



## Governance Committee Meeting

Erie County Land Bank

Tuesday, November 11, 2025 at 9:00 AM EST to 10:00 AM EST

1230 Townhall Road West, Erie, PA 16509

### Minutes

#### I. Call to Order & Attendance at 9:04 a.m.

*Committee:* Jack Lee, James Cardman, Suzanne Weber, Brian McGrath

*Also:* Jennifer Hirneisen, Jeremy Bloeser, Rachel Jessup, Megan Richter

#### II. Previous Meeting Minutes

➤ Motion to approve previous meeting minutes, moved by B. McGrath, seconded by J. Cardman; all in favor.

#### III. Unfinished & New Business

##### A. 2026 Budget

M. Richter reviewed the proposed budget.

Biggest part is ELB. Approved \$400,000.00 at last Board Meeting.

**500** - Gaming funds are the same.

**510** - 5/50 Tax Recapture: Almost \$10,000.00 this year due to billing for multiple years; probably about \$6,000.00 next year. Will change annually as new properties are sold and former properties phase out of the recapture.

**515** - Grants: \$100,000.00 on 2025 budget likely PFHA Grant for 18 Market Street; we're acting as more of a pass-through on that grant. 2026 amount for possible Erie Community Foundation Grant toward shared position with CCLT.

Question whether we can apply for more grants. We could apply for PFHA, but current funds aren't spent yet so unlikely to receive more.

As-yet-unplanned grants or other amounts would be a bonus to revenue.

**530** - Interest income rates are going down. Amount on 2026 budget reflects sweep account, as CD's will be rolled over.

**540** - Property sales were budgeted at \$42,000.00 for 2025 but were actually almost \$46,000.00. Projecting less for 2026.

##### 1. 610 - Erie Land Bank and ELB 2026 Work Plan Funding Request

New policy: can't keep rolling funds over. Can come to ECLB Board for additional funding needed for specific projects if needed.

Aaron Snippert requested 15 months instead of 12.

J. Bloeser discussed Admin amount on ELB request. A. Snippert explained that WP is admin-heavy, but agreed to bring amount down to \$150,000.00 of total allotment.

Will write up new policy like grant agreement.

**620** - Conferences/Meetings amount increased due to increased attendance and recognized value of attendance. J. Cardman questioned whether Conference amounts are in a policy. R. Jessup located Travel Policy, which states that budget amount is set by Board annually.

**630** - Auditing fees going up everywhere. We currently have three-year contract with new audit firm.

**640** - Legal & Professional Fees overbudgeted. Some legal fees tie into property acquisition costs.

**660** - Doing well on office supplies.

**670** - Insurance costs going up everywhere.

**682** - Cost of new position shared with CCLT. Cost includes taxes; line **683** needs to be adjusted to reflect this.

**685** - Health insurance adjusted down since J. Bloeser not on ECLB policy; reflects new position as on the policy based on R. Jessup's benefit. J. Bloeser looking into short- & long-term disability, Employee Assistance Plans, and life insurance; to present to Personnel Committee.

**681** - Payroll expenses reduced with switch from Paychex to M. Richter.

**700** - Property Acquisition amount increased since that is a goal for ECLB.

**711** - Contractor Assessment not really used in 2025. Some contractor fees in Property Acquisition/Management. Suggestion to rename line "Property/Building Assessment".

**712** - Municipalities handle mowing; not much snow removal. "Landscaping/Snow Removal" mostly used for landscaping/tree removal. Reduced to reflect 2025 spending.

**715** - Demolition amount not really used as demolitions paid for with Demolition Fund. M. Richter suggested using this line for balancing; could be seen as "Demolition/Acquisition/Renovation" line; move amount as needed.

**760** - Only spent \$2,500.00 in 2025. Intend to increase in 2026, still doubtful \$100,000.00 will be necessary.

**770** - Most materials already purchased; no longer need \$30,000.00 budget.

**800** - Grant Application Fees removed since none spent or upcoming.

## **B. Personnel Committee Updates**

### **1. Employee Handbook**

Drafted by Mark Kuhar; has already been updated once, so this is second draft.

Some questions brought up during Personnel Committee and by S. Weber via email.

Vacation - chart needs language clarified.

Sick days and personal days not addressed; need to be added.

No mention of FMLA; possibly because it's Federal law? Still going to ask.

S. Weber questioned hours of operation as 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. compared to other organizations. Explanation that work week is 37.5 hours and only half-hour lunch. J. Bloeser noted that EGCRA handbook lists 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. as "normal" hours and states hours may vary and are not guaranteed.

J. Bloeser intends to have final draft for Board meeting next Tuesday.

## **2. Jeremy Bloeser Evaluation**

Due in January, but working with Personnel Committee to be prepared. J. Bloeser provided Committee list of tasks where time has been spent. Working on document with list of accomplishments and adjustments made in 2025, as well as goals for 2026.

Some quantifiable tasks outside J. Bloeser's control, such as number of properties acquired or sold, or ICA's signed.

Susannah Faulkner shared general evaluation tool with Committee.

Short discussion whether to schedule additional Governance Committee meeting in December or hold Executive Session at December Board meeting for evaluation. Decision to hold Executive Session.

J. Bloeser to send document to full Board.

## **C. Landscaping quotes**

Have used South Branch Property Management for a couple of projects this year. Received quotes for a Rapid Reset property and 7 Grove; very reasonable.

Board has already voted to allow Staff to handle projects up to \$5,000.00 without Board vote; question whether three bids are needed for these projects if a reasonable quote has already been supplied by a trusted contractor.

General agreement and confirmation from J. Hirneisen that three bids are not necessary.

## **IV. Adjournment at 9:50 a.m.**

Motion to adjourn by J. Cardman, seconded by B. McGrath.

## **V. Next meetings: Board Meeting November 18th.**