



**Rome/Floyd Land Bank Authority
Minutes**

Friday, March 3, 2023
8:30 AM

Carnegie Building Training Room

Committee Members Present:

Harry Brock
J.R. Davis
Lowery May
David Mathis
Rob Ware
David Clonts

Others:

Meredith Ulmer - City - Assistant City Manager
Dylan Nelson - City - Finance - Senior Accountant

Staff:

Bekki Fox - City - Community Development - Director
Amanda Carter - City - Community Development - Rome/Floyd Land Bank Authority Manager
Logan Drake - City - Community Development - Administrative Program Assistant

Welcome and Call to order:

Chairman David Mathis called the meeting to order at 8:33 AM. A quorum was established.

Approval of Minutes:

Mathis asked for any corrections to the February minutes. Harry Brock motioned to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Lowery May. Motion carried.

Financial Report:

The financial report was distributed for review and presented by Dylan Nelson. Nelson discussed active properties, the cash balance as of January 28th and the 2018-2022 YTD property taxes collected. Some ARPA funds have been moved into that account.

Authority Updates:

Regarding 1 Orchid Place (J140113) and 7 Forsyth Street (J13J165), everything is still being finalized before the new build can begin. Attorney William Richardson has completed the contractor contract and is in the process of finishing the subcontractor contract. 7 Forsyth will use the 2/1 plan whereas 1 Orchid will use the 3/2 plan.

As previously announced, 312 Kingston Avenue (J13I105) has closed. New keys are being made. Staff will soon meet with the contractor onsite.

Staff has made a list of properties to gauge interest in the Neighborhood Vitality Beautification Grant. Contact will be made soon.

While a mechanism is already in place to purchase materials through the City's tax ID number, discussion was had on whether the LBA acquiring its own tax ID number would help facilitate the process. The City's ID will be utilized for now so that the LBA may get started on projects, but the matter will be revisited.

310 Kingston Avenue (J13I107), which is adjacent to the recently purchased 312 Kingston Avenue (J13J165), was discussed as a prospect project. Charles Price, Code Enforcement Officer for the Rome-Floyd County Building Inspection Department, brought this property to Staff's attention. Photos of the exterior and interior show it to be in poor condition. After research, it was discovered that the property was recently bought by a construction company. LBA Staff and Building Inspection will work together to find both a solution and other potential projects to work on.

Progress continues to be made on the donation of 303 E. 20th Street (J15X153). The proper legal documents are in the process of being acquired. Attorney Richardson is completing a title search. Staff has not received any responses from the owners of adjacent vacant property. Updates will be given later.

Staff is currently working on setting up bids to perform general lot clearance/maintenance at 631 Pennington Avenue (I14Z059) and other LBA owned properties. The goal is to make the parcels look more presentable by removing brush, trash, etc. Staff will take inventory of the state of the LBA's lots. Updates will be given later.

Discussion Items:

Meeting schedules were discussed. The Program/Partnership Development Committee will meet on Monday March 27th at 8:30 AM. The Housing Development Committee will meet, to which the contractor is invited, sooner than expected to facilitate the process. The next regular Board meeting originally set for Friday, April 7th, will need to be rescheduled as it falls on a City holiday. Said meeting was tentatively rescheduled for Friday, April 14th at 8:30 AM but might be cancelled if there are no applications to review. Updates will be emailed later.

The National Land Bank Network announced the first ever Innovative Approach Award, which is designed to provide financial support for land banks through grant awards of up to \$25k per organization. The goal is to encourage land banks to explore new approaches to vacant, abandoned and disinvested (VAD) property stewardship and revitalization, with an explicit focus on addressing the broader issues affecting neighbors/neighborhoods. Applications are due March 14th with applicants being selected in April. A list of various criteria must be met. The LBA is going to apply with a writeup of the already existing RFLBA Neighborhood Vitality Beautification Grant. While the grant will be competitive, all agreed that the LBA has a good chance. Updates will be given later.

Fox and Carter will be attending the National Land Bank Conference in October of this year. The others were invited to attend.

Property Purchase Requests

Entering Executive Session was unnecessary for the following requests. The following applications were presented for property acquisition through the LBA. After discussion, the outcome is listed as follows:

- **712 E. Boundary Street (J14O314)**

The Board reviewed an application submitted for the purchase of a vacant, wooded lot located at 712 E. Boundary Street. Taylor and Clarisse Reese made an offer of \$7,500 for parcel J14O314. The Reese's plan to purchase this lot, along with two adjacent parcels, for personal residence. They want to

put a mobile home on the lot. The Rome-Floyd Planning Department confirmed with them that the parcel is grandfathered in so they are allowed to have a mobile home. After discussion on whether their current plans fit in with the LBA's vision, the Board acted as follows:

- Brock moved to deny the Reese's offer of \$7,500 for parcel J140314, because the LBA already cleared the title with the intention of planning future development, refund their application fee, and discuss alternative solutions to land/home buying with them, which was seconded by David Clonts. Motion carried.

- **254A Bunratty Way (N11065)**

The Board reviewed an application submitted for the purchase of a vacant, wooded lot located at 254A Bunratty Way. Daniel E. Stafford made an offer of \$16,875 for parcel N11065. Stafford is the adjacent property owner of 254B Bunratty Way (N11065B). Both properties were originally one parcel of land. Since the features and layout of the land requires both properties to build a home, Stafford plans to combine them again. While the County has previously rejected offers for land in this area before, they have indicated they would convey this particular parcel due to the applicant being an adjacent property owner. Stafford understands that the County will not be responsible for maintaining the road. After discussion, the Board acted as follows:

- Brock moved to accept Stafford's offer of \$16,875 for parcel N11065, subject to conveyance from Floyd County, which was seconded by Davis. Motion carried.

Other Business:

The next regular meeting is tentatively scheduled for **Friday, April 14, 2023, at 8:30 AM**. A confirmation email will be sent out later.

Discussion was had on how the LBA can help those in the community who are on the pathway to homeownership. The LBA could direct people to various preexisting organizations/programs such as the Georgia Dream Homeownership Program or the Appalachian Housing Counseling Agency (AHCA). The LBA could partner with the latter who offers homebuyer education workshops. Davis explained how the financial literacy program he offers for adults through the Boys & Girls Clubs of Northwest Georgia covers homeownership as one of its sessions. Staff invited Davis to present his program to the Program Development/Partnership Committee. Staff will reach out to these respective parties and updates will be given later.

There being no further business to discuss, Ware made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by J.R. Davis. The meeting was adjourned at 9:58 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Logan Drake, Recording Secretary