

ECLB Board Meeting



Erie County Land Bank, 1230 Townhall Road West, Suite 500, Erie, PA 16509

Tuesday, November 12, 2024 at 9:00 AM to Tuesday, November 12, 2024 at 10:30 AM

Meeting Details: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87564493882?pwd=L0k0VE9JSVhZVE9sQ2pibU9lVWRydz09>

Phone: 1-309-205-3325

Meeting ID: 875 6449 3882

Passcode: ECLB2024

Minutes

I. Call to Order & Attendance at 9:03 a.m.

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

Additional: Jennifer Hirneisen, Christie Mahany, Aaron Snippert, Rachel Jessup, Rock Copeland

Absent: James Cardman

II. Hearing of the Public

Kathy Roach, a participant in the entire pilot series of Master Homeowner classes, explained how the program has helped her as a first-time homeowner, expressed her excitement for the program and her desire to see it continue, and thanked the Staff and Board.

III. Review Minutes from Previous Meeting

- Motion to approve minutes from previous meeting moved by D. Mitchell, seconded by J. Lee. All in favor, none opposed.

IV. Financial Report

C. Mahany reviewed the financial reports.

There are currently fees from the credit card payment, but should not be as the payment was mailed on time. Records show that the bank received the check on September 1st but didn't post it until September 25th. C. Mahany is looking into it and will provide an update. Northwest Savings Bank needs to talk with B. McGrath, J. Lee, or J. Cardman as signers on the account; stating they can't discuss it with C. Mahany.

- Motion to approve financial report moved by S. Morrow, seconded by S. Faulkner. Roll call vote:
 - J. Lee: Yea
 - C. Rush: Yea
 - D. Mitchell: Yea
 - S. Weber: Yea
 - T. Bogdanets: Yea
 - S. Morrow: Yea
 - S. Faulkner: Yea
 - B. McGrath: Yea

A. Demolition Fund

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

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

B. 457b Plan Annual Review

V. Erie Land Bank

- Motion to approve disbursement to Erie Land Bank in the amount of \$64,922.38 (2023 WP \$49,009.73 and 2024 WP \$15,912.65) moved by D. Mitchell, seconded by S. Morrow. Roll call vote:

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

VI. Solicitor Updates

A. Bylaws

C. Rush said she “didn’t think we’d be pushing the vote out to January.”

B. McGrath replied that the delay is so the new Executive Director has input.

C. Rush responded that she “thought we decided that was unnecessary,” and said she hasn’t seen this before.

B. McGrath said, “We’re looking for input from the new Executive Director, not decisions.”

C. Rush stated, “The Board decides on bylaws and we have an attorney involved,” so she doesn’t understand the need for Executive Director input.

D. Mitchell replied, “If we’re starting with a new administrator, it’s better to be on the same page.”

C. Rush commented, “That’s what amendments are for.”

D. Mitchell said, “It’s smoother to be patient,” and that legal fees should be considered. “There will be a new dynamic” and while the Board has say, the Executive Director runs the day-to-day operations.

B. McGrath added that the likely new hire has experience with bylaws.

In regards to legal fees, C. Rush pointed out that the solicitor was paid to sit in on interviews.

Please review the red line bylaws and send comments to B. McGrath.

J. Hirneisen asked if everyone would like a copy of the Word document, and interest was expressed by board members.



Motion to postpone amending bylaws until new Executive Director is on board moved by S. Weber, seconded by D. Mitchell. Roll call vote:

J. Lee: not present
C. Rush: Nay
D. Mitchell: Yea
S. Weber: Yea
T. Bogdanets: Yea
S. Morrow: Yea
S. Faulkner: Yea
B. McGrath: Yea

VII. Unfinished & New Business

A. Program Updates

1. Master Homeowner Program

K. Roach already shared quite a bit regarding how the program is going. Also, half of our original attendees have now brought new attendees to classes.

2. Rapid Reset Exterior Clean Up

Contractor has been hired and signed the contract, which was \$500.00 over the original quote. This includes cutting down and removing vegetation in the designated area, removal of trees, and all other necessary items. This quote is still significantly less than the second-lowest quote.

Work is weather-dependent. It may already have begun but will be piecemeal depending on the day. The contractor is local and will go over as he's able.

B. Properties

1. 19 W Park Place Update

Still waiting on the funeral home since the director is out of town. We haven't received an offer or starting point yet.

2. 17 S Main Street Roof Update

J. Lee went on site and has emailed Board. In progress; quotes coming in.

No vote needed; this has already been voted on and approved.

3. Other property comments

D. Mitchell re: S. Center St., Corry – Neighbors have been calling since the property isn't down yet. Have we heard anything about the demolition?

C. Mahany will check in.

D. Mitchell remarked that a family up the street had a house privately demo'ed and the contractor is willing to bid. "They did bury material at that site, but it was a private deal."

S. Weber re: 26 ½ Grant St. – Permits were issued on October 7th for Empire, but nothing's been done. Cindy Wells emailed S. Weber and C. Rush.

T. Bogdanets noted that Empire is working on demo's on W. 6th St., Erie, and in Millcreek and they're probably running behind.

S. Weber commented, "They shouldn't take on more than they can handle."

C. Rush remarked, "Empire has de-prioritized us before."

C. Mahany pointed out that "we don't have Krista Arnold or someone in that position to follow up." She will check in this week.

J. Lee re: 17 S. Main St. continued - McCreary's quoted a little under \$4,000.00, which seems fair.

C. Mahany reminded that this has already been voted on with approval for up to \$20,000.00, and we need the quotes for our files.

Motion to award contract to McCreary moved by J. Lee, seconded by D. Mitchell.
Roll call vote:

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

S. Morrow inquired as to why we're voting on this specific award rather than on the lowest bid.

B. McGrath replied that quotes were needed and have been received.

D. Mitchell added that this is to avoid accusations of J. Lee awarding it to an acquaintance.

4. 34 W Bond Acquisition (CNI/CIBA)

This is a CNI property and they wish to donate it to ECLB; we need approval to acquire it.

Motion to approve acquisition of 34 W. Bond Street moved by D. Mitchell, seconded by S. Morrow. All in favor; none opposed.

5. 2024 Judicial Tax Sale Properties

C. Wells emailed regarding two additional properties in Union City, 22 Lincoln and 78 Miles.

C. Mahany said 22 Lincoln is definitely an ECLB property and will be a demo. It's condemned and has seen a lot of damage and drug use, et cetera.

J. Hirneisen has done background work on the property, which was “a mess”. There are title issues, and we’re waiting on the Judicial Sale to acquire.

C. Mahany recommends acquiring both properties at the Judicial Sale; “they’ve been on our radar for a long time.” There may be more; she’s reviewing information left by K. Arnold.

Motion to approve acquisition of 22 Lincoln and 78 Miles, Union City, moved by D. Mitchell and seconded by T. Bogdanets. J. Hirneisen noted that a roll call vote was not necessary.

6. Other property comments, continued

S. Weber re: Union City Chair building - said that J. Lee has commented that “there isn’t much building left” and that the exterior needs to be renovated, along with the roof and utilities needing updates. It could cost \$400,000.00 if done right.

She said in terms of historic preservation, “people don’t care”. The property “is an albatross. We should return the grant and demolish it.”

C. Mahany replied that “The Powers That Be are not going to let us turn down the grant and demolish it.” She continued that we can choose not to be involved, but it will go elsewhere.

She continued that there are major plans for the area and they won’t accept a demolition of this property, and “nothing in land banking makes financial sense.”

B. McGrath asked what our options are. As Union City wouldn’t be happy if we demolish the property, can we turn it back over with the grant?

C. Mahany responded that we don’t actually own it yet. We could see if there are additional grants available.

S. Weber suggested that the Erie County Redevelopment Authority would take it, and it’s “not worth the money, time, or energy.”

D. Mitchell explained that it’s tied into the huge building in back and there has been “a lot of controversy” regarding the property and this could be “a nightmare”. It’s a very active community.

He remarked that the last commercial building we got into was a lot of work, so we should “let the Erie County Redevelopment Authority take it.” He added that it will also require marketing after the renovation.

B. McGrath thought Union City was going to take the building back over after we fixed it up. C. Mahany responded that no, possibly it would go back to the church or there were other options.

B. McGrath commented that he’d “hate to lose the grant” and asked if it’s transferrable. D. Mitchell responded that “it probably is” transferrable.

S. Weber said there are places in other communities to focus on.

Motion not to pursue Union City Chair building and to return the grant if it can't be transferred, moved by S. Weber.

S. Faulkner requested that we investigate the transfer of the grant before moving forward with the motion. She has concerns about pursuing this action before covering our bases.

She also pointed out that other parties involved aren't present.

S. Weber asked D. Mitchell to investigate. D. Mitchell agreed to inquire at the DCED and will report back in December.

S. Weber withdrew the motion.

D. Mitchell commented that "it's a historic building, but a huge project." He added that the community can raise money for it. S. Weber said a private business won't do it.

J. Lee added that there are ADA access issues.

S. Weber re: Doris Drive house, Millcreek – What happened?

C. Mahany replied that she doesn't know the current status; K. Arnold and J. Hirneisen were in conversations about it.

J. Hirneisen replied that she doesn't have her notes, but they "were chasing the heirs" They thought they found an heir, but there was some miscommunication.

There is in-fighting amongst the heirs. We thought they'd reached an agreement, but they hadn't.

S. Morrow re: 2508 Station Rd., Wesleyville – She believes this is a tax sale property.

J. Hirneisen replied that it may have been pulled.

C. Mahany stated that it was pre-approved with four Wesleyville properties.

J. Hirneisen said there were issues with the underlying notices, so it's been pulled from the sale but could be up in September.

This means that we'll have to wait a year before the next Judicial Sale.

J. Hirneisen said there are title issues, so possibly try reaching out to individuals with equitable interest in the property. The deed was never recorded with the last sale. It's not currently family members owning the property.

S. Morrow said there was someone living there, but as the roof is almost gone, they're probably not there anymore.

C. Homes Within Reach conference

Discussed before moving further. Please let Christie or Rachel know if you plan to attend by end of day (11/12) so registrations can be completed.

D. 2025 Budget

C. Mahany: very similar to previous year's budget, conservative. We won't know where the new Executive Director will want to focus; this can be adjusted as needed.

B. McGrath: Governance Committee met and went over preliminary budget; recommendation to approve.

S. Weber asked what the annual healthcare cost is.

S. Faulkner pointed out that it's \$32,000.00 on the line item.

ELB line item: B. McGrath remarked that "we've been impressed with ELB's work, and the Governance Committee decided that the increase to \$500,000.00 is justifiable."

A. Snippet replied that they appreciate that.

S. Weber agreed that ELB "really deserves it."

B. McGrath added that "we've been hesitant in the past because ECLB was just getting started. Now that we have the funds, let's put them to use; they're more good in the community than in a bank account."

➤ Motion to approve 2025 budget moved by S. Weber, seconded by S. Faulkner. Roll call vote:

J. Lee: Yea

C. Rush: Yea

D. Mitchell: Yea

S. Weber: Yea

T. Bogdanets: Yea

S. Morrow: Yea

S. Faulkner: Yea

B. McGrath: Yea

E. Personnel

Executive Session commenced at 10:05 a.m.

VIII. Notices & Announcements

~~A. Homes Within Reach: December Conference in Hershey~~

~~Please let Christie or Rachel know if you plan to attend by end of day (11/12) so registrations can be completed.~~ Addressed above.

IX. Adjournment

➤ Motion to adjourn at 10:53 a.m. moved by S. Faulkner, seconded by S. Morrow.

Upcoming Meeting Dates: December 10 (Board)