

**Finger Lakes Regional Land Bank Corporation
Tuesday, February 27, 2024, at 4:00 PM
Heroes 9-11-01 Conference Room**

Directors Present: Ernie Brownell (late), Jill Henry, Les Marquart,
Frank Sinicropi, David Wood

Staff: Joe McGrath, Michael Scaglione, Caitlin Ryan

Other Attendees: Esther Dickinson, Heaton & Venuti; Jae Darling

1. The meeting was called to order at 4:02 PM by Frank Sinicropi, chairperson. A quorum was present.
2. A motion was made by Jill Henry and seconded by Les Marquart to approve the minutes from the regular meeting on January 23, 2024. Motion approved 4-0.

3. Resolutions:

• **24-12: Authorizing Contracts Including Architectural, Engineer, and Environmental Professional Services**

Joe McGrath advised that our request for qualifications was posted and received a robust turnout in responses. After reviewing and scoring the seven (7) assembled teams and four (4) individual submissions, with an overall firm count of twenty-nine (29); there were 3 top firms that we proceeded to have further interviews with. We have selected IN/EX Architecture, P.C. as our lead agency, who has strong experience dealing with affordable housing and HCR grants; they have also done significant work with housing agencies in Rochester and scattered site work, including that of smaller unit counts. Their submission partnered with AMD Environmental Consultants, Inc. that would assist with asbestos and lead testing, as well as air monitoring for Phase I and II testings. There were also a few other engineering firms in their partnership submission that we may need, such as a general contractor. We have also selected Flatley Read, Inc., an environmental firm out of the Albany region, that would be best able to assist with the administrative support, as well as environmental testing. They also have a strong complimentary aspect of their business with working with non-profits, rural preservation companies, and housing, and the grant and program delivery administrative work that goes along with those; they will be helpful as a back-up and a valuable resource in the future. Les Marquart made a motion and David Wood seconded. Motion approved 5-0.

4. CEO/Presidents Update & Discussion Items

- **HCR Land Bank Initiative Grant Update**

Joe M. advised that this is how we are paying the architectural, engineering, and environmental professionals. We have \$320k in grant funding to do a number of things including pre-development work on our vacant lots, including Ovid, Lodi, Interlaken, Willard, and Waterloo so that we can design apartments or homes and utilize the professionals. These professionals would also be used to handle the drawings for the Willard, Habitat for Humanity project, as well as a supporting role for the Waterloo Washington Street project with FLACRA. We now have all of the resources to work on these projects, but first need to utilize these professionals to confirm we are utilizing these funds correctly. We have also received word from the state that Seneca Housing, Inc. received their rural preservation designation; this allows the Land Bank to have that added partnership. This does not provide funds directly to development, but assists them with \$120K per year in administrative costs to be able to support future projects; they will need to recertify for this annually, which we are willing to help with if they need it in the future. HCR prefers to see non-profit entities that work more closely with people that would be occupying the properties; the income verification that goes along with the occupancy can now be done by Seneca Housing to meet the grant demands; rural preservation companies often assist with owner occupied rehab work. Seneca Housing will also be able to work towards providing rentals, due to the shortage of rentals, and can also manage leases for low-income rentals. We intend to continue working with Monica McCollough to work on these grants to complete these projects.

- **Audit Update: Audit & Governance Committee Meetings in March; Annual Report**

Joe M. advised that Bonadio is performing our annual audit. They have slowed down asking questions, which typically means things are going well, but Joe will reach out to confirm that they have received everything they require. Bowers has been working heavily with Bonadio at this point as our Accountants. Towards the end of the process, they will send us a draft audit report and at that time they will reach out and we will schedule committee meetings to review their recommendation to report back to the full board of directors at the end of March. There is also a requirement to present the annual report of the audit for FLRLBC to the full Board of Supervisors (BOS) as well, which will likely take place at the March 26th BOS committee meeting.

- **Update on 55 Washington Street, Waterloo**

Joe M. advised that we have signed contracts and have a targeted closing date in early April; we are on track to acquire this property along with the \$60K donation towards stabilization or demolition. We are continuing to work with FLACRA to put the property into their supportive housing program. We plan to work with our new architects and engineers to spend funds on this property to stabilize it and move forward. We also plan to work with Esther and Monica to put together an agreement with FLACRA to complete the project and get it back on tax rolls.

- **New Volunteer, Jae Darling of Interlaken**

Joe M. introduced Jae Darling, our new volunteer to fill in for Caitlin as Acting Secretary while out on leave. Joe will be going out on leave as well during the summer, and Jae may need to continue to assist come that time.

5. Attorney's Update: Esther Dickinson with Heaton & Venuti advised that most everything is pending at this time, so nothing major to update on. We are currently waiting on the Washington Street closing; Wells Fargo added an additional \$2500 in closing costs as a donation. Next month there will be continued discussions on the Lodi properties, as we are still waiting for judgments for those and there is a possibility for appeals after the judgment comes through. Lodi was unaware that this was preventing them from being able to sell properties; they intend to take an inventory to determine what else they may be looking to get rid of. She has also been working with Jill & Joe on the FLACRA project. Joe M. let Esther know that Supervisor Jeff Trout may be interested in a partnership of the Town of Fayette with the Land Bank to assist in the abandonment proceedings on properties which could utilize some HCR funds. Esther said this could be a good opportunity to utilize our newly established step-by-step protocol, but that we may need to argue the difference between abandonment versus not paying taxes.

6. CFO/Treasurer Update: Michael Scaglione reported on the balance sheet comparison. He stated that this is a comparison to the prior year instead of the prior month, which he typically does for the January report. We are down \$13k in our general checking due to paying large amounts this month for insurance, legal, and professional costs. The Romulus checking saw the CDBG funding come in of \$60k, this is slated for the Pleasant Street

property. The HCR I account saw an increase as well due to incoming grant funding. There was quite a bit of movement on the balance sheet for the month as well as a comparison of actuals to budget. A motion was made by Ernie Brownell and seconded by Les Marquart to approve the report. Motion approved 5-0.

- 7. New Business:** The annual Seneca County Housing Fair is coming up on April 16th at del Lago; Melissa from Seneca Housing and the Seneca Housing Coalition are organizing the event. The fair usually takes place between 10 am-3 pm (after meeting confirmation, 10 am-2 pm). Joe M. asked Les M. about tax foreclosures; Les advised we are waiting until after April 5th to hear from the state on these, but nothing has been scheduled yet. Joe M. has been talking to the Wayne County Land Bank; there is an opportunity to visit their properties to see how they have leveraged Brownfield Grants. Wayne County does not have a Rural Preservation Company working in their area.

- 8. Adjourn:** A motion was made by Les Marquart and seconded by David Wood to adjourn at 4:43 PM. Motion approved 5-0. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 26, 2024, at 4 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Caitlin Ryan
Staff Resource Assistant
Seneca County Department of Planning and Community Development