



BUFFALO ERIE NIAGARA LAND IMPROVEMENT CORPORATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
January 19th, 2023 – 1:00 PM
Brisbane Building Conference Room 521
403 Main St. Suite 602
Buffalo, New York 14203

Call to Order by Board Chair, Brendan Mehaffy

ATTENDANCE:

Board Members Present: Brendan Mehaffy, Scott Bylewski, Daniel Castle,
Jeremy Toth, Delano Dowell, Catherine Amdur

Board Members *Excused*: Cavette Chambers, William Reece, Karen Utz, O.J.
McFoy

Board Members *Absent*: Deborah Skulski-Wakelam

BENLIC Counsel Present: John Sidd (remotely)

BENLIC Staff: Jocelyn Gordon, Marjorie McAllister, Benjamin Brown,
Matthew Azzano

HAND OUTS:

Agenda; Minutes of December 2022 Board Meeting; December 2022 Treasurer's Reports; Resolution #2023-01; Resolution #2023-02

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Roll Call

2. Approval of December 2022 Minutes:

The minutes of the December 15th, 2022, Board of Directors Meeting were presented and reviewed.

A motion to approve was made by Catherine Amdur, seconded by Daniel Castle, and unanimously carried as approved.

3. Treasurer's Reports:

Executive Director, Jocelyn Gordon, presented the December 2022 Treasurer's Reports. As of December 30th, 2022, the Corporation's bank balance was \$3,045,571.78.

A motion to approve was made by Scott Bylewski, seconded by Catherine Amdur, and unanimously carried as approved.

4. **Resolution #2023-1** Request that the Erie County Director of Real Property Tax Services and the County Attorney include the 2023 Request for Foreclosure properties in Erie County In Rem 171

The bulk of BENLIC's acquisitions come from municipalities across Erie County via the annual Request for Foreclosure (RFF) process. Every municipality in the county is invited to submit a list of vacant and abandoned tax-delinquent properties that it desires BENLIC to acquire for rehabilitation/reuse. These tax-delinquent properties are foreclosed and then acquired at auction according to the procedures outlined in the Rules and Procedures of the Corporation.

Out of 46 properties submitted by municipalities, 43 have been recommended for approval by BENLIC staff. 36 are houses and 7 are vacant lots. These properties were submitted by the Town of Amherst, Town of Cheektowaga, Town of Eden, Village of Angola, Village of Sloan, and Village of Lancaster, and the Village of North Collins.

BENLIC is requesting that the Board approve the submission of this list of potential property acquisitions for further approval.

Daniel Castle requested that the title of the resolution be changed to clarify that the properties were being submitted to the Department of Real Property, rather than directly to the legislature. A motion to amend the title of the item was made by Jeremy Toth, seconded by Daniel Castle, and unanimously carried as approved.

A motion to approve was made by Scott Bylewski, seconded by Jeremy Toth, and unanimously

carried as approved.

5. **Resolution #2023-2 Approval to Amend Procurement Policy**

BENLIC's procurement policy defines the level of approval needed before purchasing any commodities, equipment, goods or awarding construction, demolition, renovation and reconstruction contracts. Formerly, any procurement worth \$10,000 or more required a resolution to be brought to the board for approval. This requirement has resulted in some delays in rehabilitation efforts, especially because of increased construction costs post-COVID. For example, a new roof typically costs at least \$25,000. If the procurement limit before Board approval were raised to \$35,000, BENLIC would be able to more efficiently stabilize and rehabilitate its properties.

BENLIC is hereby requesting that the Board approve amending the procurement policy and raise the minimum needed for Board approval to \$35,000.

A motion to approve the municipal transfer was made by Catherine Amdur, seconded by Daniel Castle, and unanimously carried as approved.

DISPOSITIONS:

6. **Resolution #2023-3 Disposition of 95 Grote, Buffalo**

95 Grote was acquired from the City of Buffalo in 2020. The property has been stabilized by BENLIC---including a new roof in 2022. BENLIC's goal for the property was to dispose of it to an owner-occupier who would complete the necessary renovations. These renovations are estimated to cost over \$100,000 by property inspector John Good.

Three cash offers were received for the property, however none of the offerors had funds BENLIC Board and Staff deemed sufficient to complete the rehabilitation. All three of the offerors declined to pursue financing or utilize a loan offered by Home Headquarters, a BENLIC partner. As such, BENLIC is requesting permission to dispose of the house to an offeror pending more information on their finances and home-improvement experience.

A motion to amend the item and include an owner-occupancy requirement in the contract was made by Scott Bylewski, seconded by Jeremy Toth, and unanimously carried as approved.

A motion to authorize BENLIC Staff to dispose of 95 Grote to any offeror who was able to successfully respond to additional information requests made by BENLIC was made by Scott Bylewski, seconded by Jerermy Toth, and unanimously carried as approved.

7. **Executive Director's Report:**

Executive Director Jocelyn Gordon informed the Board that the Corporation has signed a letter of engagement with Drescher and Malecki that will initiate the 2023 annual audit.

A job offer has been posted for the Program Manager position. BENLIC staff will begin conducting interviews with applicants later this month.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Daniel Castle, seconded by Scott Bylewski, and unanimously carried as approved.

NEXT MEETING: Board of Directors – February 16th, 2023, 1:00 p.m.

Location: Brisbane Building Conference Room 521, 403 Main St. Suite 602, Buffalo, New York 14203

Recorded by: Matthew Azzano, BENLIC Staff

Submitted for Approval: Jocelyn Gordon, Executive Director

Adopted by BENLIC Board Members on _____