

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

**LOCATION:** Live meeting held at Community Cares Resource Center and on Google Meet (<https://meet.google.com/bbz-ywph-ygf>)

**DAY/TIME:** Called to order Wednesday, September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024 @ 11:00 AM

**PURPOSE:** Regular meeting to consider the following business:

Board Administration – 5 minutes

1. The meeting was called to order by Ric Wasserman, Chair. Roll Call by Aaron Dye, Secretary. Board members present were Ric Wasserman, Chris Chmiel, and Lenny Eliason.
2. Motion to approve the agenda by Mr. Chmiel, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Eliason. All Yeas.
3. Motion to approve the minutes from August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024 board meeting by Mr. Chmiel, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Eliason.
4. Financial Report - Treasurer LaVerne Humphrey

**Summary**

Starting Balance	150,471.28
Actual Cash In	153.22
Actual Cash Out	10,967.34
Ending Balance	139,657.16

Ms. Humphrey notes that expenses primarily consisted of payroll, utilities, and some legal fees. Mr. Wasserman notes that a large bill from APG Media will be reflected on next month's financial summary for foreclosure publications. He continues that we are still waiting for a large reimbursement from ODOD and the sale of the 11 Maple Street house. Motion to approve the financial report by Mr. Eliason, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Chmiel. All Yeas.

**Business:**

Old Business – 35 minutes

1. Update on acquisition process/pipeline from Mr. Wasserman

- i) Assistant Prosecutor TL Warren is currently working on several foreclosures for the Land Bank. We received 3 deeds this month. Several other properties are scheduled for Sheriff sale this month and next. A couple of deeds will be ready for us this week.
- ii) 15 N. Third Street, Jacksonville; 6 Morgan Street, Glouster; 50 Locust Street, Glouster; 8670 Hollister Road, Glouster did not sell at Sheriff sale. Mr. Chmiel asks if other jurisdictions could claim these properties before the Land Bank. Mr. Wasserman responds that they could, but the Prosecutor's office does not typically notify every jurisdiction anymore. Mr. Chmiel asks what these properties are like. Mr. Wasserman responds that 6 Morgan is a dilapidated house with a neighbor as an applicant. Aaron notes that 50 Locust is the Russell property and is a very dilapidated house with a neighbor interested in the parcel.
- iii) 191771 Lake Drive, Trimble (LB-2019-14): The first parcel associated with this property was acquired on August 14, 2024. A new case will be filed soon to acquire the other parcel.
- iv) 8800 SR-685, Glouster (LB-2022-06): The first parcel associated with this property was acquired on August 14, 2024. A similar occurrence to the 191771 Lake Drive case above happened with the second parcel associated with this property. A new case will be filed there as well.

## 2. State Demo project

The final report for the last round of the Building Demolition & Site Revitalization program was submitted by Aaron at the end of May. The Ohio Department of Development sent us a cure list for the final reimbursement request, and we have supplied them the requested documentation. The final reimbursement request amount is \$161,196.81.

ODOD has indicated that they have the documents necessary to close out the grant. The employee working with us on our reimbursement request reached out once more regarding our final reimbursement request. We are working with him to sort out any confusion. Aaron notes that he spoke with Shawn Carvin of the Ohio Land Bank Association about the lookback period for the program regarding costs for which we are seeking reimbursement.

The 2024-25 BD&SR application was submitted on Friday, March 29<sup>th</sup>. Other Land Banks across the state have begun receiving cure lists for the applications from ODOD, so we expect to receive one soon. Since we did not surpass the \$500,000 per county set-aside, we do not foresee any issues regarding funds. To ensure we can begin demolitions quickly after the grant agreement is received, we have ordered asbestos surveys for the first two demolition groups and the next two groups will be ordered

shortly. Aaron notes that he has heard that Land Banks will begin receiving their award notices by the end of September, but nobody can be sure.

Aaron notes that he has spoken with Kelly Hatas, Executive Director at HAPCAP about the 30 Connet project and she noted that they have a timeline to keep with regarding the demolition of the structure there. Mr. Wasserman noted that he believes they're in contract to sell the property. Aaron notes that the email regarding the contract was referring to Kelly noting that HAPCAP is "out to bid and slated to go under contract by September 30<sup>th</sup>."

Demolitions have been grouped as follows:

Group N1: 30 Connet Road, The Plains; 21 E. 1<sup>st</sup> Street, The Plains; 26 N. Clinton Street, The Plains; 5 Oak Street, The Plains

Group N2: 319 Oak Street, Nelsonville; 20 Campbell Street, Nelsonville; 902 Chestnut Street, Nelsonville

Group N3: 4382 N. Gun Club Road, Athens; 8356 Marsh Street, New Marshfield; 4910 Vore Ridge Road, Athens; 11535 Carbondale Road, Nelsonville

Group O1: 20 Smith Street, Chauncey; 71 Main Street, Chauncey; 100 Main Street, Chauncey; 14 Mound Street, Chauncey

Group O2: 73 High Street, Glouster (back addition only)

Group O3: 24518 Rowley Lane, Coolville; 805 River Front Road, Hockingport; 21196 Chapman Road, Guysville; 20757 US 50, Guysville

Group P1: 55 Mill Street, Chauncey; 8 Ellis Avenue, Chauncey; 16 High Street, Chauncey; 16 Lexington Avenue, Chauncey

Group P2: 14560 McDaniel Road, Amesville; 17759 SR-377, Bern Township

Group P3: 25 Town Street, Glouster; 29 Hill Street, Glouster; 34 Spring Street, Glouster; 23 Morgan Street, Glouster; 50 Front Street, Glouster

Group P4: 10190/10194 Chase Road, Albany; 2388 Trout Road, Albany

### 3. State Brownfield Grant Application

In collaboration with the Athens County Port Authority, we made application for two brownfield remediation projects in conjunction with the Athens County Port Authority.

Cornerstone Harvest Church in Hollister is an old school that has been used as a church for several years. The congregation has built a new building and would like the old school torn down. Application has been made for a Level I and II assessment. 4070 Washington Road, Albany was also submitted as part of the application after we were informed the Abandoned Gas Station Program had run out of funding.

It is our understanding that the Port Authority has received a cure list for their application from ODOOD. Once the grant agreement has been received, Tetra Tech will begin moving forward with the demolition of the service station on Washington Road as well as other remediation work.

The Port Authority notified us that there was an excess of available funds, and it has been decided that the funds will be utilized to expand infrastructure at the Washington Road property. Jody met with Richard Shultz on May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024 to begin looking into the potential of running a new water tap, installing a fire hydrant, and routing a new sewer line to the property.

The owners of Cornerstone Harvest Church met with Tetra Tech and potential demolition bidders for a walkthrough of the structure.

Mr. Wasserman notes that the Port Authority will need the Trimble Township Trustees to sign off on the Cornerstone Harvest Church project. A similar event is occurring in Waterloo Township for a Level One and Level Two site assessment.

## 5. Update on previously approved projects

A. Rehabs: Land Bank Rehabs underway or nearly completed in the county: 24 Cherry Street (new owner), Glouster; 141 Monroe Street, Nelsonville; 354 Chestnut Street, Nelsonville; 14 Barbour Street, Glouster. We have received complaints about the state of 354 Chestnut Street, Nelsonville regarding the accumulation of debris and other trash on the parcel. Mr. Wasserman spoke with the end-user in early August, and it appears no progress was made on the cleanup since then. He has sent the end-user a letter urging them to clean up the property and noted if they cannot complete the renovation, the Land Bank would be willing to take back the property.

Mr. Wasserman notes we have had contact with folks who have agreed to engage work on properties where no construction has been completed. He continues that he has spoken with the owners of 354 Chestnut Street, Nelsonville, where not only no construction has been done but there is dumping going on behind the house. He asked them to begin cleaning up the property. He followed the phone call with a letter than explains they entered a contract which is part of the deed that they would complete the renovation in a specific amount of time and keep the property clean. He has also spoken with the Code Enforcer in the area.

Mr. Wasserman has spoken with the owner of 141 Monroe Street, Nelsonville, who has noted an electrician is coming to install a service panel at the structure and a roof will follow. He continues that 14 Barbour is close to being done and Aaron adds that a new roof was just put on this week.

Mr. Wasserman discusses that the situation at 770/784 Poplar Street is frustrating as the end-user agreed to demolish the two structures and build a new residence. He completed the demolitions but has not begun any work on a new build.

B. 57 and 61 Summit Street, Glouster: Habitat for Humanity of Southeast Ohio is nearly finished with the new build on these parcels. Habitat has supplied the Land Bank with photos of the progress. Aaron presented photos of the build. Mr. Wasserman explains that one parcel held a blue house which was one of the first demolished by the Land Bank and the second had a burned-out church that was demolished during the last round of BD&SR funding. He continues that he believes somebody will be building behind this on the three parcels that make up 32 Front Street, whether SAOP or another entity.

Mr. Wasserman asks if Mr. Gillie, end-user for 75 High, has been contacted lately. Aaron notes that Jody spoke with him recently and he is regularly present and working at the site.

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

- 1) 4070 Washington Road (3 parcels, LB-2021-16): We have acquired this property. See above for update on environmental remediation at this property. See update regarding 4070 Washington Road above in the Brownfield section.
- 2) Haga Ridge Road, Rome Township (2 parcels, LB-2024-01): The foreclosure case has been filed. This property is scheduled for sheriff sale on September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Mr. Wasserman notes that he believes the original end-users intend to bid on this property at sheriff sale.
- 3) 6807 N. Coolville Ridge Road, Athens (1 parcel, LB-2024-08): The pay-in-advance contract was signed by Rebecca Wood on May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024. The case has been filed and is in the notification stage of the foreclosure.

## 7. Update on pending dispositions

1. No updates.

## 8. Update on 47 Main Street, Chauncey

Mediation between the Land Bank, Athens Preservation, and the Village of Chauncey occurred August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Athens Preservation, LTD presented some information to our attorney to work toward a settlement but it was insufficient to document what they have actually spent on the property. Our attorney has asked for supporting documentation but as yet none has been received. If nothing is received in a reasonable

period of time, we will have to inform the judge that mediation was unsuccessful, and the case will proceed.

Mr. Wasserman notes that we received prints of line-items from Athens Preservation's internal bookkeeping system which were determined inadequate. The received documents also included legal fees which were specifically discussed as exempted. Our attorney has asked their legal counsel to submit documents such as receipts. Our attorney has advised we wait for a short period as he believes that will be less expensive than moving forward with the litigation. Mr. Wasserman notes that we are getting close to the \$5,000.00 line-item for legal fees in the 47 Main lawsuit.

9. Community Development Block Grant opportunity in collaboration with HAPCAP for downtown revitalization

Jeff Jenkins has noted that the environmental report is wrapping up and the procurement process for the design will begin shortly after. Aaron notes that Mr. Jenkins asked if we had any documents from the procurement process of selecting BDT Architects for the job and he responded that the Land Bank did not engage a bidding process, BDT Architects were more or less selected for the job. Mr. Jenkins noted that they would have to go through the Request for Qualifications process but he is confident that BDT Architects will submit a competitive proposal.

10. 11 Maple Street, Gloucester Renovation

The house has been on the market since May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024. The Athens Real Estate Company was engaged to list the property in early August. The listing is now active, and all our marketing of the property now directs potential purchasers to them. We are conferring with our agent, CR Pratt as to a strategy going forward.

Mr. Wasserman notes that Mr. Pratt completed a sales analysis for real estate sales in the area and was unable to find comparable properties that have sold for the current asking price of 11 Maple. Two showings have occurred, but the neighborhood has been noted as the most prominent sticking point for buyers. Mr. Chmiel notes that it seems like the neighborhood has been moving in a positive direction. Mr. Wasserman responds that it can be difficult with buyers outside of the area. He continues that we will likely have to lower the asking price. Ms. Humphrey noted that updating the curb appeal may be a good strategy and Mr. Wasserman responds that he will mention it to Mr. Pratt.

11. Structural Assessment of Downtown Gloucester Buildings

All structural reports for the downtown Glouster buildings (73 High Street, 83/85 High Street, 87 High Street, and 110 High Street) have been received. We encourage any parties interested in viewing the reports to reach out to Ric Wasserman or Aaron Dye. The reports for 73, 83-85, and 87 High Street can be viewed on their respective listings on the Athens County Land Bank website.

Mr. Wasserman notes that the reports are a good roadmap, but we need to find a developer that wants to get involved with downtown Glouster. Aaron notes that he is still in contact with Shayna Bowman, approved applicant for 87 High, and she is staying up to date with the process of the project at that location. Mr. Wasserman adds that the next round of BD&SR funding will fund the removal of the back addition of 73 High, which has a couple of interested applicants. Mr. Chmiel notes that we would need someone like Guy Phillips for the 83/85 High project.

#### 12. Partnership with SAOP for Welcome Home Ohio (WHO) grant application

The Ohio Department of Development notified the Land Bank that our application was approved in full. The Athens County Land Bank is one of 17 counties in Ohio that will be utilizing WHO funding to build affordable housing across the state. In partnership with the Survivor Advocacy Outreach Program (SAOP), 13 new residences will be built. Four of these structures will be on Land Bank-owned lots (32 Front Street, Glouster; 823 Walnut Street, Nelsonville; 923/931 E. High Street, Nelsonville; 20 Campbell Street, Nelsonville).

At the August board meeting, preliminary discussion was held regarding shifting our WHO application to a partnership with Habitat for Humanity of Southeast Ohio. Leadership at SAOP noted that they are primarily focusing on the completion of their Appalachian Community Grant Program project and the partnership with Habitat for the WHO program would be an agreeable pivot.

#### 13. WHO application with Habitat for Humanity of Southeast Ohio

At the August board meeting, the board voted to accept the motion to pivot with a new WHO application with Habitat for Humanity of Southeast Ohio and to inform ODOD that we would not be moving forward with the previous application submitted in partnership with SAOP.

In a conversation with the WHO program lead at ODOD, Aaron inquired about submitting a new application. ODOD noted that a grant amendment would not be necessary unless the project proposal shifts dramatically. They continued that the grant agreement and award was to the Athens County Land Reutilization Corporation and was not contingent on our partnership with SAOP. At this time, we should be able to continue without executing the grant amendment process.

In further meeting with Habitat, it was decided that new Habitat builds would occur on 823 Walnut Street, Nelsonville; 923 E. High Street, Nelsonville, 931 E. High Street, Nelsonville; and 9 Johnson Road, The Plains (contingent on current examinations of the property). There is the potential for an additional build on a Habitat lot.

The proposed model for the strategy of this project has the potential to limit available funds for the Land Bank as we will be engaging the Building Demolition & Site Revitalization program at the same time, which utilizes reimbursement payouts after we spend the funds on our own. The same is true for the WHO program. Habitat recommended meeting with the Athens County Foundation for a preliminary discussion about a no-interest line of credit with them to have as a safety net in the event that we would be seeking two reimbursements at the same time.

Mr. Wasserman notes that one of the more difficult aspects of the WHO program is finding a buyer who meets the LMI restrictions, and Habitat already has that part covered. He continues that he and Aaron met with the Athens County Foundation and Habitat asking if they would be interested in executing a zero-interest line of credit for the Land Bank so that when these projects happen and there's a lag between the building of the house, "purchasing" it from Habitat, and then the waiting period to receive the reimbursement, there could be a safety net in place should we need it. Mr. Wasserman notes that we will get board approval for the line of credit once another meeting with the Athens County Foundation regarding specifics of the agreement has occurred. Mr. Wasserman notes that Habitat had informed us that they could begin the first build as early as March 2025.

#### New Business – 15 minutes

1. Future Dispositions – Several potential dispositions are in progress, and we hope to bring them to the board soon. They include:
  - a. 55 Madison Street, Glouster: The house at this address was also demolished during our Group M1 demolitions. A couple of Glouster residents have reached out with interest in acquiring the property.
2. Fall Land Bank Summit  
The Ohio Land Bank Association is hosting a Fall Land Bank Summit targeted at new and developing land banks. Aaron and Ric will be attending and presenting as well. It is a one-day conference in Mt. Vernon, Ohio. Further information can be found at [ohiolandbanks.org](http://ohiolandbanks.org).

### 3. Board Vacancy

Gregg Andrews transmitted his resignation, effective immediately, to the board last week. Mr. Wasserman has conferred with legal counsel regarding the process of filling that board seat.

Mr. Wasserman notes that Mr. Andrews' board seat is the one that is not statutory. Upon guidance from our legal counsel, it seems that there would be a lengthy process to engage if we were a county with two or more townships with a population exceeding 10,000, but Athens County only has one township with that volume of residents. Mr. Wasserman notes that it is his opinion to form a small sub-committee to assemble a few names to be brought to the next board meeting for discussion. Mr. Chmiel notes that we could ask the Athens County Township Trustee Association to appoint an individual. Mr. Wasserman responds that we aren't bound to that process and that the new member does not necessarily have to be a township trustee. He continues that it could be somebody from a community organization and uses the example that there were folks from the Trimble Township Bridgebuilders that were instrumental in the formation of the Land Bank. Mr. Chmiel notes that Steve Pierson, who was in attendance, has been Mr. Andrews' proxy for board meetings and asks if he would want to serve. Mr. Pierson responds that the areas where the most work is being done would make the most sense, noting the City of Nelsonville of the Village of Glouster. Mr. Wasserman adds with the Mayor of Athens already on the board, adding a township trustee from that same area might seem like too much of a concentration in one area. Mr. Pierson notes that he and Mr. Chmiel had conversations early on during the Land Bank's formation and Mr. Andrews fit the bill quite well as he was not only a township trustee from a smaller township, but had real estate experience, building experience, and had worked at COAD. Mr. Wasserman agrees, noting that there is probably nobody out there who has the same amount of township experience, building experience, and real estate experience. He notes that it is a big loss to have him step down. Mr. Wasserman motions that he, Mr. Chmiel, and Aaron will meet to determine individuals to present as possible contenders for the board vacancy at the October board meeting, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Chmiel. All Yeas. Mr. Chmiel asks if we should send Mr. Andrews a thank-you note. Mr. Wasserman agrees.

4. Gus Frangos who authored the original land bank legislation and became CEO of the Cuyahoga Land Bank passes away unexpectedly in late August. His family is requesting that in memoriam, donations be given to the Cuyahoga Land Bank charities [501(c)3]. Please contact Ric if you are interested in making a donation. We all owe a lot to Gus who was a mentor to so many as well as just a great guy.
5. New Projects: No new projects this month.

Taxes Owed	Last Pymt	Parcel ID	Owner Name	Property Address

Roundtable:

Mr. Pierson notes that 30 Connet, The Plains was brought up at the last Board of Zoning Appeals meeting and HAPCAP was granted a conditional use permit. It was originally approved in 2021, but the funding did not come through and the bid that HAPCAP received was too high. Mr. Pierson continues that they now have a financing package ready to go. He notes that the layout is different this time—instead of keeping some of the structures on the site as with their first proposal, they intend to demolish all of them. He notes that HAPCAP will have an EPA requirement they have to meet regarding stormwater detention.

6. Scheduling of next meeting: October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024.  
Aaron asks if the board would like to have the October meeting in Nelsonville again or move it back to Gloucester. Mr. Chmiel responds that he likes having the meetings in Nelsonville. Mr. Wasserman responds that the board can do another month in Nelsonville and then should go back to Gloucester at some point so those community members can be engaged as well.
7. Adjournment: Motion to adjourn by Mr. Eliason, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Chmiel. All Yeas.  
Adjournment at 11:42 AM.

Minutes submitted for approval by Aaron Dye, Secretary



10/16/2024

Secretary

Date

Approved, as amended (if any) on 10/16/2024