

ATHENS COUNTY LAND REUTILIZATION CORPORATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS – MINUTES
www.AthensCountyLandBank.com

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

DAY/TIME: Called to order Wednesday, April 16th, 2025 @ 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, Chris Chmiel, Lenny Eliason, and Meghan Jennings for Steve Patterson. Mr. Wasserman notes that Mr. Patterson did not file a designation form for Ms. Jennings but will take it on faith that she was chosen to represent him. Motion by Mr. Eliason to accept Meghan Jennings as the representative for Steve Patterson, 2nd by Mr. Chmiel. All Yeas.
2. Motion to approve the agenda by Mr. Eliason, 2nd by Mr. Chmiel. All Yeas.
3. Motion to approve minutes from March 19th, 2025 board meeting by Mr. Eliason, 2nd by Mr. Chmiel. All Yeas.
4. Financial Report from Treasurer LaVerne Humphrey

Summary	
Starting Balance	381,165.98
Actual Cash In	4,390.34
Actual Cash Out	29,584.72
Ending Balance	355,971.60

Ms. Humphrey notes that cash out included asbestos remediation work and payment to Mission Met for strategic planning consultation services. The rest of the expenditures were payroll, utilities, and usual bills. Mr. Wasserman notes that the asbestos work is being done on spec as we do not yet have a signed grant agreement with ODOD. Motion to approve the financial report by Mr. Chmiel, 2nd by Mr. Eliason. All Yeas.

Business:

Old Business

1. Update on acquisition process/pipeline from Mr. Wasserman
 - i) Several foreclosures are in the end-stages with non-oral hearings having taken place in late December. There's been no movement on current cases that we know of. We are expecting to acquire 233/235 Kontner Street in Nelsonville as soon as the property is donated to Habitat for Humanity. Habitat will convey it to us the same day they get it from the owner. Delinquent taxes will be paid prior to conveying to the Land Bank.
Mr. Wasserman notes that the Kontner property has been discussed for several years at the Treasurer's office as it has been abandoned for nearly 10 years. The taxes will be made current, and the property will be conveyed to the Land Bank as a donation. A title search has already been completed and the property owner paid for it. This property has been previously accepted as a project by the board.

2. State Demo project

The 2024-25 BD&SR application was submitted on Friday, March 29th. 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. Asbestos surveys have been ordered for demo groups N1, N2, N3, O1, O2, and O3.

We received the initial cure list from ODOD and Aaron submitted all requested items by the March 31st, 2025 due date. ODOD returned with a few additional cure requests that Aaron will provide them with by the end of this week. Aaron notes that the only hurdle for the cure items will be property access for 20 Smith Street, Chauncey. There is an heir to the parcel who could sign an access agreement, but he has been difficult to contact.

The Group N1 demolitions were awarded to Running G Farms and are underway. The Group N2 demolitions were awarded to Hutton Excavating and should begin shortly. 20 Campbell Street, Nelsonville was added back to the demolition roster in the Group N3 demolitions as requested by the board at the March 2025 meeting.

Demolitions have been grouped as follows:

Group N1: 21 E. 1st Street, The Plains; 26 N. Clinton Street, The Plains; 5 Oak Street, The Plains

Group N2: 319 Oak Street, Nelsonville; 902 Chestnut Street, Nelsonville; 23 Morgan Street, Glouster

Group N3: 4382 N. Gun Club Road, Athens; 8356 Marsh Street, New Marshfield; 4910 Vore Ridge Road, Athens; 11535 Carbondale Road, Nelsonville; 20 Campbell Street, 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; 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. The demolition of the service station at 4070 Washington Road, Albany is complete! Tetra Tech has notified us that they are working on submitting the “No Further Action” documents to mark this project as complete.

Mr. Chmiel noted that it was previously discussed to potentially have asbestos surveys conducted for the downtown Glouster buildings. Aaron responds that Mollie Fitzgerald informed him that there could be some brownfield funding for asbestos work on those buildings. He continues that if we go that route, it could delay disposition by a couple of years as the brownfield program does not always move quickly.

4. Update on previously approved projects

A. Rehabs: Land Bank Rehabs or new construction underway or nearly completed in the county: 24 Cherry Street, 141 Monroe Street, 75 High Street, Glouster; 217 Harper Street, 354 Chestnut Street, Nelsonville; 19476 Maple Street, Trimble.

5. Rural Acquisition (Pay-in-advance) Program Projects

1. 4070 Washington Road (3 parcels, LB-2021-16): On today’s agenda for disposition.

2. Haga Ridge Road, Rome Township (2 parcels, LB-2024-01): This property was acquired in early December 2024. We are following up with the initial end-user to determine if they are able to close; if not, there is another potentially interested party.
 3. 17636 Jacksonville Road, Millfield (1 parcel, LB 2024-05): The applicant Jerrame Forrest has signed the pay-in-advance agreement. The 30-day notification has been done, and we are ready to proceed with purchasing a lien certificate from the Treasurer so that the case can be filed.
-
6. Update on pending dispositions
No pending dispositions.
 7. Update on 47 Main Street, Chauncey litigation
The second round of mediation occurred on March 5th, 2025. All parties have reached a settlement agreement. Athens Preservation has until June 30th, 2025 to demolish the structure. The property will then be conveyed to the Village of Chauncey.
 8. Community Development Block Grant opportunity in collaboration with HAPCAP for downtown revitalization:
At the March board meeting, it was decided to not include new windows on the building at this time as the estimate came in at \$306,747.65 and our spendable grant amount is \$235,200. We will only be installing new windows on the façade. The new estimate comes in at \$231,168.90 but does not include the initial Professional Services Agreement with BDT Architects. BDT Architects estimates a final plan by the end of May.
 9. 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 another 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.

At the March board meeting, Executive Director Kenneth Oehlers reviewed that there will be 5 houses built with 3 being in Nelsonville on land bank lots. The Nelsonville projects will begin in June with a crew of volunteers helping with the builds. We are currently working with Mr. Oehlers on a date in early May for a public groundbreaking event. We will be signing the Memorandum of Understanding between Habitat and the land bank, and it is on today's agenda to dispose the three Nelsonville lots to Habitat.

10. 10190/10194 Chase Road, Albany project

Surface cleanup by Running G Farms is currently on hold as Tetra Tech executes their Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments. They have noted that work is moving quickly.

11. Strategic Planning Consultation with Mission Met

The board met on April 3rd, 2025 to review the final draft of the strategic plan. Further edits were made, and the plan was finalized. Upon official adoption of the plan, it will be uploaded to our website and available for viewing. Motion by Mr. Chmiel to approve the strategic plan, 2nd by Mr. Eliason. Mr. Wasserman notes that Jeff Harris discussed land banks acquiring 501(c)3 status. He thinks we should add that in as a discussion item after doing some research on the topic. Mr. Chmiel amends his agenda to include Mr. Wasserman's suggestion. All Yeas.

12. 14th Annual Ohio Land Bank Conference

The 14th Annual Ohio Land Bank Conference, presented by the OLBA, will take place April 23-25, 2025 in Columbus. This 2.5-day event brings together professionals, partners, and stakeholders dedicated to land banking and community revitalization. Early bird registration has opened and will be available until February 28th. Mr. Wasserman, Mr. Chmiel, Aaron, and Jody have been registered and their lodging secured.

13. Renewal of services with the Athens County Treasurer's office

It was discussed at the March board meeting that the agreement of services with the Athens County Treasurer's office has expired. We are seeking board approval to renew the services agreement. Motion by Mr. Wasserman to accept the renewal of the services agreement with the Athens County Treasurer's office, 2nd by Mr. Chmiel. All Yeas.

14. Donation of 233/235 Kontner Street, Nelsonville from Habitat for Humanity of Southeast Ohio

At the March board meeting, it was voted to accept the donation of 233-235 Kontner Street, Nelsonville from Habitat for Humanity of Southeast Ohio once they receive the property. We are waiting for them to notify us that the property has been acquired.

15. Clerk of Court fees

We have been in discussion with the County Prosecutor and the Clerk of Courts regarding unpaid court costs on cases where the Land Bank acquired the property. Now the Prosecutor has said he believes we are responsible for all the costs. Since 2018 when we started acquiring properties through tax foreclosure, no attorney had ever suggested that those costs are solely our responsibility and from what I can tell that is not the process in most other counties. Successive assistant prosecutors assisted us in acquiring properties through the courts by petition but never mentioned that this method leaves us exposed to 100% of the costs. Other methods of acquisition apparently require us to pay only 35%.

We will be speaking to attorneys, prosecutors and others at the Land Bank conference next month to try to discern if the law the prosecutor has cited is indeed the controlling statute in this situation because it does not mention either Land Reutilization Corporations or CICs. Further, the amount the clerk has stated is owed, over \$128,000 must be verified case-by-case.

Mr. Chmiel asks if any of the prior legal opinions were in writing. Mr. Wasserman responds that they are not. He continues that it was never presented as an issue, as the Clerk of Courts initially asked a former Prosecutor and it was explained that it was done a certain way. Any further developments will be in writing.

New Business

1. Future Dispositions – Several potential dispositions are in progress, and we hope to bring them to the board soon. They include:
 - a. 4070 Washington Road, Albany: See update under Brownfield projects.
 - b. Haga Ridge Road, Rome Township: See update under Rural Acquisition projects.
 - c. 8001 SR-78, Hollister: Two new end-users have approached us with interest in this property. It will likely be brought up for disposition at the May board meeting.
 - d. 184 Sheppard Street, Nelsonville: The contiguous property owner has contacted the land bank with interest in acquiring these two parcels.
 - e. 8670 Hollister Road, Hollister: The neighboring property owner has requested to acquire this property and perform the demolition himself. We

wanted to discuss this with the board before moving any further in discussions.

- f. 19537 S Center Street, Trimble: An interested applicant who is looking to relocate to Athens County and establish a ceramics center on these parcels. He is currently in talks with the Village of Trimble on approval of his proposal, and should he receive it, we would likely be able to bring this property up for disposition at the May board meeting.

2. Pay increase for the Land Bank Board Treasurer

We are seeking board approval to increase LaVerne Humphrey's monthly stipend from \$300 to \$400. Motion by Mr. Wasserman increase LaVerne Humphrey's monthly stipend to \$400 retroactive to January 1st, 2025. 2nd by Mr. Eliason. All Yeas.

3. Brief discussion on potentially seeking 501(c)3 designation

During Jeff Harris' presentation he mentioned that numerous Land Banks are also 501(c)3s under the tax code, allowing them to accept donations on a tax-deductible basis. Perhaps this is something we should discuss in the context of our strategic plan.

4. Dispositions

1. 923 E High, 931 E High, 823 Walnut Street, Nelsonville (LB-2021-21, LB-2021-22, LB-2020-13): These are three parcels that will be built on by Habitat of Humanity of Southeast Ohio in our Welcome Home Ohio partnership.

Motion by Mr. Chmiel to dispose 923 High, 931 High, and 823 Walnut Street to Habitat for Humanity of Southeast Ohio for \$1.00/property by Mr. Chmiel, 2nd by Mr. Eliason. All Yeas.

2. 4070 Washington Road, Albany (LB-2021-16): After a few years of waiting for brownfield work to be completed, we are ready to seek disposition for the old farmhouse on Washington Road in Lee Township, just outside the Albany village limits. We received 8 proposals with varying end uses that will be reviewed today. Proposals were submitted by Tim Caudill, Jason Morosko/Sustainablepath LLC, Laura McDowell, Jeff Gabriel, Benjamin Shonk, Henry Miller, Ian Lawson, and Chris Smyth/Southern Ohio Chestnut Company. More information in the This Month's Dispositions folder.

Benjamin Shonk and Nicolette Anderson: The applicants were present, and Ms. Anderson spoke on behalf of their proposal. This would be a mixed-use property where the house would be made livable with a modular living space while the house is being renovated. The end-use would include a space for Ms. Anderson's daycare business and their horticultural business. It is their hope that the space could be utilized for community events as well. Mr. Wasserman asks about plumbing and Ms. Anderson responds that they would be willing to utilize a composting system for the duration of the renovation. Their proposed timeline for renovation is approximately a year. Mr. Wasserman notes that it is his opinion that this is a viable proposal.

Southern Ohio Chestnut Company: Chris Smyth and Badger Johnson were present virtually. Mr. Wasserman notes that this was a highly detailed proposal. The plan is essentially a commercial endeavor with some of the house being utilized as residential. Mr. Smyth notes that this would be the third farm that the company is working with, and they have planted over 4,500 fruit and nut trees for commercial use. This would be their first owned farm. Mr. Johnson continues that they are looking to build on their previous success, and they like this site because of its access to the highway. He notes that their timeline includes having the house move-in ready by summer 2026. Mr. Wasserman notes that the house renovation proposal was excellent. He continues that this proposal is a viable proposal.

Henry Miller: Mr. Miller was not present and did not include a narrative with his proposal. Mr. Wasserman notes that the line-item estimates are not very detailed, and this doesn't seem to be a viable proposal.

Ian and Ashley Lawson: Mr. and Mrs. Lawson were present at the meeting. Mr. Lawson notes that this would be utilized as a homestead. His timeline is estimated around 18 months with the chimney being the first point of work. Mr. Lawson reviews that he is confident financial wherewithal exists to carry out this project to completion. Mr. Chmiel notes he believes this is a viable proposal.

Sustainablepath LLC/Jason Morosko: Mr. Morosko was present at the meeting. He notes that this would be a rental or would be renovated to sell. Mr. Wasserman notes that plumbing and electric are not mentioned in Mr. Morosko's renovation plan. He asks if a loan would be taken out against this property. Mr. Morosko notes that they would be utilizing their current funds for this renovation. Mr. Wasserman reviews the land bank's policy that notes the title will not be transferred until a point of satisfaction in the project is reached. He asks for clarification that this

would not be owner-occupied in any way and Mr. Morosko confirms. Mr. Eliason believes it is a viable proposal.

Jeff and Shari Gabriel: Mr. and Mrs. Gabriel were not present at the meeting. Mr. Wasserman notes this a homestead plan with a good amount of detail. He thinks the cost estimates are a little light. He notes that he was glad to see mold abatement as part of the project plan. He notes that he would forward this proposal to the next step.

Jeff Lehman: Mr. Lehman was not present at the meeting. Mr. Wasserman notes that Mr. Lehman has been a Land Bank end-user in the past and is a builder in the area. He continues that this proposal was really lacking as it included little to no detail with only three dollar amounts listed. His proposal included tearing down the house, which Mr. Wasserman believes is a non-starter. The board does not believe this is a viable proposal.

Laura and Thomas McDowell: Mrs. McDowell was present virtually. Mr. Wasserman notes that this is a homestead proposal that also includes a waterfowl business and cabins being built on the land. Mrs. McDowell notes that the house would be owner-occupied. They have a quick timeline on repairs, and they have experience with renovations, but their house in Virginia burned down and they would be moving quickly to get the home prepared for owner occupancy. The cabins would not be built until after the home renovation is complete and would be compliant with county requirements. They were not able to tour the interior of the house. They have a lot of building materials on-hand as well. She continues that they are excited to move back to Ohio and renovations would begin immediately upon closing. She notes that they may live in the camper while the house is being renovated, but they also have a contingency plan to live somewhere close by if that doesn't work out. Regarding the duck component of the future business plan, she would like to put together an Airbnb-type farm setup where folks can engage in agrotourism such as operating a small farm and the ducks would be part of the agriculture plan. Mr. Wasserman notes that there is a lot of vision in the plan, but the renovation plan seems to be lacking and he would like the applicants to visit the house and amend their renovation proposal should they move to the next round. The board agrees that the applicants can move to the next round with the condition that they tour the interior of the house and amend their renovation proposal.

Tim Caudill: Mr. Caudill was not present at the meeting. Aaron notes that the applicant is the neighbor of the Washington Road property, and they have been interested since the Land Bank acquired the house. He reviews

their submitted proposal and notes that it only includes the LB-5 with a short narrative and a lump-sum cost for the renovation as well as proof of financial wherewithal. The board agrees that this is not a viable proposal.

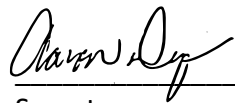
Mr. Wasserman notes that there are 6 viable proposals. Mr. Chmiel asks for the appraised value of the property. Guest Badger Johnson notes that the Auditor’s total appraised value is approximately \$79,000. Aaron notes that historically with pay-in-advance projects that go to sealed bids, the initially agreed upon purchase price is the minimum bid. Mr. Wasserman notes that the board does not have to stick with that number. He continues that he believes this contract was signed around 2019 and the Auditor’s county-wide reappraisal was almost 25% higher. He suggests \$30-35,000. Mr. Eliason notes that we would likely have to reimburse the estate of the original applicant. Mr. Wasserman notes that he has looked into an existing estate for the deceased. Mr. Chmiel suggests \$40,000 as a starting bid. Mr. Wasserman asks how much time we should give applicants to submit bids. He notes that we will be opening the bids at the meeting. Mr. Eliason suggests the deadline being the date of the next board meeting with the highest bidder not necessarily winning, but the bidder that most aligns with the board’s priorities. Mr. Wasserman suggests the 16th of May by 4:00 PM as the deadline for submissions. Mr. Wasserman moves that the 6 applicants with viable proposals (Shonk/Anderson, Southern Ohio Chestnut Company, Lawson, Sustainablepath, Gabriel, McDowell) will be permitted to submit a sealed bid with a minimum amount of \$40,000 with a deadline of May 16th, 2025 at 4:00 PM, 2nd by Mr. Eliason. All Yeas.

- 5. New Projects
No new projects this month.

Taxes Owed	Last Pymt	Parcel ID	Owner Name	Property Address

- 6. Scheduling of next meeting: May 21st, 2025
- 7. Adjournment: Motion to adjourn by Mr. Eliason, 2nd by Mr. Chmiel. All Yeas. Adjournment at 12:35 PM.

Minutes submitted for approval by Aaron Dye, Secretary



Secretary

5/21/2025

Date

Approved, as amended (if any) on 5/21/2025 _____