

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF THE
LANCASTER COUNTY LAND BANK AUTHORITY
JANUARY 24, 2017
202 NORTH PRINCE STREET, SUITE 400
LANCASTER, PA 17603**

The members of the Board of the Lancaster County Land Bank Authority met Tuesday, January 24, 2017. The Board meeting was held at the office of the Redevelopment Authority of the County of Lancaster, 202 North Prince Street, Suite 400.

Members of the Board in attendance: Jim Eby, Frank Christoffel, Dennis Groff, Ed Fisher, Jim Williams, and Mary Glazier.

Staff members present were: Matthew Sternberg, Executive Director; Terry Danforth, Tenant Services Director; Michael Brightbill, Controller; Justin Eby, Community Development Director; Aimee Tyson, Community Services Manager; Katherine Walsh, Housing & Community Development Coordinator. Also in attendance: Emily Eddowes, *Partnership for Public Health*; Dr. Jeff Martin, *Lancaster Lead Coalition*; David Garpstas, and Joe Younger, *Younger Realty Group*; and Colby Shaak.

Mr. Jim Eby called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Public Comments: Ms. Aimee Tyson introduced Dr. Jeff Martin and Emily Eddowes who gave a presentation, at staff request, on the issue of lead contamination in Lancaster County and City. It is suspected that many of the older blighted properties the Land Bank acquires, will have lead-based paint. Ms. Glazier entered the room at this time.

Dr. Martin covered both lead paint and soil contamination, best practices as exemplified in the State of Maryland, findings about lead poisoning: its consequences for educational achievement; other aftereffects, such as hearing loss, and speech delays; plus behavioral effects, such as ADD and hyperactivity; and the association between juvenile delinquency and lead. He provided stats showing the loss of IQ points correlated with rising lead levels. Even small levels cause later educational problems. For every \$1 spent on lead hazard control programs, there is a \$17 to \$221 return on investment, down the road, along with increased school performance and decreased juvenile delinquency. (It has been said that the dramatic decrease in crime rates from early 1990's to 2000's may be a result of taking lead out of paint and gasoline in the 1970's, rather than better socio-economic policies or policing).

He then focused on Lancaster noting that there have been high rates of lead-poisoning here for a long time. He showed 2014 statistics on children tested in the City and County – up to 300 kids had lead poisoning. We have 2-3 times *higher* a rate of lead poisoning than Flint Michigan, even *after* they had the water problem. This is not unique to Lancaster. There are probably 2000 to 2500 communities around the US that are actually worse than Flint. Lancaster is three times worse than the national average. Comparing Lancaster City to other areas in our region, lead levels are also higher. This is a result of the old housing stock. When you show a slide locating areas of very high blood lead-levels, it mirrors areas with pockets of very old housing – the City, and also Manheim, Ephrata, Elizabethtown, Marietta, and Columbia. Lititz does not show up because not enough test samples are available to constitute valid data. High lead-levels follow where you have old housing stock. There are also two areas in Amish country with high levels.

We also have a young population. Lancaster County is the youngest county by per-centage of kids under the age of 7 per capita, in the entire State. Also of concern is that the *rate of lead-testing* is very low. Most other counties have a 14% - 15% test-rate, while here it is only 7%. We need to do a better job of testing so we know where these hot-spots are. Ultimately his recommendation is to *stop testing kids* and instead *test houses*. Because once the child has the lead in his/her system, there is *nothing* on the medical side that can be done to *reverse* the effects.

He and Ms. Eddowes gave an introduction about the Partnership for Public Health and their four priorities. Ms. Eddowes emphasized the resources on their website www.PartnershipforPublicHealth.org from the Lead Coalition, which can be found in the Environmental Health section of the site.

He answered questions from Mr. Christoffel on the preferred child testing protocol, and what happens if it is determined that a kid has elevated blood levels. He responded to questions from Ms. Glazier on how children happen to be tested, and how many pediatricians suggest testing. Ms. Eddowes stated that *SE Lancaster Health Services* has an alert that comes up onscreen when it is time to test the child for lead.

Ms. Danforth, Tenant Services Director, answered a question from Ms. Glazier about whether the Housing Authority deals with lead. The Authority has certified Risk Assessors and has contractors who can do hazard reduction. She raised the issue of safe houses while abatement was going on. Dr. Martin shared how Maryland had handled this, by making it the responsibility of the landlord to place a family in another location during abatement.

Dr. Martin answered a question from Mr. Groff regarding the high lead-level hot-spot in Paradise Township on the recently shown map. Dr. Martin stated that they are partnering with an organization dealing with special needs children among the Amish, in order to promote testing, and learn what the sources of lead might be in their community. He answered a question from Mr. Fisher about lead solder in pipes, noting that it is not as high a risk as lead paint, but it's probably in second place. He noted that the City has been replacing the lead service lines. (Lead was allowed in fixtures up until the 1980's).

Upon completion of their presentation and Q&A, Dr. Martin and Ms. Eddowes exited the room.

Minutes of the December 2016 meeting were approved. The motion was made by Mr. Williams, second by Mr. Groff, and unanimously accepted.

Communications – None

Executive Director's Report: Mr. Sternberg referred the Board to his written report. He provided background on the Resolution-1 list of 18 blighted properties being considered in Columbia (photos of which were also onscreen with more details). He noted that if the list is approved by the Board, staff will go ahead with contracts. Any property costing over \$25,000 needs Board approval but under \$25,000 does not require approval from the Board. He highlighted a property at 117-119 North 5th Street in Columbia, which will be discussed later under Resolution 3 on the Agenda. Mr. Sternberg, Mr. Justin Eby, and Ms. Tyson answered questions from Mr. Jim Eby regarding a Borough Fund, and questions regarding the following properties: 511 Cherry Street, and 121-123 North 5th Street, and 622 Plane Street. Ms. Tyson stated that the Borough may pull the latter property back from the list, as the owner has begun repairs.

Mr. Justin Eby, Community Development Director, summarized the next steps for Board members.

A verbal Financial Report for the month of January was provided by Mr. Sternberg. The first Land Bank Authority membership check was received from Columbia Borough. He stated that the Board President's signature would be needed to open the bank accounts and that the Controller, Mr. Brightbill, had the paperwork prepared. Also staff are working on a fundraising initiative to the Columbia business community.

Committee Reports – None

Unfinished Business – None

New Business:

1) The Board approved a resolution authorizing acquisition of multiple properties in the Borough of Columbia to assist the community in dealing with blighted, vacant, abandoned, tax delinquent or obsolete land uses. The motion to approve was made by Mr. Christoffel, second by Mr. Groff, and unanimously carried. The Board reviewed photos of the properties onscreen, as specifics were discussed.

(A copy of said Resolution [Jan 17 #1] is attached hereto, and made a part hereof).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of the Lancaster County Land Bank Authority that:

1. The Land Bank is hereby authorized to acquire multiple properties identified on the attachment to this Resolution;
2. Acquisition of each of these properties will be contingent on Land Bank funding;
3. The Executive Director of the Land Bank is hereby authorized and directed to execute all documents on behalf of the Land Bank which may be necessary or desirable to further the intent of this Resolution.

2) The Board authorizing acquisition of the property at 304 Cherry Street in Columbia Borough after a lengthy discussion. The property had a mortgage default and is now owned by PHFA. Mr. Sternberg and Mr. Justin Eby answered a question from Mr. Groff about the discrepancy between assessment price and sale price. Mr. Jim Eby and Mr. Sternberg provided more details on the next steps. There was discussion of bid process, stipulations, and Columbia real estate tax rolls. Mr. Justin Eby stated that the condition of surrounding properties may be driving down the sale price of some houses. Mr. Sternberg noted that a specific resolution was not required, once the Master List had been approved with the previous resolution, due to the purchase price being under \$25,000. The Board approved unanimously by voice vote.

3) The Board approved a resolution authorizing acquisition of the 117-119 North 5th Street in Columbia Borough. They reviewed photos of the property onscreen, as Mr. Sternberg provided more details and answered questions. The motion to approve was made by Mr. Williams, second by Mr. Fisher and unanimously carried. (A copy of said Resolution [Jan 17 #2] is attached hereto, and made a part hereof).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of the Lancaster County Land Bank Authority that:

1. The Land Bank is hereby authorized to acquire 117-119 N 5th Street, Columbia, PA;
2. Acquisition of this property will be contingent on Land Bank funding;
3. The Executive Director of the Land Bank is hereby authorized and directed to execute all documents on behalf of the Land Bank which may be necessary or desirable to further the intent of this Resolution.

Other Business: Mr. Jim Eby announced that the next meeting of the Board of the Lancaster County Land Bank Authority is expected to be held Tuesday, **February 28, 2017** at the offices of the Lancaster County Housing and Redevelopment Authorities, 202 North Prince Street, Suite 400, at **4:00 p.m.** before the meeting of the Lancaster County Housing Authority.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Marian C. Joyce, Secretary