Minutes
Greater Syracuse Property Development Corporation
Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors
8:00 AM Tuesday, December 18, 2018
431 E. Fayette Street, 3rd Floor Conference Room
Syracuse, NY 13202

Board Members Present: Vito Sciscioli, Daniel Barnaba, Julie Cerio, Jim Corbett, El Java Abdul Qadir
Others Present: John Sidd, Katelyn Wright, Meghan Craner, Terri Luckett, April Panek, Rich Puchalski, Cali Khakoo, Paul Driscoll, Ed Mitchell

I. Call to Order

Vito Sciscioli called the meeting to order at 8:01 AM.

II. Roll Call

Mr. Sciscioli noted that all board members except El Java Abdul Qadir were present.

III. Proof of Notice

Mr. Sciscioli noted that public notice had been properly posted.

IV. Minutes

Jim Corbett moved to approve the minutes from November 20, 2018. Julie Cerio seconded this motion. All board members present voted unanimously to approve the minutes from November 20, 2018.

Julie Cerio moved to approve the minutes from the November 28, 2018 meeting of the Personnel Committee. Dan Barnaba seconded this motion. All committee members present unanimously voted to approve the minutes from the November 28, 2018 Personnel Committee.

Jim Corbett moved to approve the minutes from the October 16, 2018 meeting of the Finance Committee. Dan Barnaba seconded this motion. All committee members present unanimously voted to approve the minutes from the October 16, 2018 Finance Committee.

V. Financial Statements & Executive Summary

Ms. Wright noted that financial statements through the end of October were included in the packet.

VI. New Business

A. Authorize Sale of Multiple Properties

Ms. Wright described each of the properties for which offers were received. Julie Cerio moved to authorize the Land Bank to sell multiple properties. Jim Corbett seconded this motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY PASSED A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE LAND BANK TO SELL MULTIPLE PROPERTIES.**

B. Authorize the Sale of 1420 S. Geddes Street

Ms. Wright explained that this noncompetitive sale was being proposed under the Land Bank's Tenant to Homeowner program. Without competition they use an appraisal to define the fair market value of the property and in this case the buyers are qualified for a mortgage and offering to pay the full appraised value to buy the home that they have occupied as tenants for the past four years. Jim Corbett moved to authorize the noncompetitive sale of 1420 S. Geddes Street. Julie Cerio seconded this motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY PASSED A**

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE LAND BANK TO SELL 1420 S. GEDDES TO GLENN MILYON & ALICE HINMAN FOR $65,000.

C. Revise resolution authorizing the acquisition of 200 Maple Street

Ms. Wright explained that this revised resolution corrected some typos on the tax ID number and address names in previous resolutions and permits the Land Bank to take title in its own name instead of an LLC, but that the prices to be paid remain the same. Julie Cerio moved to pass the amended and restated resolution to authorize the Land Bank to take title to 200 Maple Street and related properties. Jim Corbett seconded the motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO PASS AN AMENDED AND RESTATED RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE THE LAND BANK TO TAKE TITLE TO 200 MAPLE STREET AND RELATED PROPERTIES.**

D. Authorize the Land Bank to acquire 125-28 Alexander from the City of Syracuse

Ms. Wright summarized the plan for this property and 123 Alexander Ave as described in the executive summary. Mr. Sciscioli informed the board that this City-owned parcel was a leftover piece of the old Sears parking lot, which is why it contains a lamp post and guard rails.

El Java Abdul Qadir arrived at 8:15 AM.

Julie Cerio moved to authorize the Land Bank to acquire 125-27 Alexander Ave from the City of Syracuse. El Java Abdul Qadir seconded this motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY AUTHORIZED THE LAND BANK TO ACQUIRE 125-27 ALEXANDER AVE FROM THE CITY OF SYRACUSE.**

E. Authorize the Land Bank to enter into a Co-Development Agreement with Home HeadQuarters for the renovation of eight single-family homes for sale to owner-occupants per the terms of the Land Bank's CRI grant contract with Enterprise Community Partners

Ms. Wright reminded the board that the month prior they had authorized the Land Bank to enter into a contract with Enterprise for $2 million, with deliverables identical to those required by their 2017-18 $2 million contract with LISC. Under that contract, the Land Bank outsourced the rehab or new construction of 8 homes to HHQ. She explained that this co-development agreement is identical to the previous agreement with HHQ approved two years prior, except for updated dates and updating that Enterprise is the grant funder in this round.

Mr. Barnaba asked if this item and the next were related. Ms. Wright confirmed that yes, it wouldn't make sense to pass F if they didn't pass E. He asked how these homes were selected. She explained that these were actually selected over the course of a year with input from NBD as they worked to identify Land Bank homes that would be well suited for rehab using their AHC funds. Once the houses were identified HHQ indicated that AHC funds weren't sufficient and they proposed combining those funds with these CRI funds. Rich Puchalski reported that SUN had also participated in the process of identifying these houses and they want to see more homes on the Southside renovated. Mr. Barnaba asked if HHQ was 'cherry picking' the good homes out of the Land Bank's inventory and whether there was more revenue to be made by selling these as fixer-uppers in their current condition. Ms. Wright responded that most of these homes are actually quite distressed and that under this program the Land Bank does get made whole for their expenses into each property and earns a small developer's fee on each one so the Land Bank earns a small amount of positive revenue on each one.

Mr. Barnaba recommended this item and Item F be voted on as a pair. He moved to authorize the Land Bank to enter into a co-development agreement with Home HeadQuarters and to sell them the six properties listed below. El Java Abdul Qadir seconded this motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY PASSED A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE LAND BANK TO ENTER INTO A CO-DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT WITH HOME HEADQUARTERS AND TO SELL THEM THE SIX PROPERTIES LISTED BELOW.**

F. Authorize the Land Bank to sell the following properties to Home HeadQuarters, Inc. at cost for renovation using Enterprise CRI funds:

i. 308 Craig Street
ii. 203 Landon Avenue
iii. 256 Girard Avenue
iv. 106 Elmwood Avenue
v. 116 Dearborn Place
vi. 147 W Kennedy

G. Hire Luke Avery-Dougherty as CFO/Director of Administration

Julie Cerio moved to authorize the Land Bank to hire Luke Avery-Dougherty as the CFO/Director of Administration per the recommendation of the personnel committee. Jim Corbett seconded this motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY PASSED A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE HIRING OF LUKE AVERY-DOUGHERTY AS THE CFO/DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION.**

H. Renew engagement letter with Bowers & Company CPAs, PLLC

Ms. Wright informed the board that their procurement policy allows them to award professional service contracts such as this one non-competitively and that in her opinion this was preferable to bidding this work out since shifting to a new accounting firm would come with such a steep learning curve that it would likely be inefficient to do so. The board disagreed and argued that the Land Bank out to be putting these services out to bid every few years anyway, even if the scoring rubric gives points for experience with the Land Bank. They noted that it was too late to do so this year and Julie Cerio moved to authorize the Land Bank to renew its engagement of Bowers & Company for another two years. Jim Corbett seconded this motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY PASSED A RESOLUTION AUTHORING THE LAND BANK TO RENEW ITS ENGAGEMENT OF BOWERS & COMPANY FOR ANOTHER TWO YEARS.**

I. Renew engagement letter with Barclay Damon LLP

Ms. Wright informed the board that they had the option of either renewing Barclay Damon's engagement letter for one or two years. There was a general discussion about the need to bid professional services out more frequently. Mr. Barnaba suggested that they renew their service agreements with accounting and legal for only one year. Ms. Wright suggested that it would be preferable to stagger them in case they do have to switch service providers in both categories so they wouldn't be bringing two new service providers on line at once. Dan Barnaba moved to renew Barclay Damon's engagement letter for one year. El Java Abdul Qadir seconded this motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY PASSED A RESOLUTION AUTHORING THE LAND BANK TO RENEW ITS ENGAGEMENT OF BARCLAY DAMON LLP FOR ANOTHER YEAR.**

J. Set schedule of meetings for 2019

There was some discussion about moving the annual meeting in January to the evening and everyone agreed that they would check calendars and decide on the date via email. Julie Cerio moved to keep regular meetings scheduled for the third Tuesday of each month at 8:00 AM. El Java Abdul Qadir seconded this. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO KEEP REGULAR MEETINGS SCHEDULED FOR THE THIRD TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH AT 8:00 AM.**

VII. Discussion

A. 901 Park Street shooting + Owtram lawsuit

Ms. Wright briefed the board on a lawsuit filed against the City and the Land Bank shortly after six properties owned by Owtram Holdings, LLC on May 31. She explained that during the lawsuit the Land Bank was told not to exercise any claims of ownership over these properties, but that the lawsuit was finally dismissed in early December. She explained that while this suit was ongoing there were two shootings at 901 Park Street, a property to which the Land Bank held title. Now that the suit has been dismissed, the Land Bank is taking possession of the properties, evicting squatters, and plans to demolish 901 Park Street as soon as possible due to its extremely deteriorated condition. Several of the board members asked questions about safety protocols and what risks Land Bank employees might be exposed to when visiting these properties. Ms. Wright described their standard procedures.

B. 215 Tully purchase completed

Ms. Wright updated the board informing them that the Land Bank closed on this property and now owns 215 Tully Street and let them know that the Good Life Foundation had secured a $700,000 grant from the state and is well on their way raising funds to renovate the building.

C. 757 W. Onondaga

Ms. Wright reminded the board that in September they'd been presented with an appeal from the former owner claiming that she'd been working with engineers to spec the rehab of this house in order to retrofit it for her medical needs and that she was being awarded funding by the VA to renovate this specific house due to her status as an service-disabled veteran. Due to these unique circumstances it would appear to warrant the Land Bank selling her this house back so that she could access the funds for renovation and be able to own an accessible home. VA staff had verbally confirmed that her case was pending approval but couldn't give us an idea of when that approval might come. The board at that time said to give her another 90 days. She now claims that she's gotten verbal approval from the VA but won't have written confirmation until the check is delivered to her. We have no certain idea when that might happen. After some discussion the board offered to wait another 30 days for written confirmation from the VA. Mr. Sciscioli noted that a possible federal government shutdown may make this deadline impossible for her to meet. All agreed that no formal board vote or action was needed at this time.

D. Issue with Money Orders

Ms. Wright informed the board that they recently had an incident in which a potential buyer claims to have provided a deposit and later decided to withdraw their offer and requested their deposit be refunded. She noted that it's standard procedure to scan a copy of the deposit check and that if it's deposited it is reflected as a deposit being held in Quickbooks until the sale goes through when it is shifted over to unrestricted income. In this instance there wasn't a scanned copy of the check and Quickbooks does not reflect that any deposit is being held for that address. The customer can't dispute it because it was a money order and they claim that they didn't keep the receipt stub. She explained that if it were a personal check they could verify whether it had been deposited and/or put a stop payment on the check. The board discussed briefly and directed her not to issue a refund unless this customer could produce a receipt proving that the GSPDC had received the funds and all agreed with her suggestion that the Land Bank should cease to accept money orders.

E. Issues with Enforcement Mortgages

Ms. Wright summarized the challenges that they are having getting buyers to complete renovations and close out their enforcement mortgages in a timely manner. She listed some possible procedural improvements and asked whether this warranted a committee meeting to discuss policy changes or whether the board would prefer that they brainstorm with the CAB and staff and bring a few proposals back to the full board for their consideration. After some discussion, the board agreed that they would rather staff come back with some proposals for the full board to consider.

VIII. Adjournment

Julie Cerio moved to adjourn the meeting. El Java Abdul Qadir seconded the motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:53 AM.**