Omaha Municipal Land Bank Board

MINUTES

Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Regular Meeting:
9:00 AM, Jesse Lowe Conference Room – 3rd Floor
Omaha/Douglas Civic Center
1819 Farnam Street

Meeting Minutes: This document states the minutes before the Omaha Municipal Land Bank Board at their Public Hearing and Administrative meeting held on Wednesday, September 9, 2015.

Certification of Publication: Omaha Municipal Land Bank Board Administrator certifies publication of this agenda in the Daily Record, the official newspaper of the City of Omaha on Wednesday, September 2, 2015.

Members Present: Tom McLeay, Chairman
Jamie Berglund, Vice Chair (arrived at 9:09)
Ken Johnson
Scott Semrad
John Heine
Mike Riedmann
Julia Plucker
Julie Stavneak
James Thele, Planning Director (arrived late)

Members Not Present: Cathy Lang
Randy Lenhoff
Diane Battiato

Staff Present: Jennifer Taylor, City Law Department
Debbie Hightower, Recording Secretary
**PUBLIC MEETING:**

Tom McLeay, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:09am, introduced the voting and non-voting board members, as well as the City staff. He stated that the Nebraska Open Meetings Law is in effect and a copy is available in the room for review. He further stated that copies of the agenda are located in the back of the room. McLeay explained the procedures of the meeting.

Roll call was taken with 8 board members present (James Thele arrived late; Cathy Lang, Randy Lenhoff and Diane Battiato were absent).

McLeay informed the public that a notice of the meeting was published in the Daily Record on September 2, 2015 and was verified by Debbie Hightower, Recording Secretary.

Motion by Jamie Berglund to approve the minutes from the August 5 and August 12, 2015 meetings. Ken Johnson seconded the motion.

AYES: Berglund, Johnson, Semrad, McLeay

MOTION CARRIED: 4-0

McLeay provided information with regard to the proposal from the Center for Community Progress (CCP) as a facilitator for the strategic plan. The CCP indicated that they would be interested in providing on-going consulting and proposed up to 50 hours of assistance particularly for the Executive Director to be able to reach out and have the availability of the CCP. The CCP would also consult on the strategic plan process but were not interested in facilitating the strategic plan directly. He asked for further comments and a possible approval of the proposal from the CCP.

Berglund suggested finding a skilled strategic planning facilitator, regardless of their capacity with land banking, utilize the assistance from the CCP to provide the technical expertise and go into a contract with the CCP to provide the 50 hours of service for on-going issues related to land banking. Berglund indicated that she could identify a couple of different strategic planners but there would need to be consideration to the procurement process depending on the fee charged. She suggested using the City to RFP it out if the fee would be over $5,000.00.

McLeay questioned the timing of creating the strategic plan. Berglund stated it will realistically take a couple of months from start to finish to complete the plan but she was hopeful of a mid-October start date with completion by December.

Jennifer Taylor, Law Department, stated that the land bank has a $5,000.00 guideline but if the money being spent is not public money there would be no need for the RFP process. She concluded that the source of the funds will dictate the requirements.

McLeay suggested moving forward without any procurement or RFP but part of the strategic plan may include a procurement policy in the future. McLeay asked Berglund, along with Lang, to look into the selection of a strategic plan facilitator for an October meeting. Berglund suggested extending the October 14th board meeting for a strategic planning session.
Motion by Jamie Berglund to approve the “Scope of Consulting Services” agreement from the Center for Community Progress. Ken Johnson seconded the motion.

AYES: Berglund, Johnson, Semrad, McLeay
MOTION CARRIED: 4-0

McLeay provided a draft of the Daugherty grant which will be for each year for the next four years. The Daugherty Foundation requests that the grant agreement be executed by the land bank.

McLeay stated that a letter was recently received from the IRS confirming that the land bank received the 501(c)(3) designation which was immediately provided to the Daugherty Foundation.

Riedmann asked about the reference in the grant agreement with the regard to the grant being anonymous (Subset 5, Section 3) and whether it should be discussed publically. McLeay stated that it was explained to Mr. Wilson that the board is subject to the Open Meetings Act and are prohibitive to not discussing the grant in public before an open vote.

Motion by Ken Johnson to authorize the Chairman to sign the Daugherty Foundation grant agreement. Scott Semrad seconded the motion.

AYES: Berglund, Johnson, Semrad, McLeay
MOTION CARRIED: 4-0

McLeay stated that the budget was discussed with Heine and Lenhoff. Heine summarized that office space, computer, and benefits and salary were discussed. McLeay suggested that accounting services be retained through the end of calendar 2015 to assist Brittany Jefferson as she moves forward.

Motion by Jamie Berglund to authorize the Finance Committee to select an accountant for the remainder of 2015 and develop an RFP for 2016. Scott Semrad seconded the motion.

AYES: Berglund, Johnson, Semrad, McLeay
MOTION CARRIED: 4-0

McLeay discussed banking and expenditure authorizations. Berglund confirmed that any expenditure between $1,000.00 and $5,000.00 requires two signatures and anything less than $1,000.00 requires one signature. McLeay suggested that there be two signatures for all checks. Berglund suggested that a credit card be obtained for the Executive Director to make small purchases and business expenses that can be approved and reimbursed. Berglund stated that the Executive Director should be authorized and have the oversight to spend an appropriate amount of money each month. McLeay stated that Lenhoff suggested reimbursing the Executive Director with out-of-pocket expenses on a monthly basis versus an open credit card. In response to Stavneak and Johnson, Riedmann stated that it would be common for an office supply company to extend credit with a monthly billing statement. Riedmann recommended turning the
financial issues over to the accounting firm on a temporary basis but any out-of-pocket expenses should be covered by the Executive Director herself with an expense report submitted monthly to be audited and reimbursed. Heine agreed.

Berglund stated that the Executive Director On-Boarding Committee welcomed Jefferson to Omaha in August. A list of individuals was created for her to meet and the board was encouraged to submit their own contacts that need to make a relationship with Jefferson. Other issues discussed were an e-mail and URL address and GIS housed within the website for property inventory.

Heine discussed office space for the land bank and suggested a six month short-term lease with Regis in the Landmarks Building on the east side of 13th Street between Farnam and Harney. The office space amenities include a furnished office, phone system, receptionist, internet, security, cleaning, copy room, mail service and free parking. A board room is also available and can be rented for $250.00 per day. Jefferson can move into a 106 square foot office with a window and can upsize to a larger office, if needed. The proposed cost is $650.00 per month for all services with a six month lease but by January 1, 2016 there would need to be a notice to stay or leave.

Motion by Ken Johnson to approve the rental space for the Executive Director. Jamie Berglund seconded the motion.

AYES: Berglund, Johnson, Semrad, McLeay  
MOTION CARRIED: 4-0

Berglund stated that she plans on spending time with Jefferson on Monday, September 14, 2015. McLeay and Heine agreed to meet with Jefferson at the new office. Berglund suggested contacting P & L Technology for set up and IT support. Taylor, City Law, suggested using Dot Comm in the long term especially with a tie into the GIS system.

Taylor, City Law, advised that the Mayor issued an executive order that all boards/commissions/authorities provide minutes to the Mayor’s office as well as the City Council. Hightower confirmed that the minutes are sent to Joel Cota in the Mayor’s office.

Cota, Mayor’s Office, stated that the minutes are forwarded to the Mayor when they are received. He also stated that he has been seeking qualified financial candidates in South Omaha to replace the vacancy on the board. Plucker stated that there may be legislation addressing the issue of expanding industry parameters when the next session starts in January 2016.

There were no other public comments.

It was the consensus of the Board to adjourn the meeting at 10:12am.

Debbie Hightower, Planning Department  
Recording Secretary