

DETROIT LAND BANK AUTHORITY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
GUARDIAN BUILDING
500 Griswold St, Suite 1200 • Detroit, Michigan
(Belle Isle Conference Room)

Tuesday, August 25, 2015
2:00 PM

MINUTES

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

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

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Ward Gerson called the August 25, 2015 Board of Directors meeting to order at 2:03 pm.

ROLL CALL

All board members were present and a quorum was met.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Chairperson Ward Gerson called for the adoption of the agenda. **Motion by Member Hosey to adopt the agenda. Supported by Member Bruhn. MOTION APPROVED.**

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Member Hosey to adopt the June 16, and July 20, 2015 minutes. Supported by Member Bruhn. MOTION APPROVED.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairperson Ward Gerson opened the meeting to public comment. Tyson Gersh of the Michigan Urban Farming Institute introduced his company and asked questions pertaining to leasing land, a recent side lot application submitted to the DLBA and explanation of the DLBA's relationship with other City departments, specifically the Department of Neighborhoods. Chairperson Ward Gerson requested that Mr. Gersh speak with Mrs. Mends-Cole regarding his questions. Joann Warwick also introduced herself and asked questions relating to the DLBA's MOU and LTA with the City of Detroit, as well as inquired about the status of a property previously applied for with the City's Planning and Development Department (PDD). Chairperson Ward Gerson referred her to Mrs. Lewand-Monroe for assistance with her question. Jim Dwight, a resident of Rosedale Park, asked about the possibility of demolition of 3 houses on Ellsworth and Chalfonte streets. Mr. Dwight also requested boarding for properties in his direct area. Chairperson

Ward Gerson requested Mr. Fahle and Mrs. Lewand-Monroe speak with Mr. Dwight regarding his request. This concluded the public comment.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director Kevin Simowski provided an update to the Board. Mr. Simowski discussed the finalization of the office move to the Guardian, where the current meeting was taking place. Mr. Simowski discussed recent and upcoming staff changes, including those departing and newly joining the DLBA, in addition to internal staff promotions. Mr. Simowski discussed upcoming grants and the status of the Hardest Hit Fund demolitions. Mr. Simowski also discussed the most recent Quarterly Council report and provided a copy to each Board Member. This concluded the Executive Director report.

STAFF REPORTS

Acquisitions and Land Reuse.

Carrie Lewand-Monroe, Deputy Director, first provided a report on demolition, noting the current rate of about 150-200 demolitions occurring per week. Mrs. Lewand-Monroe confirmed almost all Round 1 Hardest Hit Funds are closed out. Mrs. Lewand-Monroe also noted that some demolitions are currently being executed using NSP program income. Mrs. Lewand-Monroe then provided an update on DLBA acquisitions, stating of the over 51,000 properties agreed to be transferred from the City, only 7,169 properties remain due to outstanding applications with the PDD. Mrs. Lewand-Monroe discussed the plan for staff to be brought on specifically to assess the stage of applications received on these properties by PDD, and confirmed that the outstanding contracts will be honored. A discussion ensued where Mrs. Lewand-Monroe addressed questions of the Board regarding the cost of demolition and the rate at which PDD applications will be addressed. This concluded the Acquisitions and Land Reuse staff report.

Disposition.

Dekonti Mends-Cole, Deputy Director, provided a report on Disposition. Mrs. Mends-Cole announced the DLBA sold 1,250 side lots in the last 50 days, Liberty Bank's commitment to increase its down payment allowance and received over 500 applications for employee discounts. Mrs. Mends-Cole noted that to date approximately 11% of auction winners have utilized an employee discount. Mrs. Mends-Cole discussed the team's effort in contacting over 200 self-identified occupied households over the summer. Finally, Mrs. Mends-Cole noted the Community Partner program currently has 206 partners that have an interest in a total of 418 parcels, of which 140 have already been successfully sold. A discussion ensued regarding the DLBA's occupied properties. Member Bruhn asked staff for a copy of the property management plan presented to City Council in July. This concluded the Disposition staff report.

Legal.

Michael Brady, General Counsel, provided a report on Legal. Mr. Brady provided an update on staff changes, including departures, promotion and new staff. Mr. Brady noted that the NAP program continues to consistently perform. Mr. Brady discussed the plan to ramp up Quiet Title efforts, primarily by bringing in additional support staff to focus solely on Quiet Title. This concluded the Legal staff report.

Public Affairs.

Craig Fahle, Public Affairs Director, provided a report to the Board. Mr. Fahle discussed the proposed advertisement purchases that would occur under a prospective contract. Mr. Fahle described the prospective contract, the marketing areas and described the marketing plan he intends to deploy in conjunction with the new advertising purchases. A discussion regarding the new marketing approach ensued. 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 the potential for grant funds for property maintenance of DLBA properties. Member Hosey also noted the committee's desire to shift in focus from Accounting to Finance. Member Hosey communicated the Board's request for contingency limits to be established as part of the DLBA's budget and to subsequently be reported on for the Board. This concluded the Finance and Audit committee report.

Project Review.

Member Lipa provided the Project Review report to the Board. Member Lipa confirmed the Acquisitions and Land Reuse and Disposition staff reports. 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 staff reports provided. Member Pernell-Shelton also noted the committee discussion regarding having a fair, similar to Side Lot Fairs, for Community Partners. Member Bruhn also requested that staff confirm follow-up from prior meeting's public comments, when questions are posed. This concluded the Community Engagement committee report.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Michelle Story-Stewart, Chief Financial Officer, provided a staff report to the Board. Mrs. Story-Stewart distributed a report to the board and provided updates on the forthcoming FY15 Financial Audit, IBM Smarter Cities Grant, the beginning of Financial Force implementation, incoming Finance staff, as well as additional grants the DLBA is currently pursuing. A discussion ensued. This concluded the Treasurer's report to the Board.

OLD BUSINESS

Chairperson Ward Gerson opened the floor for any Old Business. None was outstanding.

NEW BUSINESS

Resolutions.

Resolution 8-01-2015, regarding authorizing the Executive Director to sign an agreement with the City of Detroit Department of Health and Wellness Promotion. Mr. Brady and Mrs. Lewand-Monroe provided an overview of the resolution and Board Members asked questions regarding the agreement. A discussion ensued. **Motion by Member Hosey. Supported by Member Pernell-Shelton. MOTION APPROVED.**

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairperson Ward Gerson adjourned the meeting at 3:29 p.m.