

MEETING MINUTES

1. ROLL CALL AND CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Lower South Valley Land Bank was called to order at 9:05 am on December 11th, 2024 by Chair Donna Wall.

<u>Members Present:</u>	<u>Members Excused:</u>
Ashley Borough – Frank Sorokach	Municipality of Kingston - Sondra Riviello
Hanover Township – Sam Guesto	Hanover Area SD - Rick Oravic
Nanticoke City – Donna Wall	
Newport Township - Joe Hillan	
Wilkes-Barre City – Dave Wilson	
Citizen Member – Ronald Jones	

Others Present:

Slusser Law Firm – Attorney Chris Slusser
Hailstone Economic – Sara Hailstone
Hailstone Economic – Ted Ritsick

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Jamie Smith – Wilkes-Barre City commented verbally regarding the bidding and selection process for RFP properties to be sold by the land bank and the status of 2024 judicial sale properties.

3. APPROVAL OF 11.13.24 MEETING MINUTES

Motion: Mr. Guesto – 2nd: Mr. Sorokach

Motion passed unanimously.

4. FINANCE REPORT

A. Review and approve finance report:

Motion: Mr. Hillian – 2nd: Mr. Wilson

Motion passed unanimously.

B. Review and approve the following invoices:

1. Brdaric Excavating for Demolition in Newport, Hanover and Ashley and Fencing in Newport for \$98,200
2. Judie Piccolo for Title Searches \$245
3. Slusser Law Firm for Legal Services from August-October for \$7488.81
4. PennEastern Engineers for Demo/Fence Newport, Hanover and Ashley \$9,820
5. Sanguedolce Law Firm for Hanover Upset Title Searches for \$1,400
6. Hailstone Economic for Consulting - November 2024 for \$3,603.75

Motion: Mr. Jones – 2nd: Mr. Wilson

Motion passed unanimously.

5. STAFF REPORT

A. Solicitor's Report

- a. 775 Hazle Street
 - i. Email was received from opposing counsel confirming agreement to settle the case.
- b. Hanover Township Property Transfer Update
 - i. Final properties are near completion.
- c. Emergency Demolition of 16 Garman St, Hanover Township
 - i. Attorney Slusser recommended a motion to allow for reimbursement upon confirmation of title being vested in the land bank.
 - ii. Mr. Guesto reported on the status of the property - there is currently a tree growing through the middle of the structure, and it is ready to fall over. Hanover Township will be opening emergency demolition bids later on the 11th to immediately address the situation.
- d. 2024 Judicial Sale Properties Status
 - i. Attorney Slusser's office is making the filings in the week following the meeting. The quiet title process should take a few months to complete. Attorney Slusser discussed the belt and suspenders approach taken by the firm to ensure ownership of the property through the quiet tile process.

B. Administrator's Report

- a. Statement of Financial Interest Forms
 - i. Hailstone will be collecting statement of financial interest forms for all members. Forms will be stored in Nanticoke City Hall.
- b. 501(c)3 Application Update
 - i. Application was submitted to IRS. We are awaiting a response.
- c. Property Disposition Update
 - i. 5 Arch Street, Newport
 1. Follow up emails will be sent to list of interested buyers. No proposals were received during the time of the meeting.
- d. Broker and Appraisal Service Update
 - i. Land Bank is awaiting proposals from interested parties.
- e. Yard Signs for Properties
 - i. Cost per standard yard sign is approximately \$14-15 for a small batch.

- f. Annual Reporting to DCED and 2024 Audit
 - i. 2024 Report and Audit will be completed in a timely manner in 2024. Auditors will be directed to begin in early 2024.
- g. October-December ARPA Interest Due January 10th, 2025

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

7. NEW BUSINESS

A. Discuss process regarding selection of applications for 5 Arch, Newport

- i. The selection process will take place during the executive session. Members will be provided an overview and full applications.
- ii. Mr. Hillan inquired regarding a WVSA bill. Previous bills for Land Bank properties would have been removed and waived as part of the judicial sale process. WVSA should discuss reclamation of funds with their solicitor.

B. Discuss process regarding selection of applications for Appraisal/Broker Service

- i. Applicants will be requested to attend the next land bank meeting if three or less. Anyone with contact information for potentially interested parties was asked to provide it to Mr. Ritsick.

C. Discussion and motion regarding 2025 meeting schedule, advertisement and location.

Motion to approve and advertise 2025 meeting dates as presented.

Motion: Mr. Guesto – 2nd: Mr. Hillan

Motion passed unanimously.

D. Discussion and motion regarding property donation request for 356 State Street, Nanticoke lot.

- i. Ms. Wall provided an overview of the property. The previous owners sold the property without selling the lot next to it, and the city declined an offer to receive the lot. Land Bank members discussed the possibility of coordinating with current owners to acquire lot, remove the trees, and get the lot into the hands of a neighbor.

No motion was made.

E. Motion regarding disposition of 49 N Main St, Ashley to Christopher Wheeler for \$25,000

- i. Mr. Guesto and Sorokach discussed the offer with Ashley Council, and expressed a favorable opinion of the disposition. Attorney Slusser will prepare a sales agreement.

Motion: Mr. Hillan – 2nd: Mr. Sorokach

Motion passed unanimously.

F. Motion regarding emergency demolition of 16 Garman St, Hanover

- i. Land Bank members reviewed documentation regarding the current condition of the property. Hanover has requested demolition occur by the 20th of December.

Motion to allow for reimbursement upon confirmation of title being vested in the land bank.

Motion: Ms. Wall – 2nd: Mr. Hillan

Motion passed unanimously.

G. Motion to approve 2023 annual report

Motion: Mr. Hillan – 2nd: Mr. Guesto

Motion passed unanimously.

H. Discussion regarding use of remaining ARPA funds

- i. Land Bank members discussed usage of remaining funds, a joint demolition RFP for properties and creation of a bid package.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Mr. Guesto – 2nd: Mr. Sorokach

Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 9:55am.