

**DETROIT LAND BANK AUTHORITY**  

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**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**  
**CADILLAC TOWER**  
**65 Cadillac Square, Suite #3200 • Detroit, Michigan**  
**(Conference Room)**

**Tuesday, January 20, 2015**  
**2:00 PM**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Marsha Bruhn  
Richard Hosey  
Patricia Pernell-Shelton  
Erica Ward Gerson

**Absent:** Larry Lipa

**Others Present:** Detroit Land Bank Authority (DLBA) staff  
Public

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Ward Gerson called the January 20, 2015 DLBA Board of Directors meeting to order at 2:05 pm.

**ROLL CALL**

Four of five Board members were present and a quorum was met and the meeting began.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Chairperson Ward Gerson called for the adoption of the agenda, as amended to include *X.a.iv 01-04-2015 Resolution for the annual election of officers*. **Motion by Member Bruhn to adopt the agenda as amended. Supported by Member Pernell-Shelton. MOTION APPROVED.**

**REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chairperson Ward Gerson asked for adoption of the minutes from the December 16<sup>th</sup> public meeting. **Motion by Member Bruhn to adopt December 16, 2014 minutes. Supported by Member Hosey. MOTION APPROVED.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chairperson Ward Gerson opened the meeting to public comment. Catherine Gillis, a University of Chicago student, introduced herself.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Executive Director Kevin Simowski provided an update to the Board. Mr. Simowski distributed and discussed the Quarterly report prepared for City Council. Mr. Simowski discussed the incoming properties from Wayne County Treasurer, which was estimated at about 13,000, and the anticipated rate of occupancy of those homes. Mr. Simowski provided an update on the most recent Side Lot Fair, which resulted in the sale of approximately 110 lots, then noted the next Fair will be held on January 24, 2015. Mr. Simowski provided a brief Salesforce update to the Board, confirming the progress to date. Mr. Simowski concluded by noting the addition of 8 new staff

since last month's meeting. There were no questions from the Board. This concluded the Executive Director's report.

## **STAFF REPORTS**

### **Acquisitions and Land Reuse.**

Carrie Lewand-Monroe, Deputy Director, was not present due to attending a New Orleans conference on demolition. Chairperson Ward Gerson requested an update at the next month's meeting.

### **Disposition.**

Dekonti Mends-Cole, Deputy Director, provided a report on Disposition. Mrs. Mends-Cole distributed the side lot sales, community partners and auction reports. Mrs. Mends-Cole discussed the distinct increase in community partners and recent growth of the program due to new staff hires. Mrs. Mends-Cole noted the reduction in time to close on auction properties, as well as the reduction in failed closings due to homebuyer counseling resulting in increased lending opportunities. Mrs. Mends-Cole distributed a schedule for February Open Houses. The Board inquired about the logistics of winter open houses and Mrs. Mends-Cole discussed the modified approach to address winter weather. A discussion ensued. This concluded the Disposition staff report.

### **Legal.**

Michael Brady, General Counsel, provided a report on Legal. Mr. Brady provided an update on the tax foreclosure reform, confirming the legislation was signed into law with little minimal dissent from the State legislature. Mr. Brady also discussed the pending transfer of lots from City Council. Mr. Brady provided an update on December Resolution 12-02-2014, authorizing contract negotiation for certain legal services. Mr. Brady noted substantial negotiation occurred resulting in price savings in the contractual terms and that the contract was awarded to eVantage, who had the lowest price. Mr. Brady also discussed that this contract was expected to be in place by February, resulting in increased weekly filings. Mr. Brady then noted over 2,000 posterings had resulted in a total of 1,374 nuisance abatement suits filed, with no suits lost to date. Mr. Brady answered questions from the Board regarding the agreement process and a discussion ensued. This concluded the Legal staff report.

### **Public Affairs.**

Craig Fahle, Public Affairs Director, provided a report to the Board. Mr. Fahle discussed the past month, including: a television feature on the Nuisance Abatement Program, the season-long focus on a Land Bank Auction home on the HGTV television show "Rehab Addict" and international media attention due to the previous Side Lot Fair coinciding with the media week for the Auto Show. Mr. Fahle noted that the marketing campaigns would have a renewed focus on the Auction, with the open houses resuming in February. Mr. Fahle also noted the upcoming third Side Lot Fair and the Mayor's State of the City address, which will include a large focus on the Land Bank. A discussion ensued regarding the increased media coverage. This concluded the Public Affairs staff report.

## **STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Finance and Audit.**

Member Hosey provided the Finance and Audit report to the Board. Member Hosey noted that the Committee had a robust discussion about holistic financial reporting across all Land Bank programs. Member Hosey also stated the Committee reviewed the latest financials and projections and discussed the upcoming need for additional financing. This concluded the Finance and Audit Committee report.

### **Project Review.**

Member Bruhn provided the Project Review report to the Board in place of Member Lipa. Member Bruhn noted that two of the current month's resolutions were discussed in detail, as well as the potential for a "buy back" program to assist in addressing the Land Bank's concern regarding receiving occupied properties. Member Bruhn

noted there was a larger discussion about potential updates to the Land Bank's Occupied Properties Policy and a discussion ensued. This concluded the Project Review Committee report.

### **Community Engagement.**

Member Pernell-Shelton provided the Community Engagement report to the Board. Member Pernell-Shelton confirmed the Public Affairs staff report and additionally discussed the success and importance of bringing the Side Lot Fairs to the neighborhoods. Member Pernell-Shelton also thanked Mr. Brady for his advocating of the tax foreclosure reform legislation. This concluded the Community Engagement committee report.

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Michelle Story-Stewart, Chief Financial Officer, provided the Treasurer's report to the Board. Mrs. Story-Stewart distributed December financials, in addition to the final audit report, provided by Alan C. Young & Associates at the prior month's meeting. Mrs. Story-Stewart discussed key balance sheet and profit and loss figures. The Board requested financials to be provided prior to the Board meetings and a discussion on timing of providing these reports ensued. This concluded the Treasurer's report to the Board.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Chairperson Ward Gerson opened the floor for any Old Business. It was noted that none was outstanding.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **Resolutions.**

**Resolution 01-01-2015**, regarding accepting the audited financial statements. Chairperson Ward Gerson provided an overview of the resolution and a discussion ensued. **Motion by Member Hosey. Supported by Member Bruhn. MOTION APPROVED.**

**Resolution 01-02-2015**, regarding permitting the acquisition and disposition of property to support economic development projects endorsed by the City of Detroit. Chairperson Ward Gerson provided an overview of the resolution and a discussion ensued. The Board requested monthly reports be provided to the Project Review Committee regarding the properties acquired and disposed of as a result of this program, if approved. The Board also requested that staff provide a report, along with the resolution, in those instances where there have been changes from what was discussed at a Project Review Committee meeting. **Motion by Member Hosey. Supported by Member Bruhn. MOTION APPROVED.**

**Resolution 01-03-2015**, regarding adopting the employee discount policy. Chairperson Ward Gerson provided an overview of the resolution and a discussion ensued. **Motion by Member Pernell-Shelton. Supported by Member Hosey. MOTION APPROVED.**

**Resolution 01-04-2015**, regarding the annual election of Board officers. Chairperson Ward Gerson requested the re-election of the Board's current officers. Due to three of the four Board Members present currently holding offices, and as there was no dissent to the request to re-elect the Board's current officers, Chairperson Ward Gerson declared the resolution approved by acclamation.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Chairperson Ward Gerson adjourned the meeting at 3:19 pm.