

MINUTES OF THE STARK COUNTY LAND REUTILIZATION CORPORATION
December 18, 2023

The Stark County Land Reutilization Corporation met for their regular meeting on Monday, December 18, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. in the Stark County Regional Planning Commission Conference Room.

1. CALL TO ORDER BY SCLRC CHAIRMAN, Alex Zumbar
2. ROLL CALL – Board Members Present

Roll call found the following board members in attendance: Bill Smith, Alex Zumbar, Janet Creighton, John Arnold and Chris Hardesty.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF November 20, 2023 MEETING

Creighton moved and Arnold seconded to approve the minutes of the November 20, 2023 meeting. Motion carried on a roll call vote as follows: Voting Aye - Smith, Zumbar, Creighton, Arnold and Hardesty.

4. PUBLIC SPEAKS
5. TREASURER/FISCAL REPORT

Heather Cunningham reviewed the Treasurer's Report for the month of November. Arnold moved and Hardesty seconded to approve the Treasurer's Report for November as presented. Motion carried on a roll call vote as follows: Voting Aye - Smith, Zumbar, Creighton, Arnold and Hardesty.

6. SIDE LOT/VACANT LOT PROGRAM REPORT
Gwen Arthur provided the Side Lot Program Update:

Total Applications Submitted: 2,568
(9 applications were received since November '23 update)

Cities – 2,124
Canton: 1,667, Massillon: 185, Alliance: 272

Other Communities – 444

Beach City – 1, Bethlehem Twp – 68, Brewster – 9, Canal Fulton – 1, Canton Twp – 84, East Canton – 7, East Sparta – 2, Hartville – 3, Jackson Twp – 6, Lake Twp – 8, Lawrence Twp – 12, Lexington Twp – 67, Limaville – 2, Louisville – 2, Marlboro – 1, Meyer's Lake – 1, Minerva – 5, Nimishillen – 6, North Canton – 2; Osnaburg Twp – 15, Paris Twp – 3, Perry Twp – 18, Pike Twp – 21, Plain Twp – 38, Sandy Twp – 41, Sugarcreek Twp – 6, Tuscarawas Twp – 2, Washington Twp – 6, Waynesburg – 6, Wilmot-1

-
- Total Number of Applications under Preliminary Review: 0
 - Total Number of Applications Denied: 970
 - Number of Canceled Applications/Fee Refunded: 186

- Total Number Pending Approval by Community: 20
- **Total Number of Approved Applications: 1,392**
-
- Total Number of Approved Applications Pending Deposit Receipt / NIP Early Lien Release Approval / Request for Foreclosure / Completed Foreclosure Proceeding: 106
- Total Number Being Prepared for Transfer: 32
- **Total Number Transferred to Date: 1,254**

Vacant Lot Program Update:

Total Applications Submitted: 374

(4 Applications received since November '23 update)

Cities – 260: Canton: 213, Alliance: 33, Massillon: 14

Other Communities – 114

Bethlehem Twp – 65, Canton Twp – 13, Hartville – 1, Jackson Twp – 3, Lake – 4, Lexington Twp – 9, Nimishillen – 3, Paris – 1, Perry – 1, Pike – 2, Sandy Twp – 7; Sugarcreek Twp – 1, Washington Twp – 4,

-
- Total Number of Applications under Preliminary Review: 0
- Total Number of Applications Denied: 260
- Number of Canceled Applications/Fee Refunded: 24
- Total Number Pending Approval by Community: 0
- **Total Number of Approved Applications: 90**
-
- Total Number of Approved Applications Pending Executed MOU/ Completion of Foreclosure Proceeding: 19
- Total Number Being Prepared for Transfer: 3
- Total Number Transferred to Date: 68

Hardesty moved and Arnold seconded to approve the Side Lot/Vacant Lot Report as submitted. Motion carried on a roll call vote as follows: Voting Aye - Smith, Zumbar, Creighton, Arnold and Hardesty.

7. **ADOPT SCLRC 2024 MEETING SCHEDULE**

Arnold moved and Creighton seconded to approve the SCLRC 2024 meeting schedule as submitted. Motion carried on a roll call vote as follows: Voting Aye - Smith, Zumbar, Creighton, Arnold and Hardesty

8. **NEW BUSINESS**

a. Prosecutor Agreement

Nau stated the agreement is the same as previous years. A base amount is paid to the prosecutors of \$56,250 for up to 75 cases. Anything over 75 cases is \$750 per case. Nau stated the

amount of cases were high this year and Yost agreed. Yost said the number of cases was approximately 150. The agreement is being kept the same. They did a one-year agreement, noting that next year would be the last year of Kyle Stone's current term. Depending on what happens in the 2024 election, the new term would start out with a new contract in 2025.

Arnold asked if Springwood was part of the case numbers. Yost stated that Springwood was part of that large number, but it has been discussed that if we had a business-type partner like condo association or trailer park, SCLRC may want to consider having an additional side agreement with them from the Land Bank. With Springwood there has been a combination of doing work for the board and individuals within the park. They have had quite a few Springwood cases over the last year, and there has been issues dealing with the Springwood board.

Arnold moved and Hardesty seconded to approve the Prosecutor's Agreement. Motion carried on a roll call vote as follows: Voting Aye - Smith, Zubar, Creighton, Arnold and Hardesty.

b. Treasurer Agreement

Nau reviewed the terms for the Treasurer's Agreement, which is a 2-year agreement. The dollar amount proposed is \$62,000 for 2024, and \$64,000 for 2025. Zubar stated those amounts have not been met. Staffing in the Treasurer's office has been reduced because much of the work has been picked up by RPC.

Creighton moved and Arnold seconded to approve Treasurer's Agreement. Motion carried on a roll call vote as follows: Voting Aye - Smith, Creighton, Arnold and Hardesty. Zubar abstained.

c. Julian & Grube, Inc -3-year Agreement/Financial Statements for Audit

Nau remarked on our three-year agreement with Julian & Grube to handle our financial statements. They proposed it in three difference scenarios. One year is \$1,700, two years is \$1,600 a year, three years is \$1,500 per year. The last agreement, three years ago, was \$1,300. Nau recommended entering into an agreement with Julian & Grube for three years at \$1,500 a year.

Smith moved and Arnold seconded to approve a 3-year agreement with Julian & Grube, Inc. for \$1,500 per year. Motion carried on a roll call vote as follows: Voting Aye - Smith, Zubar, Creighton, Arnold and Hardesty

d. Appointment of Secretary

Nau stated that Jill Gerber is retiring. Zubar made motion to appoint Jennifer Bayer as Secretary to the Land Bank. Arnold seconded. Motion carried on a roll call vote as follows: Voting Aye - Smith, Zubar, Creighton, Arnold and Hardesty.

9:15 Public Hearing – 2024 Budget

Zubar went into a public hearing for the consideration of the 2024 SCLRC budget. Zubar asked if anyone was present to speak on behalf of the SCLRC 2024 budget. Nau stated that he would speak in support of the budget. There was one revision made to the budget. Heather Cunningham spoke regarding the property on Jackson Ave. There was a proposed \$50,000 rehab line item. The

acquisition of the property was on this year's budget but the rehab will be solely on next year's budget. The amount will be increased due to staff time and the rehab of the house itself to \$100,000 which means money will be reallocated from other programs. Money will be pulled from the DAP program with a change in residential from \$18,000 to \$10,000 and commercial from \$100,000 to \$58,000. With the DOD grant that's coming for demo, we feel that will take over most of the staff work we will be doing. Overall total budget has not changed, but it is reallocating line item amounts. Zumbar asked again if anyone would like to speak on behalf of the SCLRC budget. Zumbar asked three times if anyone wanted to speak in opposition of the 2024 budget. No one spoke in opposition to the budget.

Hardesty moved and Arnold seconded to approve the 2024 SCLRC budget. Motion carried on a roll call vote as follows: Voting Aye - Smith, Zumbar, Creighton, Arnold and Hardesty. Zumbar left the public hearing and went back into the regular meeting.

9. OLD BUSINESS

a. 1710 Jackson Ave.

Nau stated that we closed on the property at 1710 Jackson Ave. a couple of weeks ago. We paid approximately \$24,000. The auditor valued it at approximately \$90-95,000. It was a hoarder house. RPC's CD/Rehab department is doing the work write-up on it. There is list of five contractor's through the rehab program that are pre-approved, so we're going to work off that list of contractors that we've worked with that have some credibility. The project should take approximately six months to complete. Arnold asked that photos be taken to document the progress.

b. Auction of 12777 Mogadore Ave., Uniontown Update

Nau stated the auction on the Mogadore property was on November 24th. The property sold for approximately \$17,000 an acre. That amount will be split with the township per the agreement with them. There is no closing date yet. The purchaser may split some lots off on the existing frontage on Mogadore and may develop the rest later. There was a neighbor at the auction who had come to land bank meetings in the past to speak of his desire to purchase some of this property. He and some others had bid on this property to some extent, but did not purchase it.

c. ODOT Demolition Program

Nau stated that with the Demo program the county gets \$500,000 allocated to us at 100%. With the Brownfield program the county gets \$1 million allocated to us at 100%. The balance is a state-wide competition. Applications for the demo program were available on October 31. The concern was that larger counties would submit applications to take well over all that money statewide on the balance. DOD are encouraging everybody to submit their application. It is first come, first serve. Nau assumes they want counties to document the need by submitting the applications and there is discussion that there might be an ongoing budget allocation with the legislature if the need is documented.

The Brownfield applications are open and will be due April 1. We will submit the Starfire Gas Station on Columbus Rd for \$700,000. We are in a good position because we've got the remedial action plan that has been approved by the EPA. They have eliminated the Gas Station Cleanup program through BUSTR; everything is just going through the brownfield program now.

d. Stark Ceramics property

Land Bank was contacted by the owner and their attorney and a man from the EPA asking technical assistance through a grant program. To qualify, they must be sponsored by a public entity. John Anthony stated he received notice of an issue during the phase I assessment, they discovered Stark Ceramics had an open case with the Federal EPA from 1994. The EPA said this could potentially be a problem with the voluntary action program. They asked for our help to enter into the technical assistance program with EPA. Once they start doing the cleanup, they can call the EPA to give them help. The EPA will charge for that service. If the Land Bank becomes the applicant for the program, there is a grant available to pay for it. Through our original agreement, we put it on the owners to do the remediation. The Land Bank wants to see the property cleaned up. The owners have a consultant that is working with them. Anthony stated that he needs to speak with someone at the Ohio EPA to make a full disclosure of the situation. If the Land Bank is qualified to be an applicant, we will continue. Zumber asked if Anthony would like tentative approval from the board to file the application. He said yes. Zumber motioned, Arnold seconded the motion for the board to conditionally approve any necessary action to be filed by the SCLRC if necessary to receive and accept the funds if granted for Stark Ceramics. Motion carried on a roll call vote as follows: Voting Aye - Smith, Zumber, Creighton, Arnold and Hardesty.

e. Hope, Inc.

Nau stated that he and Diane Sheridan had a phone meeting with Ryan from TESTA Development which is a group out of Akron doing the HOPE, Inc. project in East Canton. They are interested in 10 acres on the balance of the property that is not being utilized yet. They have had conversations with local representatives from HOPE Inc., Brenda Griffith. Conversations were had about the possibility of the land Bank partnering with TESTA as a public entity to get tax credit grants through the state of Ohio that would allow them to build single family houses on the balance of the property. Nau has spoken with Griffith about this possibility and the board of HOPE is interested. Affordable housing is an issue in Stark County and East Canton has a shortage of housing.

f. Alliance Brownfield

Dreger wanted the Land bank to know that in Alliance that we are going to be making applications as quick as possible for the brownfield money for balance that is competitive statewide. There are 2 gas stations in town that RPC has been assisting with. One is on East Main St and is abandoned. Work was done and was expected to receive BUSTR funds. There were some delays but now there is no BUSTR money.

The second gas station is in the northeast part of Alliance on Patterson. There has been substantial clean up and renovating. Owner of the station removed the tanks and put the dirt from the site back into the site. There were some problems going through BUSTR. They are working to get funds for brownfield.

10. NEXT MEETING - Monday, January 22, 2024 - 9:00 a.m.

11. ADJOURNED