

**ATHENS COUNTY LAND REUTILIZATION CORPORATION**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS - MINUTES**  
[www.AthensCountyLandBank.com](http://www.AthensCountyLandBank.com)

LOCATION: Live meeting held at Athens County Records Center with guests joining virtually on Google Hangouts (<https://meet.google.com/bbz-ywph-ygf>)

DAY/TIME: Called to order on Wednesday, December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2022 @ 11:01 AM

PURPOSE: Regular meeting to consider the following business:

Board Administration

1. The meeting was called to order by Ric Wasserman, Chair. Roll Call by Aaron Dye, Secretary. Board members present were Ric Wasserman, Commissioner Chris Chmiel, Mayor Steve Patterson, Township Trustee Gregg Andrews, and Stephanie Morris for Commissioner Lenny Eliason.
2. Motion to approve agenda by Mr. Chmiel, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Patterson. All Yeas.
3. Motion to approve minutes from October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022 board meeting by Mr. Chmiel, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Andrews. All Yeas.
4. Financial Report from Treasurer La Verne Humphrey:

Summary	
Starting Balance	289,687.32
Actual Cash In	127,212.54
Actual Cash Out	126,604.96
Ending Balance	290,294.90

Mr. Wasserman notes that income does not include an Ohio Department of Development grant for the soil remediation of 16 Main Street, Chauncey, the sale of the Sargent Road, Guysville property, and a grant from the Athens County Treasurer's office for the renovation of 17922 N. Akron Avenue, Buchtel, all of which came to us in December, after the period of this report.

Motion to approve financial report by Mr. Patterson, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Chmiel. All Yeas.

Business:

#### Old Business

1. Update on acquisition process/pipeline from Mr. Wasserman
  - i) Properties acquired since October board meeting are: 30 Cross Street, Gloucester; 42 Front Street, Gloucester; 14 Barbour Street, Gloucester. We are awaiting deeds for 319 Oak Street, Nelsonville; 55 Madison Street, Gloucester; 11 Maple Street, Gloucester; 3 Main Street, Gloucester; 29 Hill Street, Gloucester; 21 W. High Street, Jacksonville; Mostly vacant lot at corner of Congress Street and Valley Street, Trimble. Mr. Wasserman notes that there has been a lot of interest in 30 Cross Street, Gloucester as it seems to be a good candidate for renovation.
  - ii) Sargent Road, Lodi Township (LB-2021-02): Closing for this project occurred on December 1, 2022.
2. Self-Funded Demos: Hutton Excavating has completed the Group J1, J2, and J3 demolitions. These demolitions included 13 structures in Nelsonville, Gloucester, Trimble, Jacksonville, Chauncey, and Stewart. Aaron and Ric are currently going through the projects list to determine the next rounds of demolitions. Expenses for these demolitions will be reimbursable under the Building Demolition and Site Revitalization Program rules. See below.
3. State Demo project: Update from Mr. Wasserman – The applications were due on February 28th. The Land Bank applied to demolish 42 buildings and six mobile homes across the county. We have finally been notified of our approval for the entire \$734,000 of our grant request! Aaron has begun to submit reimbursement requests for expenses incurred for the Group J1, J2, and J3 demolitions. This means that all of the projects on our demo list will be funded though some of them are now moot due to sales or owner-demos.

Aaron is beginning work on the next phase of demos to be labeled “Group K”. He notes that there will be four rounds of demos in this group, including structures in Gloucester, Chauncey, Nelsonville, New Marshfield, The Plains, and Athens.

4. State Brownfield Grant Application: In collaboration with the Athens County Port Authority, we made application for several brownfield remediation projects around the county that had previously been Land Bank projects. As part of this program the Jacksonville-Trimble school, vacant and dilapidated for over 40 years, has been torn down. Two other projects have had assessments completed and will be shifted to the OEPA BUSTR program for remediation. Greening has been carried out at the Jacksonville-Trimble school, marking the demolition as complete.

Mr. Patterson notes that he received notice that funding has been approved for \$45,000 for 83 Columbus Road, Athens. Other approved projects include 63 S. Court Street, Athens in the amount of \$430,000.

5. Update on previously approved projects: Mr. Wasserman

- A. 27 Main Street, Glouster (LB-2018-72): The house at 27 Main was demolished in the Group J2 demolitions. A sign has been placed at the property. We expect it to come up for disposition in early 2023.
- B. Rehabs: Land Bank Rehabs underway or nearly completed in the county: 24 Cherry Street (new owner), Glouster; 141 Monroe Street, Nelsonville; 130 Jefferson Street, Nelsonville; 354 Chestnut Street, Nelsonville; 637 High Street, Nelsonville; 495 Patton Street, Nelsonville; 770/784 Poplar Street, Nelsonville. Aaron notes that he has toured 637 High with owner Marcie Denney and that the renovation is looking great.

6. Rural Acquisition (Pay-in-advance) Program Projects:

- 1) Sargent Road, Lodi Township (LB-2021-02): Nathan and Kayleigh Stotts. This property was officially disposed to the selected end-user on December 1, 2022.
- 2) 4070 Washington Road (3 parcels, LB-2021-16): We have acquired this property. See below for update on environmental remediation at this property. Aaron and Ric conducted a level one inspection of the house on the property, which seems to be in very good condition. We now have several potential end users for this property. Heirs of the previous owner contacted us and are currently in the process of removing some personal items from the house. Mr. Wasserman notes that relatives of the former owners have been to the property with Jody to reclaim some items from the house.
- 3) 110 High Street, Glouster (LB-2022-08): This property was transferred to the Land Bank on November 29, 2022. Mr. Wasserman notes that the former owner has requested access to the building until the end of January to clean out belongings. She has informed us that the floors on the first story are damaged and joists will likely need to be replaced.
- 4) 4667 Sand Ridge Road, Lodi Twp (LB-2020-07): The Land Bank purchased the tax certificates and sent them to Frank Lavelle, who filed the foreclosure case. The judge in the case issued a decree of foreclosure on Dec. 13<sup>th</sup> and ordered Direct Transfer to the Land Bank. We expect to get a deed sometime in mid-January.
- 5) 61 Summit Street, Glouster (LB-2021-06): Burned out church along Summit in Glouster. This property is already a Land Bank project. The church is slated to be

demolished with BD&SR funds later this summer. It was voted at the July board meeting to accept Habitat for Humanity of Southeast Ohio's proposal to acquire this property through the Rural Acquisition program. A foreclosure case was filed on this property on Land Bank lien certificates on September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022. A foreclosure has been decreed and we should have the deed to this property in mid-January.

#### 7. Brownfield Remediation Projects:

- a. 83 Columbus Road (LB-2021-18): abandoned gas station owned by the City of Athens. This project was granted a Level 1-2 assessment in the Round 1 brownfield funding and we applied for remediation (demo) of the property in Round 2. We expect the remediation to be funded since it is within our \$1 Million county set-aside. Best estimate on timeline is a mid-late summer 2023 demo.
- b. Trimble-Jacksonville School Project (LB-2021-19): Demolition and greening has been carried out, marking this project as completed.
- c. 4070 Washington Rd, Albany (LB-2021-16): Foreclosure was completed.

Phase 1 and 2 evaluations were done with Brownfield project money and it was decided to move this project to the EPA's BUSTR program as there is over \$10 million left in that fund and Tetra-Tech believes there is an easier path to funding there. It will not, however be quick. It will probably take 6 months to finish the work on the Phase 1 & 2 and get an approval from Ohio EPA for a remediation grant.

#### 8. Update on pending dispositions:

- a. 60 Converse, Chauncey (LB-2018-22): At the October board meeting, it was voted that the initial disposition offer to Scott Bruch would be rescinded. Mr. Bruch was sent a letter notifying him of the rescindment. See more under New Business.
- b. 19596 Maple Street, Trimble (LB-2019-16): Disposition occurred on November 10, 2022.

#### 9. Buchtel Renovation

- a. 17922 Akron Avenue, Buchtel (LB-2020-01): All appliances have been installed and the renovation is complete! Sanborn Family Builders did a fantastic job with the renovation and were wonderful to work with. Finishing touches have been completed. The renovation cost approximately \$170,000. The Land Bank received \$15,000 from the Athens County Foundation and \$30,000 from the Treasurer's lien administration fund, so the Land Bank spent \$125,000. Mr. Wasserman notes that interest rates are on the rise, but the market is still good in Athens County.

We are under contract with a buyer after an initial contract fell-through. An appraisal on the house will be completed shortly. After the appraisal is completed, we will be able to move forward toward a closing in early January. Net before real

estate agent commission is \$169,000. Mr. Chmiel notes that the severely dilapidated house across the street will be getting demolished. Mr. Wasserman notes that a shared driveway agreement is in progress with the neighbor.

10. ARPA request in the amount of \$200,000 for demolitions and nuisance properties in collaboration with the Health Department

- a. A request was sent to the Commissioners, and was then sent to their Auditors to verify that it is an approved expense. Mr. Chmiel notes that he hopes to have an update in early January and that they're working on finalizing an agreement with HAPCAP.

11. HAPCAP contract for Building Demolition & Site Revitalization demolitions

- a. See above. All Group J demolitions have been completed. HAPCAP and Sean Brooks were very helpful in guiding us through the demolition process.

12. USDA Application for 83 High, Glouster Roof Repair

- a. The application was approved for 75% of the roof repair and Mike Smith of Smitty's Interior & Exterior was chosen to take on this project. Work is completed and has been inspected by Commissioner Chmiel. The grant funds were received and the contractor has been paid.

New Business – 25 minutes

1. Future Dispositions – Several potential dispositions are in progress, and we hope to bring them to the board soon. They include:

- a. 27 Main Street, Glouster (LB-2018-72): The structure was demolished during the recent Group J2 demolitions. A new sign has been placed on the property. We expect it to come up for disposition in early 2023.
- b. 8001 SR-78, Glouster (LB-2019-10): Parcel with a dilapidated trailer. A few end-users have applied for this property. Needs survey. An application was submitted to have this structure demolished with state BD&SR funds.
- c. 20 Campbell Street, Nelsonville (LB-2018-43): This property was recently acquired, and we believe it to be a candidate for renovation. Waste diversion is currently being carried out at the house. It was inspected by local contractor Danny Yahini and it is his opinion that the structure can be renovated. He estimates it would cost \$25,000-35,000 in materials to successfully renovate. No project proposals were submitted on the prior October 19, 2022 deadline. Athens County Planner Laura Olbers confirmed with us that this property is in the floodplain and would need to be elevated 6 inches above the base flood elevation if renovated. Guest Steve Pierson notes that in Nelsonville, flood protection elevation is one foot, not 6 inches.
- d. 38 Main Street, Glouster (LB-2018-73): Large blue boarded up Victorian house in Glouster. A new end-user has come forth with an

interest in renovating the house. He is currently composing a prospectus. Our Property Manager, Jody Barnes conducted a tour for a new interested end-user on December 15, 2022. Mr. Chmiel notes that it could be a potential Land Bank renovation. Mr. Wasserman says the challenge with this property is that it would likely need to be more than a single-family home and that an inn, a B&B, or home of a non-profit would be more suitable. Stephanie Morris asks what the parking situation is like at the house. Mr. Wasserman notes that 2/3rds of the garage behind the house belongs to 38 Main and that there is alley access behind the garage. Aaron notes that it is also located on the portion of Main Street where street parking is available.

- e. 14 and 16 Maple Street, Glouster (LB-2019-25 and LB-2019-26): Empty parcels. Structures previously demolished by Land Bank. The only interested end-user has not responded to contact attempts.
  - f. 823 Walnut Street, Nelsonville (LB-2020-13): Currently on our list to be demolished in the next round of BD&SR funding demolitions. An end-user came forth with an interest in potentially renovating the structure. Jody met with local contractor Danny Yahini who determined that the house would not be a feasible renovation candidate.
2. Resolution to authorize Chair Ric Wasserman or Manager Aaron Dye to sign paperwork to sell and convey 17922 Akron Avenue, Buchtel as agreed to in the sales contract.
- a. Mr. Wasserman makes a motion that we approve the contract to sell 17922 N. Akron Avenue, Buchtel as agreed in the sales contract and to allow either Ric Wasserman or Aaron Dye to sign the paperwork to affect that sale, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Chmiel. All Yeas.
3. Committee for the creation of an employment policy
- Lenny and Aaron have drafted a new employee handbook. They are using the Lucas County Land Bank's employee handbook as a framework. The first draft was circulated to the board members on Monday, December 19, 2022. Motion to approve the employment policy by Mr. Chmiel, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Wasserman. Aaron notes that this would become effective on January 1, 2023. Mr. Wasserman notes that we should be alert to possible changes in the future in case something doesn't work for us. Aaron notes that it is included in the handbook that the board has the authority to change items in the handbook as they see fit. All Yeas.
4. Discussion on an event with Heritage Ohio in Spring 2023 – Commissioner Chmiel
- Mr. Chmiel notes that he met with Heritage Ohio to tour some of the Land Bank's recently acquired buildings in downtown Glouster. Some of the conversation included historic preservation tax credits and other downtown revitalization initiatives. He notes that one of the focuses of the current Appalachian grant program is downtown revitalization and that folks have been having conversations with Buckeye Hills Regional Council about similar ideas. He also notes that many people in these conversations have been talking about saving their historic buildings. Heritage Ohio would like to collaborate with us on hosting an event.

Mr. Chmiel has talked with Tom O'Grady of the Southeast Ohio History Center about hosting this event as well. The event would focus on why communities should save their historic buildings, how to do it, and then discussion on more technical facets of the process. Representatives of the State Historic Preservation Office and other experts would be present. He notes that he would like to host this event in February or March.

5. 2023 Budget discussion and approval

Mr. Wasserman made several comments about the 2022 actual numbers:

- DRETAC income is about where we expected it to be. We have only been collecting 2.5% but will be collecting the full 5% in the coming year.
- Grant income is not where we expected it to be because we have not yet received any reimbursements from the ODOD BD&SR program. Additional grants related to Brownfields and ODOD that we were not necessarily counting on ended up hitting in 2022.
- Sale of properties is lower than expected because sales we believed would occur by November are happening in either December or January 2023. This includes the sale of the Sargent Road property and 17922 N. Akron Avenue, Buchtel. It was estimated that we would complete 3 of the pay-in-advance foreclosures, but 2 were completed. The sale of those properties will be in 2023. Much of the environmental services budget went through the Athens County Port Authority instead of the Land Bank. We spent approximately 70% more on the renovation project than anticipated, but we will still end up making a profit on it. In 2023 we expect to monetize the rest of the grant from the BD&SR program and hope to receive \$200,000 from the Athens County Commissioners for the collaboration with the health department.
- There will be a lot of money spent on demolitions in 2023 through the BD&SR program. We will have certain grants go through back through our budget, including the demolition of the service station at 4030/4070 Washington Road, Albany.
- We're looking at adding a line-item of \$50,000 in payroll for Jody's position.
- Mr. Wasserman notes he and Mr. Chmiel have been looking to identify another property to perform a renovation on and \$120,000 has been included in the budget for it.

Mr. Chmiel moves that the board approve the amended budget as presented, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Patterson. All Yeas.

6. Disposition Action:

- i) 60 Converse, Chauncey (LB-2019-22): At the October board meeting, it was voted that the initial disposition offer to Scott Bruch would be rescinded due to several months of not responding to contact attempts. The Village of Chauncey has expressed interest in this property. Mayor Amy Renner spoke with Mr. Bruch to discuss his plan, and she contacted us to note that the Village of Chauncey would be withdrawing their application for the property because they were in favor of Mr. Bruch's proposal. Mr. Bruch was present at the meeting and noted that he owns 58 Converse and would like to acquire 60 Converse so a house could be built on 58 Converse. 60 Converse would need to be acquired because of the way that parcels are laid out in Chauncey. He has maintained 60

Converse since 58 Converse was purchased. He notes that the lack of communication was due to many health issues in his family throughout the year.

Mr. Patterson asks if the easement that the Village of Chauncey has on that property is a utility easement. Mr. Bruch notes that the railroad runs behind the property so it could be due to maintenance. Mr. Wasserman asks if 60 Converse has a sewer line. Mr. Bruch notes that there are footers present on the property, but doesn't know if there is a sewer tap on 60 Converse. He notes that he has photos from the demolition of 58 Converse showing the location of that sewer cap.

Mr. Wasserman says the sale of 60 Converse is contingent on the payment of the property taxes for 58 Converse. Mr. Chmiel asks when he could begin building on 58/60 Converse. Mr. Bruch notes that the plan is mid-2023.

Mr. Chmiel moves that we dispose of 60 Converse Street, Chauncey to Scott Bruch for the initial offer of \$4,000 with the caveat that back-taxes are paid on 58 Converse Street, Chauncey. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Patterson. All Yeas.

- ii) 26 Converse Street, Chauncey (LB-2020-03): Site of a former dilapidated house along Converse Street/Route 13 in Chauncey. There were two interested end users, but only one submitted a project proposal. Carrie and Jeff Russel, who own an adjoining property at 11 Sycamore Street where Jeff's parents live, would like to acquire the property to maintain as greenspace.

Aaron notes that they also own the Sunday Creek Raceway in Millfield. With their proposal, they submitted an offer of \$15,000 for the property. Mr. Wasserman notes that the house was demolished with BD&SR funding in October/November. Mr. Patterson moves that 26 Converse Street, Chauncey be disposed to Carrie and Jeff Russell for \$15,000. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Chmiel. All Yeas.

- iii) **19498 Congress Street, Trimble (LB-2021-03):** Site of a former dilapidated house that was demolished in the recent Group J demolitions. The garage was left standing and is in decent shape. The Land Bank has been using this building for the storage of property maintenance items.

Motion by Mr. Patterson to amend the agenda to include the disposition of 19498 Congress Street, Trimble. Mayor Doug Davis of the Village of Trimble was present at the meeting, noting Trimble's interest in the property for the storage of water parts, truck, and more as their current storage is in the flood zone and not sufficient. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Wasserman. All Yeas.

Motion by Mr. Patterson to dispose of 19498 Congress Street, Trimble to the Village of Trimble. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Chmiel. Mr. Wasserman notes that disposition would be subject to a use agreement on the garage. He also notes that the sale price to the Village of Trimble will be \$1.00 and closing costs will include the \$200.00 deed preparation fee. All Yeas.



7. New Projects:

Taxes Owed	Last Pymt	Parcel ID	Owner Name	Property Address
\$12,856.75	N/A	M050030003600	Smith, Janet Olena	64 E. Palmer Street, Jacksonville
\$ 4,210.34	Oct 2022	K010150200100	Jeffers, Kenneth & Nicole Miller	17 Church St., Stewart

Aaron notes that he was contacted by the neighbor of 64 E. Palmer Street who informed us of its abandoned status. Upon further research, it was also found to be tax delinquent in the amount of \$12,856.75. This property sits across the street from a former Land Bank property, 67 ½ E. Palmer Street.

Mr. Wasserman notes that he has visited 17 Church Street is definitely abandoned and in poor shape.

Mr. Chmiel moves to accept both 64 E. Palmer Street, Jacksonville and 17 Church Street, Stewart as new projects. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Patterson. All Yeas.

Roundtable:

- A. Scheduling of next meeting: January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023.
- B. Mr. Chmiel notes that he attended the County Commissioner’s Conference and heard from Miami County, whose Land Bank does not demolish any buildings but operates as a community improvement corporation (CIC). He notes that Land Banks are CICs and would like everyone to be aware of that and the benefits it may offer. Mr. Wasserman asks if the county has a CIC. Mr. Patterson says that they do not, but the City of Athens has created a new one. The old one dissolved in 2016. The armory was recently migrated into the CIC. Mr. Wasserman asks what the difference is between an EDC (economic development council) and a CIC. Mr. Patterson responds that a major difference is that a CIC has access to historic tax credits while an EDC does not.

- C. Guest Gary Arnold notes that he is having trouble with squatters at 21 W. High Street, Jacksonville. The Land Bank does not yet own this property. Mr. Chmiel notes that he and Aaron had previously visited this property in an attempt to secure the driveway. Mr. Chmiel asks if the past water bill will be extinguished once the Land Bank acquires the property. Mr. Wasserman answered that it would be. Mr. Arnold notes that the property is being used as a dump and trash has been overflowing onto his property. Mr. Wasserman notes that the Land Bank should have ownership of this property soon and asked if Mr. Arnold has spoken with the village regarding a law enforcement remedy? Mayor Doug Davis notes that the Village of Trimble has similar issues with enforcing various violations such as waste accumulation.
  
- D. Guest Heath Moore asks if 3 Fairlawn Avenue, Glouster is in the next round of demolitions. Mr. Wasserman notes that it is not next on the list, but is slated for demolition. Mr. Moore asks if the trees will be removed during the demolition and Mr. Wasserman says yes. Mr. Moore also asked about 24 Spring Street, owned by Michael Kennedy. Mr. Wasserman informed Mr. Moore that the Land Bank acquired permission from Michael Kennedy's widow, Sharon Kennedy, to demolish the structure at 3 Main Street, Glouster, and have since acquired the property, but the Land Bank has not looked into acquiring 24 Spring Street.
  
- E. A guest asked about the status of 5 Broad Street, Glouster. It was noted that we are currently in the process of having a title search completed on 3 Broad Street, Glouster so that a foreclosure can be started, and that this may be the property the guest was referring to.

13. Adjournment: Motion to adjourn by Mr. Chmiel, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Patterson. All Yeas. Adjournment at 12:26 PM.

Minutes submitted for approval by Aaron Dye, Secretary

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Secretary

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Date

Approved, as amended (if any) on \_\_\_\_\_