

MINUTES - APPROVED

Time: Wednesday, January 10, 12:00PM-1:00PM

Place: Annex 1st Floor Conference Room, 420 10th St.

Call to Order: Sherrie Aaron 12:04 pm

Attendance: Deidre Tilley, Alston Auten, Steve Anthony, Carson Cummings, Michelle Williams, Sherrie Aaron.

Guests: Atravious White and Franklin Johnson, Carrie Strickland, Elton Bennett, Dr. Webb

Absent:

Staff: Natalie Bouyett, Mary B Garcia, Rob Scott

1. Approve Minutes from December 13, 2023

Motion to approve 1st Alston 2nd Carson. Minutes approved.

2. Director's Report: Rob Scott spoke about reengagement of non-profits.

3. Recipient Presentation:

Truth Springs, Carrie Stickland; Truth Spring's first rule is to listen to the community. The program includes Truth Spring Real Estate and Truth Spring Trade School. Trade school consists of four (4) main components: Construction, Culinary Arts, Child Development Associate, and Urban Farming. It is a 10-month paid to learn program for 20 students per year. They focus on the whole family not just one part of the problem. They work on the houses and jobs for people in their community. This program is utilized by members of this community in North Highlands and open to other people in Muscogee County.

Rob Scott reminded the board this is a program in high demand.

4. Amendment to Deeds

- **Truth Springs:**

Amend the deed for 3215 and 3217 6th Avenue to change verbiage to state as follows:

“that Grantor shall lease or deed the property to a tenant or buyer suitable to Grantor's general nonprofit and/or charitable purposes, in Grantor's reasonable discretion, within five (5) years of the date hereof”

Properties were purchased with CDBG funds and restricted to affordable housing and CDBG/HUD compliance. This will lift affordable housing restrictions and allow them to reimburse CBGB/HUD grant.

Motion by Steve Anthony. 2nd by Deidre Tilley.

Discussion: Carrie Strickland explained the need for such an amendment and purpose of "Anchor Houses." Such houses are sort of block captains or RAs like in college.

Sherrie Aaron asked if this was possible to happen again? Carrie Strickland assured her measures were put in place to prevent future occurrences.

Alston Auten asked what exactly was going to be removed from the document?

Natalie Bouyett explained the CDBG, 5 year time limit and HUD compliance portions are the only portions being removed and only from these two properties.

No opposition. Passed.

- **4Chambers LLC:**

Amend the deed for 4019 Hickory Avenue to change verbiage to state as follows:

"after the completion of the renovations, and at Grantee's option, either sell the property, or lease it for residential purposes."

Grantee was restricted to selling the property for approximately \$80,000. This will allow a change from the original application purpose.

Motion by Steve Anthony. 2nd by Alston Auten.

Discussion: Deidre Tilley asked why these specifications were placed in the document?

Natalie Bouyett explained the specifications were stated by the applicant.

Rob Scott mentioned not utilizing restrictive language in the future and leaving deed more open to prevent such amendments.

Michelle Williams asked for clarification of the motion.

Sherrie Aaron asked if what we are doing is flipping houses?

Rob Scott stated that while looking at other Land Banks in other areas they do not use such restrictive language.

Natalie Bouyett stated we will always be good stewards looking for locally responsible owners and not large out-of-state corporations that do not provide adequate housing. We have safety nets in place like requiring purchaser to do follow-up presentations and only selling one or two properties at a time to a first-time partner with the Land Bank.

No opposition. Passed.

5. Review Property Bids and Proposals:

Natalie Bouyett presents: Nuisance abatement foreclosure of 1502 Virginia Street requested by Betsy Eby and Bo Bartlett. Bid \$6,500. Side Lot Acquisition to clean up and extend the yard.

Property is 1 year delinquent on taxes, \$2,452.46 taxes owed. Demo Lien is \$24,677.82, Solid Waste Removal Lien is \$222, Grass cutting lien is \$652. Total liens on property is \$28,304.28.

Motion for Land Bank to work with Tax Commissioner's Office to obtain property with the contingency that the intended buyers sign the cost agreement by Michelle Williams. 2nd Carson Cummings.

Steve Anthony abstained due to personal relationship with neighbors involved.

Discussion: Carson Cummings asked if this is a common occurrence.

Steve Anthony mentioned that the owner has multiple properties around the area.

Alston Auten asked about a cost agreement.

Natalie Bouyett went into detail.

No opposition. Passes.

6. Tax Sale Updates:

Natalie Bouyett informed the board she obtained 2 properties at the tax sale. Planning to send letters to waive liens and moving to close on the deals around March or April.

7. Nonprofit Partnerships and Services

The Land Bank has been in talks with NeighborWorks regarding the Land Bank taking over deeds to property they own due to Land Banks tax exempt status. Then when ready to develop the property a Quit Claim Deed will be filed by Land Bank returning property to NeighborWorks. More talks are necessary to settle timelines and update the Land Bank Board on a more frequent basis.

Discussion regarding previous iterations of this sort of exchange. Rob Scott assured board members that things are different from the past regarding the capacity of Land Bank. Board members request Cathy from Neighborworks address them in person at the next meeting prior to engaging.

Deidre Tilley asked if there is a downside to this relationship?

Natalie Bouyett replied under extreme circumstance like if they go out of business or decide to walk away from the properties which would likely permanently sever a partnership.

Steve Anthony asked if there was a prior relationship with NeighborWorks in the past that wasn't good?

Rob Scott replied that the old way Land Bank did things prior to the new board and new Land Bank iteration was very different. Currently this iteration of Land Bank is operating in a completely different manner. There may be issues with NeighborWork's capacity. It may take 10

years to develop properties we would be holding, it may not. That is why it is suggested that Cathy from NeighborWorks come speak directly to the board to answer their questions.

Michelle Williams inquired about a cap to the number of properties the Land Bank would hold and will that affect capacity.

Natalie Bouyett stated that will not happen as long as there is a clear line of communication between the Land Bank and Neighborworks. Therefore, she will invite Cathy to come speak to them at their next meeting.

8. Luncheon

The board luncheon is still in the planning phases.

Next meeting will be on Wednesday, February 14, 2024.

Call to Adjourn 1:05