business

A. Properties

1. 17 S Main Street, Union City

This property is next to the borough building.

Emergency board-up was carried out on the windows discussed last month. Some glass was removed. They are now secure, with no risk to passersby.

There are "lots of other things" to be done with this property by the new staff.

There is a small leak at the top of the roof. It's not an emergency situation and we have been getting quotes.

C. Mahany can have this patched. B. McGrath expressed concern at the leak worsening.

D. Mitchell remarked that this is good commercial space with apartments above, and the city was uninterested in expanding their building into this property. He thinks the roof is critical as the borough is concerned about the condition of this property affecting their building.

J. Cardman pointed out that it's important to get the roof patched before the weather changes.

C. Mahany will discuss the roof with Krista Arnold and Cindy Wells and will ensure that the roof is not actively leaking.

B. McGrath asked if C. Wells was concerned with the roof.

C. Mahany responded that C. Wells's concern was regarding the windows and that the building not get lost in ECLB staff turnover.

The skylight has been temporarily tarped which is currently working to deflect water.

C. Mahany can have contractors assess whether we need to do more for the winter.

D. Mitchell asked J. Lee if he thought the skylight should come out.

J. Lee replied that yes, it's old and not worth repairing.

K. Arnold said we have quotes to remove the skylight and repair the roof. B. McGrath requested the quotes and wants to act now.

K. Arnold believed the highest quote to be around $17,000.00 and noted that the back wall may need to be assessed prior to repairs to the roof.

D. Mitchell suggested a motion to approve up to $20,000.00 for repairs.

J. Lee feels that the quotes are too high.

J. Cardman asked what is included in the quotes.

K. Arnold responded that they include removal of the skylight and repair to the roof. She added that there are photos of the roof in the file with the quotes.

J. Lee to take a look at the roof and provide the Board with his opinion.

D. Mitchell doesn't want to wait until December to address the roof.

- Motion to approve permission for Staff to pursue quotes and execute repairs and or replacement up to $20,000.00 on the roof at 17 South Main Street, Union City, moved by D. Mitchell, seconded by S. Morrow.

Roll call vote:

C. Rush: Yea
S. Faulkner: Yea
S. Morrow: Yea
J. Lee: Yea
D. Mitchell: Yea
J. Cardman: Yea
S. Weber: Yea
T. Bogdanets: Yea
B. McGrath: Yea

2. 19 W Park Place, Corry

C. Mahany is in negotiations with the funeral home but the director is currently out of town. She will have an update at the November 12th meeting.

B. Program Updates

1. Master Homeowner Program

There are 4 sessions left. Please feel free to stop by.

Attendance is going up this week. Interest has been expressed for us to bring the program to other areas of Erie County.

2. Rapid Reset Exterior Clean Up

We have our first pilot property: Mrs. Tillman at 8912 Wattsburg Road, Greene Township.

C. Mahany and K. Arnold have already reviewed the property. We have 3 quotes for the work, though the lowest may not include everything.

The point of this program is to make the property safe and avoid it turning into a Land Bank house.

B. McGrath indicated that the quotes are available in the meeting book.

S. Weber commented that some quotes don't include regrading, hauling away, or worker's compensation.

Clarification was requested regarding the quotes.

K. Arnold stated that she sent out a more formal, inclusive quote with an updated scope of work after initial quotes were received. Not all landscapers will address, for example, small cracks in the foundation.

Two landscapers had submitted updated quotes at the time K. Arnold's employment with ECLB ended, all three verbally expressed willingness. She suggested reaching out to the one landscaper who had not returned the updated scope of work.

C. Mahany inquired whether the numbers had changed.

K. Arnold said all stayed the same except Sean Carner, who said he'd follow up but hadn't yet responded.

We could go with Carner if he remains the cheapest with the full scope of work; this may go up.

C. Mahany requested approval for a maximum amount of $8,500.00 rather than approval for a specific vendor.

Motion to approve spending a maximum of $8,500.00 for 8912 Wattsburg Road, moved by J. Lee, seconded by T. Bogdanets.

Roll call vote:

C. Rush: Yea
S. Faulkner: Yea
S. Morrow: Yea
J. Lee: Yea
D. Mitchell: Yea
J. Cardman: Yea
S. Weber: Yea
T. Bogdanets: Yea
B. McGrath: Yea

C. CCLT Transfer of PHARE funds

We've been acting in something of a "foster parent" role while the CCLT applies for grants.

CCLT has now filed and EIN and has a bank account.

C. Mahany needs a motion to approve moving the CCLT funds to their account.

B. McGrath inquired whether the ECLB is done with the CCLT.

C. Mahany replied that for ease of auditing, we'll invoice the CCLT for the minimal expenses they've incurred with the ECLB. We might be done after that.

➢ Motion to transfer the $400,000.00 in grant funds to the CCLT, moved by D. Mitchell, seconded by S. Morrow.

Roll call vote:

C. Rush: Yea
S. Faulkner: Abstained
S. Morrow: Yea
J. Lee: Yea
D. Mitchell: Yea
J. Cardman: Yea
S. Weber: Yea
T. Bogdanets: Yea
B. McGrath: Yea

S. Faulker recused herself from voting due to her employment with the Sisters of Saint Joseph.

J. Hirneisen requested that C. Mahany send her the CCLT grant.

D. Personnel

Executive Session.

VIII. Notices & Announcements

None.

IX. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 10:54 a.m. by D. Mitchell, seconded by S. Faulkner; all in favor.

Upcoming Meeting Dates: November 12 and December 11