



Rome/Floyd Land Bank Authority Minutes

Friday, August 4, 2023

8:30 AM

Carnegie Building Training Room

Authority Members Present:

LaDonna Collins

Rob Ware

David Mathis

David Clonts

Harry Brock

J.R. Davis

Others:

Meredith Ulmer - City - Assistant City Manager

Dylan Nelson - City - Finance - Senior Accountant

Joe Smith - City - City Clerk

Kevin Payne - County - Tax Commissioner

Bruce Ivey - County - Special Projects Manager

Jamie McCord - County - County Manager

Sherrell Smith - Realtor (Guest)

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 June minutes. Rob Ware motioned to approve the minutes, which was seconded by LaDonna Collins. Motion carried.

Financial Report:

The financial report was distributed for review and presented by Dylan Nelson. He presented the following: active properties, the cash balance as of July 31st and the 2018-2023 YTD property taxes collected.

Property Updates:

At the previous meeting, the Board approved a purchase offer for 0 Payne Avenue (H13P200). The attorney is working on some issues with the title. A closing will be scheduled once the transfer is complete.

The donation of the burned-out home at 303 E. 20th Street (J15X153) has been completed. Recording took place the day before. Paperwork has been signed. Jamie McCord confirmed that the County will demo the home soon. Everyone was appreciative of the County helping out. A discussion about property owner resolution was had. This is the first property the LBA has taken in that has back taxes owed. The property could not be foreclosed on and was thus in limbo for several years. The owner was finally able to donate the property after the LBA worked with bankruptcy court to have it released. A formal request to extinguish said taxes will need to be made. A letter will be sent to the Rome City Schools Superintendent informing him of the process being carried out pursuant to Georgia law. He has 30 days to voice any concerns after which the LBA

can pass a resolution and send a letter of request to Kevin Payne. Some LBAs create a blanket written agreement with their school board(s) that the latter does not have to be notified if the taxes are below a certain amount. A formal decision on drafting an agreement will be made in the future.

There was a continued discussion on obtaining the following parcels adjacent to 303 E. 20th Street: 305 E. 20th Street (J15X152), 307 E. 20th Street (J15X151), and 309 E. 20th Street (J15X150). The owner has agreed to sell parcels J15X152, J15X151, and J15X150 to the LBA for a total amount of \$5,832.00. A contract has been signed and sent over to Attorney William Richardson, who is working on clearing one of the titles. All agreed to work on getting the properties cleared and receiving some estimates. Staff will contact Eddie Burk to, at minimum, mark the lot corners. Discussion was had on what type of housing to put on the lots. While the location is probably not right for a pocket neighborhood, the goal is still to create one elsewhere. Individual houses would be a better fit. McCord stated that he would look into the County grubbing the lots. Regarding 311 E. 20th Street (J15X149), Staff is going to reach back out to the one owner, out of four siblings, who has responded to see if they would reconsider selling to the LBA. After discussion, the Board acted as follows:

- David Clonts motioned to make an offer of \$3,000 for the acquisition of parcel J15X149, negotiable up to \$5,000, which was seconded by Harry Brock. Motion carried.

Staff provided updates on 0 Billy Pyle Road (H13Y678), where the City will retain a 40-foot strip. The Rome Engineering Services Department has agreed to complete the survey work but will not be able to do so for possibly three more months. Once that is done, the City can transfer the property to the LBA and then to the buyer.

Staff provided new build updates regarding 1 Orchid Place (J14O113) and 7 Forsyth Street (J13J165). Orchid Place should be finished in 35-40 days. The unexpected issues at Forsyth Street are being handled. The build should be finished by the end of October. At the most recent Housing Development Committee meeting, some expressed interest in having a crawl space instead of a slab foundation for futures houses. After speaking with the builder, the following changes will be made to 7 Forsyth: switch a slab foundation out with a crawl space, slightly extend the footage to accommodate a half-bath and have the porch wrap around both corners. Going forward with future builds, the LBA and Housing Development Committee can explore various changes/options.

Jett Law Group is almost done with clearing title on the following properties: 411 Superba Avenue, 0 Spring Creek Street, 2 Blacks Bluff Road, and Line Street. They have produced quality work and the LBA is open to working with them again. Updates will be given later.

Executive Session (Closed)/Action Items:

Ware motioned to enter Executive Session, which was seconded by Brock. Motion carried. Consequently, Joe Smith and Sherrell Smith left. Discussion was had on the donation of a property, one application presented for property acquisition through the LBA, one home build and one possible sale. Ware motioned to exit Executive Session and return to open meeting, which was seconded by Brock. Motion carried. Sherrell Smith re-joined the meeting. The outcomes are listed as follows:

- **216 E. 20th Street (J15X204)**

In June, the Board approved donating the property located at 216 E. 20th Street (J15X204) to Trails for Recreation and Economic Development of Rome/Floyd Co. (TRED) with a \$2,000 cap toward maintenance. Since then, an alternative option has been brought to Staff's attention. The idea is to transfer the lot to the City instead of TRED. This way, the City could help maintain the lot, whereas

they could not if it were TRED-owned. After discussing the matter at the Housing Development Committee meeting, TRED supported the idea. All other aspects of the project would remain the same with it then being a City-LBA-TRED partnership. The \$2,000 would still go into the park. The lot has been cleared and fence torn down. This alternative option would require a new motion. After discussion, the Board acted as follows:

- Brock motioned to transfer the title to the City instead of TRED as previously motioned, work with both entities on the project as time goes on and have up to \$2,000 set aside for any items or improvements to the area, which was seconded by J.R. Davis. Motion carried.

- **315 Howell Road (J13J207)/Eagle Park (J13J206)**

The Board reviewed an application submitted by John Mayes to purchase a 30-foot strip of land adjacent to his Pro Systems Clean Care business located at 315 Howell Road (J13J207). The land in question is currently owned by the City of Rome and located right next to the fence line of the City of Rome park, Eagle Park (J13J206). Mayes would use the land for additional parking for his business and has already completed the survey work. The Rome City Commission approved to transfer this portion of property to the Rome/Floyd Land Bank Authority for disposition through the Land Bank's normal process. After discussion, the Board acted as follows:

- Brock motioned to accept the \$1,500 offer made by John Mayes for the 30-foot strip of land in between the Eagle Park fence line and parking lot of his business, which was seconded by Clonts. Motion carried.

- **1 Orchid Place (J14O113)**

Staff sought guidance regarding 1 Orchid Place. What is decided for Orchid will be the model for future houses. An appraisal is likely unnecessary as the LBA could set the prices by having a broker run a report where recent sale comparable can be used. Since the LBA will sell at market value, a downpayment program should be developed in order to help buyers qualify to purchase the home through their lender. Realtor representation of the Land Bank is not needed at this time, but a flat fee/finder's fee could be paid to any realtor that presents a buyer that meets the requirements imposed. Household income will not be capped but the home must be owner occupied for ten years. If that does not happen, the person will have to pay a portion of the funds back. Staff will find out what the total construction cost will be soon. The house will likely be posted for sale in the \$200-210k range. After discussion, the Board decided to table the decision until September.

- **312 Kingston Avenue (J13I105)**

Staff sought guidance regarding the possibility of selling 312 Kingston Avenue. A for-sale sign was put up and some individuals/developers have expressed interest. Fox recommended setting a price and taking applications. The purchase agreement would have certain written requirements. It would reference a separate developer agreement that would survive closing. Whoever makes an offer would need to show they have the finances on hand to make all the needed repairs and bring it up to code, provide any examples of previous projects they have completed, and commit to implementing a plan/timeline. Everyone understood this home would be an investment rather than immediately owner-occupied. A reversionary clause would help. If one were to do what was originally intended for the house, the LBA's mission would still be fulfilled. After discussion, the Board acted as follows:

- Brock motioned to set the asking price for 312 Kingston Avenue at \$30,000, and to work out the details in the agreement, which was seconded by Clonts. Motion carried.

Other Business:

Collins gave an update on the Program/Partnership Development Committee, which met on July 24th. On August 31st, Committee members will walk the E. 20th Street neighborhood and ask community members what they are thinking and feeling. They want people to be aware of upcoming projects so they can receive honest feedback. They hope to speak with a couple of churches in the area as well. Napoleon Fielder, who will soon become a new committee member, is going to walk as well. All agreed he will be an asset to the Committee. Communication and the upcoming Neighborhood Grant will benefit all involved.

J.R. Davis thanked the Board for their support of the Financial Literacy Program offered at the Boys and Girls Club. A photo was taken with Davis.

The Madison, GA discussion and group photo were both pushed back to the next regular meeting, which is scheduled for **Friday, September 1, 2023, at 8:30 AM.**

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 9:53 AM.

Respectfully submitted,



Logan Drake
Recording Secretary