

Finger Lakes Regional Land Bank Corporation

March 28, 2023 at 4:00 PM

Heroes 9-11-01 Conference Room

Directors Present: Kyle Barnhart, Ernie Brownell, Jill Henry, Don Northrup, Frank Sinicropi, David Wood

Directors Absent: Les Marquart

Staff: Joe McGrath, Amanda Forney

Other Attendees: Michael Scaglione, CFO/Treasurer of the FLRLBC; Esther Dickinson, Attorney at Heaton & Venuti; Mitch Rowe, County Manager

1. The meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM by Frank Sinicropi, chairperson. A quorum was present.
2. A motion was made by Ernie Brownell and seconded by Don Northrup to approve the minutes from the regular meeting on January 24, 2023. Motion approved 5-0.

A motion was made by Ernie Brownell and seconded by Don Northrup to approve the minutes from the Audit & Governance Committee meeting on March 27, 2023. Motion approved 5-0.

3. Resolutions:

- **23-11: Adopt Certain FLRLBC Policies and Procedures**

Don Northrup made a motion and David Wood seconded. Motion approved 5-0.

The Audit & Governance Committee reviewed all policies and procedures and no changes were made.

- **23-12: Adopt Updated Purchasing Policy**

Don Northrup made a motion and David Wood seconded. Motion approved 5-0.

PAAA requires annual review and readoption of this and other policies. The requirements for procuring services without gathering quotes was increased from \$500 to \$1,000. This will enable the FLRLBC to more efficiently hire contractors for work such as boarding up properties and tree removal. Three quotes will be needed for any work that costs \$1,001 to \$10,000 and will require CEO approval and Board notification.

- **23-13: Update FLRLBC Board of Directors Meeting Schedule**

Jill Henry made a motion and Frank Sinicropi seconded. Motion approved 6-0.

Within the last year, the Land Bank has held the Board of Directors meetings quarterly. As additional funding is expected, and brownfields projects will become a focus, it is likely that the meetings will need to occur more regularly to meet requirements and complete environmental reviews.

- **23-14: Accept 2022 Financial Statement and Audit Report**

Frank Sinicropi made a motion and Kyle Barnhart seconded. Motion approved 6-0.

The audit came back clean with no findings. The accountants Bower's & Company coordinated with the auditors at the Bonadio Group which allowed for a smooth process. No new recommendations were made.

- **23-15: Authorizing Service Agreement with Mozaic for Lawn Maintenance**

Kyle Barnhart made a motion and David Wood seconded. Motion approved 6-0.

Mozaic is a NYS Preferred Source contractor for lawn maintenance as they employ people with developmental disabilities. The Land Bank was required to get a quote from NYS ID, Preferred Source vendor, that coordinates at the state level. For all Land Bank properties, Mozaic quoted weekly up until July, and after July, quotes were for biweekly work with a total cost of \$11,349 for the year.

- **23-16: Authorizing Purchase Offer for Two Buildable Lots in Village of Lodi**

Frank Sinicropi made a motion and David Wood seconded. Kyle Barnhart abstained. Motion approved 5-0.

Mr. McGrath stated that there were very few properties on the County tax foreclosure list that would be appropriate for the Land Bank to acquire. Mr. McGrath became aware that the Village of Lodi had two properties listed for sale on Zillow and made contact regarding purchase. Mr. McGrath was able to write this idea into the grant application for the next round of HCR funding. If the full application is funded, the purchase price would be included for the lots and the resolution and purchase order would be contingent upon awards of those funds. Only HCR funding would be used. Mr. McGrath stated that the more properties that the Land Bank can accumulate, the more competitive it will make the Land Bank for grant funding and conducting new construction. The lots are adjacent. One lot is $\frac{1}{4}$ of an acre and the other is $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre. The total offer of \$37,000 is contingent upon receiving grant funding.

- **23-17: Authorizing Memorandum of Understanding with FLACRA and Mental Health Community Services Board**

Frank Sinicropi made a motion and Kyle Barnhart seconded. Motion approved 6-0.

Mr. McGrath noted the previous discussion about the Housing Needs Assessment that is currently in the works and the information that was acquired through the stakeholder meetings. FLACRA has funding available for supportive housing but does not have any sites. The Land Bank has access to sites but is lacking funding. The MOU states that the

Land Bank will work to identify potential candidates for this use and pursue the potential partnership with FLACRA. Any future project would need its own individual contract and agreement. The MOU outlines what that may look like. The Community Services Board has a role in managing and overseeing all Mental Health developments, initiatives, etc. including the Seneca County Mental Health Department, FLACRA, and Lakeview.

- **23-18: Accept and Award Strategic Plan and Grant Writing RFP**

David Wood made a motion and Frank Sinicropi seconded. Motion approved 6-0.

The FLRLBC released an RFP for a consultant to help develop a strategic plan and apply for grants. The current HCR Land Bank funds administration and operations and will be used towards this project. The strategic plan will help the Land Bank build a development and acquisition pipeline to help replace revenue that will not always be available. The plan will also describe ways to generate revenue through property development. A development model menu was requested to help with more complicated sites as the Land Bank seeks less complicated proposals that still produce market rate housing. Five bids were received and distributed to Land Bank Board of Directors, and many submitted feedback. MRB Group had the strongest application, offering more staff support and having more NYS housing specific work experience. A proposal was also received from MMDA, a small firm out of Rochester that was highly recommended. MMDA does a lot of work with the Rural Housing Coalition and has experience in scattered site housing in rural counties. Mr. McGrath believes their expertise will benefit the work of the Land Bank. The resolution proposes awarding MRB Group and utilizing MMDA as a secondary resource. The total budgeted cost for this project increased by \$5,000 to a total of \$35,000. \$29,200 will be paid for with LBI Phase 1 funds as originally budgeted and the remaining \$5,800 will be paid from the Land Bank's general account.

- **23-19: Authorize the Appointments of Accountants, Attorneys, and Auditors for 2023**

Jill Henry made a motion and Kyle Barnhart seconded. Motion approved 6-0.

This resolution affirms that the Land Bank is working with Bower's & Co. as accountants, Heaton & Venuti as general counsel, Hancock Estabrook as consultants, and the Bonadio Group as auditors.

4. CEO/Presidents Update & Discussion Items

- **FLRLBC Annual Report 2022**

Mr. McGrath summarized several topics discussed in the annual report such as funding, property sales, list of inventories, acquisitions, projects, and expected activities.

The Land Bank currently has seven properties in its inventory, five of which were demolitions, one was a rehabilitation, and the remaining property was a new build start.

The Department of Planning & Community Development created and completed a building condition report of properties on the tax foreclosure list or that were one year in arrears. The purpose was to determine which properties would make good Land Bank candidates.

Mr. McGrath stated that a full housing plan is needed to help identify ways to help residents pay taxes, stay in their homes, and stay on the tax rolls. The Housing Needs Assessment is not a full housing plan.

Mr. McGrath also explained that there are two possible options for the County to acquire vacant and abandoned residential property after just one year in tax arrears. Many communities in NYS are utilizing these options, especially for those that are zombie properties.

- **Housing Needs Assessment Update**

The Planning & Community Development Department has been working with the HNA consultants with completion expected in May 2023. The assessment will be valuable for the Land Bank's work as well as developing County housing policies and the creation of a County housing strategy or plan. Another stakeholder meeting will be held between the HNA consultants, Seneca County DHS, Seneca County Mental Health, and FLACRA to quantify and gather descriptions about the homelessness issue. Mr. McGrath stated that it has been great working with these stakeholders and noted their significant contributions to the HNA.

- **HCR LBI Phase II Grant Submission Update**

The grant application has been submitted and proposed one demolition, one rehabilitation, and nine predevelopment projects. Predevelopment projects may require site plans, blueprints, environmental assessments, zoning applications, zoning approvals, etc. Mr. McGrath stated that this is the only program that provides funding for those types of activities. The total requested is \$369,600 for work on all properties in the inventory, two from Lodi, two from tax acquisitions, and 108 Mynderse St. The award announcement is expected in April 2023.

- **Brownfields Update**

The agreement has been signed by Seneca County, FLRLBC, and the NYS DEC. The agreement will also need to be signed by the NYS Comptroller. Once fully executed, the Land Bank will work with the County Treasurer's office and County administration to propose the properties that will be added to the agreement. Mr. McGrath also noted that the awards for the Brownfield Assessment Grant should be announced in April 2023.

- **Seneca County Tax Foreclosures Update**

Mr. McGrath noted that the last day for tax payments to be received is Friday, March 31, 2023. The auction is scheduled for May 5-19, 2023 and will be held online. Mr. McGrath hopes that a grant award announcement will be made by that time.

- 5. CFO/Treasurer Update:** Mr. Scaglione delivered the financial report. Frank Sinicropi made a motion to accept the report and Kyle Barnhart seconded. Motion carried 6-0.
- 6. Adjourn:** 4:47 PM. The next regular meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 25th, 2023 at 4:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amanda Forney, Staff Resources Assistant, Dept. of Planning and Community Development