

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

**LOCATION:** Live meeting held at Nelsonville City Hall (211 Lake Hope Drive, Nelsonville, OH) with guests joining virtually on Google Meet (<https://meet.google.com/bbz-ywph-ygf>)

**DAY/TIME:** Called to order on Wednesday, March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023 @ 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, and Township Trustee Gregg Andrews.
2. Motion to approve agenda by Mr. Chmiel, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Andrews. All Yeas.
3. Motion to approve minutes from February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023 board meeting by Mr. Chmiel, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Andrews. All Yeas.
4. Financial Report from Treasurer La Verne Humphrey

<b>Summary</b>	
Starting Balance	\$453,895.91
Actual Cash In	\$ 2,200.00
Actual Cash Out	33,990.46
Ending Balance	\$422,105.45

Motion to approve financial report by Mr. Chmiel, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Andrews. Mr. Wasserman notes that there will be some demolition expenses that will be reimbursed through the Building Demolition and Site Revitalization program. He notes that there are approximately eight structures that the Land Bank has already acquired or will be acquiring soon that will need to be torn down with funding outside of the ODOD BD&SR program. All Yeas.

Business:

## Old Business

### 1. Update on acquisition process/pipeline

- i) Properties acquired since February board meeting:
- ii) We have moved into a new cycle of foreclosures with 7 title searches having been ordered from Nolan and Meek in consultation with Asst. Prosecutor Zach West. Mr. West will be preparing these cases soon. Mr. Wasserman notes that 25 Town Street, Gloucester will likely be acquired very soon. It went through two sheriff's sales and did not sell. It may take another 5 to 6 weeks to acquire. It will almost certainly need demolished.

### 2.

Structures in Group K include: 8001 SR-78, Gloucester; 2 Mound Street, Chauncey; 22 Smith Street, Chauncey; 3 Main Street, Gloucester; 61 Summit Street, Gloucester; 3 Summit Street, Gloucester; 234 W. Washington, Nelsonville; 3798 Woodlane Drive, Nelsonville; 823 Walnut Street, Nelsonville; 4071 Old SR-56, New Marshfield; 3 Elm Street, The Plains; 38 Brown Avenue, Athens.

The Group K demolitions were awarded as follows: Group K1 awarded to Good Builders, Inc.; Group K2 awarded to Running G Farms, LLC; Group K3 awarded to Engle Excavating LLC; Group K4 awarded to Hutton Excavating, LLC. Group K1 and K4 demolitions are expected to begin shortly, with K2 and K3 following. Mr. Wasserman asks if Group K4 only includes 3 Main Street, Gloucester. Aaron confirms that it does. Mr. Wasserman follows up that there was a fire at 3 Main causing the roof to collapse, and that the structure is bowing out toward a rental property next door.

Mr. Wasserman notes that a meeting was held with Hutton Excavating at the site and they have a plan worked out for the precarious demolition. Mr. Wasserman also followed up with the landlord to inform them of the progress. Mr. Chmiel asks if this is a property owned by the Land Bank. Mr. Wasserman responds that it was not owned by the Land Bank at the time projects were submitted to ODOD, but has been acquired via donation since the project began.

- ### 3. 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. Mr. Wasserman notes that the one remaining contact the Land Bank has with the Brownfield program is the Washington Road property in Lee Township. Once the Environmental Site Assessments are complete, the Land Bank will be submitting an application to the BUSTR program for demolition and remediation.

5. Update on previously approved projects: Mr. Wasserman

- A. 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.

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

- 1) 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. Tetra-Tech was at the house on February 1<sup>st</sup> to install a monitoring well into the bedrock.
- 2) 4667 Sand Ridge Road, Lodi Twp (LB-2020-07): We have received the new deed for this property. It will be brought to the April board meeting for disposition.
- 3) 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. We have received the new deed for this property. The church is scheduled to be demolished in the upcoming Group K1 demos, following which the property will be brought to the board for disposition. Mr. Chmiel notes that he would like to ensure that the sandstone from 61 Summit is saved. Ms. Humphrey asks if the Land Bank would sell the sandstone. Mr. Chmiel responds that they may be put up for bid.

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. The service station was demolished on February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023.
- b. 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. Closing for 98 W. Franklin Street, Nelsonville occurred on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023.
- b. Closing for 27 Main Street, Glouster is estimated to occur by the end of April.
- c. Closing for 8001 SR-78, Glouster is currently on hold. See Dispositions.
- d. Closing for 60 Converse Street, Chauncey is estimated to occur by the end of March.

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

- a. Update from Commissioner Chmiel. Mr. Wasserman asks if the Commissioners will be sending a letter when they make a final decision regarding the ARPA requests. Mr. Chmiel responds that they will do that. Mr. Wasserman asks what the timeline looks like regarding the determination of ARPA funds. Mr. Chmiel responds that determinations will likely occur within the next couple of months.

10. Heritage Ohio Workshop – Update from Commissioner Chmiel

- a. The workshop on historic tax credits and preservation from Heritage Ohio was held Thursday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>, at the Southeast Ohio History Center. Mr. Chmiel notes that there were approximately 50 attendees. He follows up that Village of Glouster councilmember Nathan Simons has already been working with the State Historic Preservation office and they will be coming to Glouster on April 2<sup>nd</sup> to discuss the creation of a historic district in Glouster.

## New Business

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

- a. 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. Mr. Wasserman notes that the Land Bank will likely be coming to the City of Nelsonville sometime soon regarding the floodplain issues if a new end-user comes forward.

- b. 38 Main Street, Gloucester (LB-2018-73): Large blue boarded up Victorian house in Gloucester. 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. A request for project proposals was sent out with a deadline of Thursday, February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023 for submissions. No end users submitted proposals.
- c. 14 and 16 Maple Street, Gloucester (LB-2019-25 and LB-2019-26): Empty parcels. Structures previously demolished by Land Bank. On today's agenda.
- d. 30 Cross Street, Gloucester (LB-2019-42): A recently acquired property with a house that we believe to be a good candidate for renovation. Several potential end-users have applied for this property and have been taken on walk-throughs of the house. On today's agenda.
- e. 8810 Center Street, Stewart (LB-2020-09): A house was demolished on this property during the Group J demos. On today's agenda.
- f. 21 W. High Street, Jacksonville (LB-2019-40): The house at this property will have to be demolished once we complete the BD&SR project demolitions. There have been several folks reaching out about this property. The Land Bank was informed that Trimble Township Wastewater Treatment District would be discussing a sewer expansion that could potentially hook into 21 W. High on March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Mr. Chmiel notes that he reached out to the TTWWTD engineer and he will be providing a quote regarding cost to connect 21 W. High into the local sewer system.
- g. 87 High Street, Gloucester (LB-2021-12): Downtown Gloucester building next to the old American Legion building. There has been some new interest in this property. A clean-up day was organized for March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023 to remove the rubble and detritus left in the building. Niru Dabholkar of Barber & Hoffman, Inc. toured this building as well as the other downtown Gloucester buildings on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023. He is currently working on a proposal for the Land Bank to consider regarding the structural integrity and renovation potential of the buildings. Mr. Dabholkar submitted a preliminary report with estimates on each building assessment. Mr. Wasserman notes that each building had an assessment estimate around \$11,000-12,000. Mr. Chmiel notes that he believes we should move forward with 83/85 and 87 High Street as there are potential end-users interested in these properties and having these assessments completed would be beneficial. Mr. Wasserman responds that this decision will require further discussion and should be put on the agenda for the April board meeting.

2. 2023 Ohio Land Bank Conference

- i) The Ohio Land Bank Association will be holding its 12<sup>th</sup> Ohio Land Bank Conference in Dayton, OH on April 26-28, 2023. Mr. Wasserman notes that he will be attending along with Mr. Chmiel and Aaron.

3. Disposition Action:

- i) 98 W. Franklin Street, Nelsonville (LB-2018-03): The property was voted to be disposed to Maria and Neil Sommers at the February board meeting. Mrs. Sommers requested the deed be put in the name of her LLC, Maria Buckalew Sommers #3. Mr. Wasserman moves that the name on the disposition be changed to Maria Buckalew Sommers #3, LLC, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Chmiel. All Yeas.
- ii) 8001 SR-78, Glouster (LB-2019-10): At the February board meeting, the board voted to dispose 8001 SR-78, Glouster to Derek Boyer. The project was originally going to be taken on by Derek Boyer and Dana McClurg. Mr. Boyer has stepped back from this project and Ms. McClurg will be heading the project moving forward. Mr. Boyer's name was the only name listed on the application, so the board will need to accept the change in disposition. Ms. McClurg is an approved end-user and has submitted proof of financial wherewithal to complete the project as described in the project proposal. Disposition would be to her LLC, High Hopes Ventures. Motion by Mr. Chmiel to change the name on the disposition to High Hopes Ventures, LLC, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Andrews. All Yeas. Aaron notes that the property still needs a new survey and the Land Bank agreed in 2022 to cover half the cost of the survey.
- iii) 8810 Center Street, Stewart (LB-2020-09): The dilapidated house on this property was demolished during the Group J demos last fall. There is only one end user who has applied for the property. Kevin and Jeanette Morris would like to acquire this property as greenspace. Their original plan was to build on the property, but the Athens County Health Department has informed them that there is currently no way to install a private sewer system on this property. Mr. Chmiel moves to dispose 8810 Center Street, Stewart to Kevin and Jeanette Morris/MM Builders for \$2,000, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Andrews. All Yeas.
- iv) 30 Cross Street, Glouster (LB-2019-42): The house at 30 Cross Street has proven to be a good candidate for renovation. While there were several qualified applicants, only one submitted a project proposal. Mike Smith of Smitty's Interior & Exterior has submitted a proposal to renovate the structure into a rental property. See more in This Month's Dispositions folder. Aaron reviewed Mr. Smith's LB-5 form and estimates and notes that there aren't any line items for bathroom or kitchen renovations. Mr. Chmiel asks why the Land Bank should not take this on as another in-house renovation. Mr. Wasserman replies that the Land Bank is currently looking into 11 Maple, Glouster as the next renovation. Mr. Andrews notes that if there are any questions about the proposal, the Land Bank should seek answers. Mr. Chmiel notes that there is no code regarding building in Glouster. Mr. Wasserman responds that end-user renovations on Land Bank properties must be completed to Athens Metropolitan Housing Authority standards. Mr. Chmiel asks what price the Land Bank is considering for this property. Aaron notes that

the Auditor's value of the land is around \$7,000 and the structure is valued around \$30,000. Mr. Wasserman notes that 29 Main, Gloucester was sold for \$7,000 knowing it was an older house, and 30 Cross is in better condition. Mr. Chmiel suggests a sale price of \$15,000. Mr. Chmiel motions that the Land Bank dispose of 30 Cross Street, Gloucester to Mike Smith/Smitty's Interior & Exterior for \$15,000 with the stipulation that the structure is renovated to the standards set by the Athens Metropolitan Housing Authority, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Andrews. All Yeas.

- v) 14 and 16 Maple Street, Gloucester (LB-2019-25 and LB-2019-26): Two very dilapidated structures used to occupy these parcels. They were demolished by the Land Bank during our Group H demolitions. Neighbor Ethan McKee would like to acquire these parcels as greenspace. Mr. Wasserman suggests \$200 per parcel. Mr. Wasserman moves that the Land Bank dispose of 14 and 16 Maple Street, Gloucester to Ethan McKee for \$400 to be utilized as greenspace, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Chmiel. All Yeas. While on the topic of Maple Street, Mr. Wasserman notes that the Land Bank has been looking into 11 Maple Street as an in-house renovation. He would like to bring a proposal to the April board meeting.

4. New Projects:

<b>Taxes Owed</b>	<b>Last Pymt</b>	<b>Parcel ID</b>	<b>Owner Name</b>	<b>Property Address</b>
860.00	2007	P01-0090104000	Bratton, Jerry C.	SR 691, Nelsonville

Mr. Wasserman notes that that the interested end-users would like to execute a pay-in-advance contract for the above SR 691 property, as they believe they have exhausted their other options to acquire it. Motion to accept SR 691, Nelsonville as a project by Mr. Chmiel, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Andrews. All Yeas.

Roundtable:

- A. Guest Steve Pierson asks if the ARPA funding mentioned earlier in the meeting would be distributed to the Athens City County Health Department. Mr. Wasserman responds that it would be a joint project between the Health Department and the Land Bank and he is unsure who would be the recipient of the funds. Mr. Chmiel notes that he believed the recipient would be the Health Department, as the proposal regarded nuisance properties. Mr. Pierson responds that his understanding is that the funding would be in lieu of the wherewithal of the working townships to go after properties through the condemnation process. Mr. Chmiel notes that it would be the funding stream for that process so that the townships wouldn't be taking on the financial risk. Mr. Pierson responds that in Athens Township and other

townships, one starts off with a condemnation unfit for human habitation done by the building department, health department, or fire department. He notes that Athens Township usually starts with the health department, and then they do their own funding through the general fund. Mr. Chmiel responds that this likely wouldn't be for townships like Athens Township that have money. Mr. Pierson asks who would be able to apply for this project, should the ARPA request be approved. Mr. Wasserman responds that he does not believe there will be an application process. He continues that the health department regularly issues orders that buildings are uninhabitable, and they would like the ability to carry through and demolish some of those properties, but they do not have the necessary funding. The idea for this collaboration would be if they determine that a building needs to be demolished, they could ask the Land Bank to demolish the structure and the ARPA funding would be used to execute the demolition. Mr. Chmiel follows up that Athens Township has more funding than other townships such as Lodi Township. Mr. Pierson responds that he thinks that is an interesting point of view. Mr. Wasserman replies that Mr. Chmiel's statement is not the official view of the Land Bank board. Mr. Pierson notes that there is a house that recently burned down on E. 1<sup>st</sup> Street and he has been receiving complains about it. To move forward, Mr. Pierson continues that he would have to go to the health department to have the structure condemned before anything else could occur. Mr. Wasserman clarifies that the Land Bank's goal in the ARPA proposal was to add some follow-through into the health department's process. Mr. Pierson asks if this would be not just for tax delinquent properties, but for dilapidated or donated properties in general. Mr. Wasserman replies that it would not be for properties that the Land Bank owns or is targeting to acquire. Mr. Chmiel asks who owns the property that burned down in The Plains (E. 1<sup>st</sup> Street). Mr. Pierson responds that he cannot remember the name of the owner. Mr. Chmiel asks if they have the means to clean up the property themselves. Mr. Pierson says that he isn't sure. Mr. Pierson presents an alternative question regarding the funding: If the townships are not the ones going to the health department, would he be able to notify an individual that there is the potential for them to go to the health department for assistance? Mr. Wasserman responds that, should the project get funded, it would ultimately be up to the health department, and the Land Bank would essentially be acting as their contractor. Mr. Pierson clarifies that the health department would be a cooperating partner with the Land Bank because the Land Bank has experience demolishing nuisance properties. Mr. Chmiel follows up that the Land Bank would like to find places that need the resources, and in the case of the burned structure in The Plains, maybe that owner is the one who would need the resources. He continues that if the township demolished the structure, the amount of money that the township spent on the demolition could be put on the owner's taxes. Mr. Wasserman follows up that if a property becomes tax delinquent, he as the Treasurer may foreclosure on it at some point and it sells at sheriff's sale and the

assessments could be paid. Mr. Chmiel suggests to Mr. Pierson that he meet with the health department to discuss the E. 1<sup>st</sup> Street property. Mr. Pierson notes that the problem becomes if you make a threat to someone that they need to make necessary repairs or the structure will be demolished, you must have the funds to back that up. Mr. Chmiel asks if Athens Township got their money back the last time they went through that process. Mr. Pierson notes that they did not.

- B. Guest Jeremy Dixon asked about the acquisition status of a small parcel contiguous to 4667 Sand Ridge Road, Guysville. Aaron clarifies that the parcel is currently owned by Orion Ventures. Mr. Wasserman notes that disposition of 4667 Sand Ridge will have to occur first and then the Land Bank can go to Orion Ventures and ask them to donate the parcel. He continues that there was a split from another parcel owned by same business and the Auditor loaded taxes on the small parcel next to 4667 Sand Ridge, which is about half a mile away from the original parcel. He has not been able to get a satisfactory answer regarding the situation from the Auditor. He notes that Orion Ventures had previously mentioned they may be interested in donating the parcel to the Land Bank. Mr. Dixon asks if he needs to submit another Purchaser Qualification Form and Application to Acquire Property with his business name listed. Aaron responds that doing so would be recommended in the event that he would like the property disposed to the business, should Mr. Dixon acquire it.
- C. City of Nelsonville Auditor Taylor Sappington notes that he appreciates the Land Bank meeting in Nelsonville. Mr. Sappington says that the city has budgeted \$10,000 for property maintenance with the original idea that these funds could be used concurrently or collaboratively with the Land Bank, and that it is up to the City Manager and Code Enforcement to utilize these funds. He follows up that he believes this is the third year these funds have been included in the budget, but the city has not been able to administer these funds yet due to a number of reasons. Mr. Wasserman notes that when Becky Barber was the Code Enforcer, the city did spend a lot of time and money boarding up properties that the Land Bank had targeted for acquisition, which was an immense help. Mr. Sappington responds that funding for that has come from the property maintenance fund as well as the general code enforcement budget. He continues that he believes approximately \$800 was spent from the property maintenance fund during 2022. Mr. Chmiel notes that another community in Ohio has a program where they will match landowners if they perform downtown renovation-type work. Mr. Sappington responds that there was a discussion in the past regarding utilizing economic development funds for property maintenance that would have an economic impact. Mr. Sappington continues that he just wanted to ensure that everyone knows this property maintenance funding is available. Mr.

