



ECLB Board Meeting

Erie County Land Bank, 1230 Townhall Road West, Erie, PA 16509
Tuesday, March 18, 2025 at 9:00 AM EDT to 10:30 AM EDT

Meeting Details:

us02web.zoom.us/j/8145808990?pwd=0alBjbraC45A4AxnLwDF9nyKVlxzki.1&omn=82060960934

Phone: 1 646 558 8656

Meeting ID: 814 580 8990

Passcode: ECLB2025

Minutes

I. Call to Order & Attendance at 9:01 a.m.

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

Additional: Jennifer Hirneisen, Jeremy Bloeser, Rachel Jessup, Rock Copeland, Aaron Snippert, Megan Richter

Absent: James Cardman, Suzanne Weber

II. Previous Meeting Minutes

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

III. Financial Report

Megan Richter, CPA, introduced herself to full Board. She has been supporting R. Jessup with QuickBooks and working on internal controls: ECLB has a large bank account, so she's another set of eyes reviewing the financials; as well as balancing the checkbook and reconciling credit card transactions, and ensuring that QuickBooks is up-to-date.

She invites the Board to let her know if there are other reports they may want to see.

D. Mitchell thanked M. Richter for coming on board with the ECLB.

Budget vs. Actual: This is the first time Real Estate Taxes have been involved. Only other income was the interest in the sweep account. Major expense was Erie Land Bank payments toward designated Work Plans; otherwise normal operating expenses.

Transaction List: Good to have this kind of detail. Nothing stood out to M. Richter. Board members are invited to reach out to her if you have any questions.

Trial Balance: M. Richter would like to display restricted funds (e.g., ELB, CCLT, Millcreek Township) as a subcategory rather than included with available funds.

- Motion to approve financial reports, moved by J. Lee, seconded by D. Mitchell. All in favor; none opposed.

A. Demolition Fund

\$11,001.00 deposited for February 2025

J. Bloeser has updated the dashboard including information provided by Aaron Snippet of ELB demolitions to be completed within next 60 days, so available funds are displaying more accurately.

Dashboard available at

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

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

IV. Hearing of the Public

None.

V. Erie Land Bank

Requests weren't ready for last month's ECLB Board Meeting, so this total consists of two months' requests.

A. Snippet remarked that the WP23 funds are pretty much depleted, so he'll be working on a proposal to close WP23 and allocate the remaining funds to the other Work Plans.

Demo's are starting to move. As J. Bloeser noted, several should be completed within the next 45-60 days.

- Motion to approve disbursement to Erie Land Bank in the amount of \$99,064.22 (2023 WP \$42,298.86; 2024 WP \$23,188.22; and 2025 WP \$33,577.14), moved by D. Mitchell, seconded by J. Lee. All in favor; none opposed.

VI. Solicitor Updates

A cleaned-up version of the bylaws with current suggestions was sent around this morning. Let J. Hirneisen know if you have any questions.

This will be discussed at the next Board Meeting on April 15th, at which time comments can be made, they may be approved, or it will be decided whether a Special Meeting is needed.

VII. Unfinished & New Business

A. Realtor Listings

J. Bloeser explained that ECLB currently owns 30 properties— officially 26 since 4 are Judicial Sale purchases and we haven't yet received the deeds. He has identified properties which he believes should be listed with our Realtor. Some already have candidates and/or interested parties; some still have delinquent taxes.

J. Bloeser is requesting approval to list 9 Vacant Lots with Pat Groner.

Properties will be listed on Tolemi, the MLS, and Pennington Lines. Sale offers will be submitted along with ECLB Applications.

Motion to approve listing with P. Groner the 9 properties identified by J. Bloeser, moved by D. Mitchell, seconded by J. Lee. All in favor; none opposed.

B. Property Dispositions

All have been approved by the municipalities:

- **363 S. Center St., Corry - Hiram and Judith Daley** (offered \$1,660.00 for Neighborhood Lot - Governance Committee recommends price of \$1,000.00 and suggest they use the \$660.00 toward improvements)

J. Bloeser requesting of the Board whether to proceed with Governance Committee's suggestion; and also whether to wait until outstanding delinquent taxes are exonerated or proceed.

D. Mitchell remarked that the Daleys "are an excellent prospect" and do a wonderful job volunteering at the city park. He also pointed out that if the sale is delayed, ECLB will be responsible for maintaining the lot as the growing season is starting.

J. Hirneisen advised that we can enter into an agreement with the Daleys which states that we will have the taxes exonerated.

- Motion to approve sale of 363 S. Center St., Corry to Hiram and Judith Daley for \$1,000.00 conditional on exoneration of taxes, moved by S. Morrow, seconded by S. Faulkner. All in favor; none opposed.

- **402 W. Pleasant St., Corry - Troy Jaggi** (\$500.00 Side Lot)

Owns adjacent property (rental property).

D. Mitchell commented that T. Jaggi has renovated several Corry properties which may otherwise have been demolished.

- Motion to approve sale of 402 West Pleasant Street, Corry to Troy Jaggi for \$500.00, moved by T. Bogdanets, seconded by S. Morrow. All in favor; none opposed.

- **80 E. High St., Union City - Lyle Miller** (\$9,000.00 Vacant Lot with plans for a new build)

Several applications were sent to Union City for this property; the Borough selected this application.

T. Bogdanets inquired whether this was the highest bid. It was not; the highest bid was \$12,000.00.

L. Miller is a local developer who intends to develop more properties in Union City.

The ECLB can't dictate sales; there needs to be community consensus, so we should go with the Borough's decision. J. Hirneisen confirmed we are not bound to go with the highest bid; this sale will be acting on the recommendation of Union City.

There is a small tax delinquency on the property. After discussion, it was decided to discuss with the buyer to cover the taxes with the closing; if he doesn't accept, ECLB will split 50/50. D. Mitchell remarked that pursuing exoneration will take some time and cause delays in the transfer.



Motion to approve sale of 80 East High Street, Union City, to Lyle Miller for \$9,000.00 contingent on payment of delinquent taxes either by the Buyer or split 50/50 with ECLB, moved by D. Mitchell, seconded by C. Rush. All in favor; none opposed.

C. Property Updates

1. 19 West Park Place, Corry

Per notes left by prior ECLB leadership, J. Bloeser reached out to the funeral home owner in December to follow up on the approved sale negotiations; was told the owner was busy. This was also the case in January, February, and March.

This had previously been approved by the Board to be a CCLT property, and the CCLT has available funds. Corry developer Josh Dyne also reached out to J. Bloeser about interest in some projects, including this property. Meanwhile, ECLB is paying \$392.00 per month for the DAWGS board up.

J. Bloeser asked whether the Board wants him to continue pursuing the funeral home sale, or look into other options?

D. Mitchell spoke with the funeral home owner recently and advised that he needs to begin negotiations.

D. Mitchell also indicated that Corry HiEd was offered 3 properties in this corridor for \$120,000.00 by a landlord looking to unload the properties. HiEd countered \$90,000.00, which was refused. D. Mitchell asked the Board to consider whether we want to develop this corridor as a residential or commercial space.

T. Bogdanets inquired as to the likelihood of the neighborhood being developed as residential. D. Mitchell noted that the community is open to residential renovation but not new builds.

B. McGrath directed J. Bloeser to issue a deadline to the funeral home owner to have an offer in writing by the ECLB Board Meeting on April 15th.

2. 18 Market Street, Union City (Union City Chair building)

Surveyor Rabell was hired at Union City's request and gave a 5-week timeframe. This is week 3, so the subdivision should be complete in April, which meets the deadline for the LSA grant transfer to the RDA in May.

3. 7 Grove Street, Corry acquisition

CNI was going to acquire and transfer this property to the ECLB. Acquisition has been complicated due to several heirs and an open estate in Florida, but is actively being worked on. J. Bloeser has signed letters from the heirs.

The Board has previously approved splitting the estate costs with CNI.

It was asked if there was developer interest for the property; there is. D. Mitchell also noted that the neighborhood is improving and is a good residential street.

4. 64 East Pleasant Street, Corry renovation

J. Bloeser has had conversations with Katelyn Cochran. The developer contract is for 18 months and she is about 8 months into the project. She has been very responsive, answering emails quickly.

There turned out to be significant structural issues with the house, and they've need to completely reframe the building as the outer walls were falling away. This is currently in progress. The porch has been an issue of concern in the community, but has actually been helping hold the building together; it will be removed and rebuilt ASAP.

Electric has been updated and inspected.

J. Bloeser reviewed a handful of her other projects and was impressed; they were also resold at high value. He has requested pictures throughout her renovation process for potential ECLB marketing.

The Board agreed with J. Bloeser's recommendation to wait to see how the renovation develops.

D. Outstanding Tax Exonerations

No updates. J. Hirneisen will circle back with the city solicitor.

E. Audit Updates

Engaged with BBB for 2024 and R. Jessup has submitted all documentation.

J. Bloeser seeking 3-year contract with new firm beginning with 2025.

McGill, Power Bell & Associates LLP had initially declined, but bid after J. Bloeser discussed with a partner in person while they were working on Summit Township audit.

Maher Duessel CPAs are preparing a bid, likely ready by April Board Meeting. They began working on ELB's audit as of this year.

Firms used by other municipalities have already declined or not responded to our RFQ.

Currently paying about \$3,800.00. Quotes have come in around \$15,000.00-\$17,000.00. Regardless of final contract, our audit costs will be going up.

J. Bloeser hopes to have a recommendation by the April Board Meeting.

F. 5/50 Tax Recapture Updates

Have received payments totaling \$4,924.71 from:

- Corry Area School District
- North East Borough
- City of Corry
- North East School District
- Union City Area School District

Still waiting on Millcreek Township, Millcreek Township School District, Union City Borough, and Erie County Finance.

\$9,828.16 billed. We may send a reminder out soon but these invoices likely require approvals.

G. Bylaw Updates

Board members should review the document sent out today and be ready to discuss at the April meeting.

H. CCLT Updates

ECLB has received the CCLT funds -\$15.00 for bank fees and has signed an MOU regarding how the funds should and will be used per grant requirements.

Need developer agreements between ECLB and the non-profit developers, which J. Bloeser will be working on this week.

A couple of things have changed since the grant was written.

BEST had to step back due to current situation; need to be replaced.

ECLB and ELB properties are no longer available. ELB has inventory but we need to look for an ECLB property.

B. McGrath suggested looking into whether HANDS is interested; they have expressed interest in working with ECLB properties in the past.

Corry RDA is getting more involved with residential renovations.

D. Mitchell inquired whether a property can be donated for CCLT use; it can. He suggested looking into the landlord who rejected Corry HiEd's counteroffer.

I. Payroll Services

Currently handled by Paychex, a company out of Rochester, which charges about \$114.00 per pay period. J. Bloeser inquired whether this was the best cost option, and there is a cheaper tier but still rather pricey. Our contract is month-to-month.

M. Richter's accounting firm offers payroll services. The fee would be \$40.00 per month plus \$150.00 per quarter for taxes, and possibly an extra annual fee if she's charged for online W-2 filing.

J. Bloeser requested Board approval to switch our payroll at the end of the quarter, for tax purposes.

Motion to move payroll services from Paychex to Richter Tax & Consulting, moved by D. Mitchell, seconded by J. Lee. All in favor; none opposed.

J. Statements of Financial Interest forms

Just a reminder that these forms are due by May.

Can be filed online (please provide a hard copy to the ECLB office)

<https://www.pa.gov/services/ethic/file-a-statement-of-financial-interests.html> or with the attached form.

K. Marketing Materials

Staff have been discussing lack of marketing presence. J. Bloeser asking about Board appetite for marketing materials and possible budget, possibly from Master Homeowner Program, Payroll Services, etc. funds.

These could be used at informational fairs, ECLB classes, property sales closing, and so forth.

General consensus that most materials aren't needed, but branded shirts and fleeces for Staff is recommended.

S. Faulkner liked the idea of materials for sales closing to increase public awareness; useful items such as pens and tote bags would be best.

J. Bloeser called attention to new office corkboard.

VIII. Notices & Announcements

None

IX. Adjournment at 10:20 a.m.

➤ Motion to adjourn, moved by S. Morrow, seconded by S. Faulkner.

Next meetings: Governance Committee April 1st; Board Meeting April 15th.