



**Kalamazoo County Land Bank Fast Track Authority
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes—June 11th, 2020
Electronic Zoom Meeting**

Members Present: Mary Balkema, Brian Hudson, Holly Crump, Rebekah Kik
Carl Roberts faced technical difficulties and was able to join at approximately 8:40. Terry Dorgan able to join at approximately 8:45

Members Absent: N/A

County Liaison Present: N/A

Staff Present: Kelly Clarke, Michelle Tombro Tracy, Theresa Coty O’Neil, and Reality Rojas

The June meeting of the Kalamazoo County Land Bank Authority Board of Directors was called to order by Balkema at 8:36 a.m. Via Zoom. Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83363549285?pwd=MVBmSld0c0llaON0eWEwdHF4VVdQdz09>

Approval of Minutes- April 2020

The approval of the April Meeting Minutes made a motion by Hudson, Crump seconded the motion. April Meeting Minutes were unanimously approved without any revisions.

Chair’s Remarks: Balkema informed the board of the updated 2020 Foreclosure deadline. The Governor’s Executive Order newly updated deadline is June 29th, 2020.

Citizens’ Time: N/A

Commission Liaison Comments: N/A

Executive Director Report: Clarke informed the board that there will be staff returning to the office with a hybrid schedule June 15th, with half the team working in person at a time and the Land Bank will be meeting with visitors by appointment. In lieu of the typical Executive Director report, Clarke suggested the time be spent discussing the agency and its work related to the issue of structural racism which was heavy on hearts and minds locally and nationally in the context of the local and national protests and discussion. Clarke acknowledged the agency still has much work to do and that it could be helpful to revisit where we have been, where we are and where we are going. The Land Bank has been a partner in the Kalamazoo Foundation convened Truth and Racial Healing and Transformation initiative since it began in 2017. This has included ERACE training for all full time staff and participation in the housing committee. This participation informed a review of real estate policies with an equity lens last year which resulted in removing a requirement that property purchasers not have property that was the site of criminal activity in the past. Board member Holly Crump was also able to attend ERACE training and travel to the national vacant properties conference with the Executive Director last year which had a primary focus of vacant property disposition with a race and equity lens.

On the project side, the agency has been working to advance from an inclusionary approach with regards to property repurposing to an empowering approach wherever possible. In addition to including residents and People of Color in the vision building process, the agency has been working to provide platforms for resident leadership and leadership by People of Color throughout all stages of a project or property transaction when possible. For example, staff are working with NACD to create a mini RFP process for parcels zoned commercial or Live Work which will include an NACD board member on the review committee. Clarke acknowledged the agency has work to do to continue building and maintaining diversity in its staff and broader leadership. Clarke anticipates the agency will be able to offer more training to the board as one to two hour webinars are now becoming very available on the topic of structural racism. Finally, Clarke shared she and the Executive Director of the Calhoun County Land Bank were asked to participate in a call with the Center for Community progress to support the creation of a national land bank network which is intended very intentionally to drive high level narrative and systems shifts that advance racial equity in land banking and community development. Clarke reviewed the concepts shared by CCP around reparative work including ensuring residents both benefit from and influence land banking work. Board Chair, Balkema suggested the staff look at the core values and see if these concepts can be reflected in our core values.

Operations Coordinator, Rojas gave a presentation demonstrating the advanced features of the Land Bank's website that now include data regarding property such as zoning, asking price, size, property condition, etc. This work was done to compliment the Property Disposition overview sheet created last fall with the help of Carl Roberts and NACD as an effort to provide greater transparency to the community about how to access programs. We have heard that residents particularly on the northside where we have most of our property lacked trust in the agency and have felt it was difficult to understand what property we owned and how property could be accessed. Staff have shared the property disposition overview sheet last fall which was received positively and will be sharing these new web features with neighborhood associations as we move out of COVID quarantine.

Regular Agenda

- Approval of Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs Capital Request for Pocket Plaza – Eastside Square - Overview: This grant application is to MCACA, MCACA matches 50/50 with total cash match. Okun Foundation and the Gilmore Foundation have commitments of about \$70,000 that has been secured since last meeting. 2021 is the plan for groundbreaking on the pocket plaza.
- Approval of Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs Project Support Request – Art installation for the Pocket Plaza: This portion of the request would involve the community to engage in a poetry project to create poems about the east side and would be integrated into the structure and tiles. This project includes a land bank financial commitment as well as described in the application documents distributed.
- Motion to approve both submissions of grant request – Motion by Carl Roberts to approve grant application, second Rebekah Kik. Motion passed unanimously.

Real Estate Committee Update - Hudson updated the board of a meeting with Allen Edwin Homes regarding purchasing parcels to build new housing that would be used for rental housing. Hudson shared that there is community support by the neighborhoods associations where parcels are located (Vine and Oakwood) and by Cooper township where most of the parcels are located. Hudson noted this is a good way to return property to the tax base and increase the supply of housing options. Clarke shared the transfer of these parcels are consistent with board approved policies but the plan was shared with the Real Estate committee and the relevant neighborhood associations and Cooper township to ensure a thoughtful process was followed.

Vibrant Update – Clarke shared the Turning Ten is tentatively rescheduled for a belated birthday in 2021 given the COVID crisis.

Board Member Comments: N/A

Move to adjourn:

A motion was made by Roberts to adjourn, seconded by Crump all were in favor. Meeting was adjourned at 9:34 AM.