



Pittsburgh Land Bank [PLB] Minutes

March 8, 2019

Convene: Chair called meeting to order.

Roll Call: Administrator called the Roll. Members Present: Reverend Burgess, Chair, Jamil Bey, Vice-Chair, Diamonte Walker, Secretary Paul Leger, Treasurer, Senator Fontana, Councilwoman Kail-Smith, Councilman Lavelle, Steve Mazza.

Public Comment:

There was no public comment and the Chair proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

Approval of February 2019 Minutes:

The Board reviewed the February 2019 meeting minutes.

◇ Motion to approve the February 2019 Board meeting minutes without correction [**Leger/Fontana**] Passed Unanimously.

Chairman's Report:

The Chair updated the Board and public on the search for a second full-time position – the PLB Coordinator, and reviewed the coordinated PLB/URA hiring process. The Executive Committee will receive the top 3 candidates in ranked order and make the final decision. Director Davidson informed the board that over 50 resumes have been received and the search was still open.

Legal Counsel, Irene Clark, provided a report on her findings of additional public comment options for PLB board meetings. Specifically, given the requirement to provide sufficient notice for members of the public to speak on stated agenda items, public comment should be kept at the beginning of meetings. There is nothing preventing the PLB Board from adding additional comment periods at the end of meetings. The recommendation is that there would need to be rules around any new process to ensure fairness. The Board discussed the desire to provide opportunity for the public to speak on issues unrelated to the stated agenda and would like to explore holding issue-specific special meetings or hearings in the future as warranted. Board Chair will keep the process as-is unless there is more formal requests made to add comment periods from fellow Board members.

Treasurer Leger reviewed the staff recommendation from Director Davidson to enter into a contract with the URA's independent insurance advisor for 12 months. This technical assistance contract would have an adviser on retainer for all of the PLB's start-up and evolving insurance needs in its pilot year. The first major step is to issue an Request for Bids from several brokerages and then select initial insurance underwriters.

SMazza asked if the Board would have the opportunity to vote on the final recommended underwriters. Counsel acknowledged the Board would take this action as this is a contract with a financial implication, so Board action is required.

◇ Motion to enter into a 12-month, \$6,000 contract with Bailey Raabe & Associates. **[Leger/Walker]** Passed Unanimously.

Administrator's Report:

Dir. Davidson provided an update on the PLB's inventory acquisition pipeline and next steps, including the Property Reserve Modernization. The PLB will formally assume the role of managing the Pittsburgh Property Reserve beginning on January 1, 2020. Board asked if state or local legislation would need to be amended or enacted to implement changes to the existing system. As the PLB is independent, it will determine the policies that govern the new system without needing local or state legislative action.

Counsel Clark introduced the Board to the new partnership with the Duquesne University Law Clinic regarding current 2 and 3L law students conducting title research at the request of the PLB. Member Kail-Smith expressed her support and provided another potential partnership recommendation at the University of Pittsburgh Law School.

Nominations Committee:

The Nominations Committee completed its interviews and formally recommended Wanda Wilson to fill the vacant PLB Board seat. Ms. Wilson is a resident of Greenfield in City Council District 8 and Executive Director of the Oakland Planning & Development Corporation. Ms. Wilson accepted this nomination via email to staff.

◇ Motion to appoint Wanda Wilson to a 3-year term on the PLB Board. **[Walker/Bey]** Passed Unanimously.

Staff will provide an orientation to Ms. Wilson and her first PLB Board meeting will be April 12, 2019.

Finance & Fundraising Report:

Staff introduced the Finance Report, and noted there were no February expenditures.

The Treasurer updated the Board on the status of the 2017 and 2018 audits. The PLB has been determined to be a component unit of the City of Pittsburgh, and as such, the PLB's financial statements will be included in the City's CAFR. Both the 2017 and 2018 audits will be presented to the PLB Board for their acceptance at the April 2019 monthly Board meeting.

The Board requested staff to provide the auditor's contact info to them so they have the opportunity to have any conversations they may deem necessary, and to provide the auditor with the contact info of the rest of the board, beyond the Treasurer and Legal Counsel, in case they would like to reach out.

The Board discussed the need to engage in fundraising beginning this quarter, so that any requests or public agencies may be made during their budget cycles, including most importantly, the City of Pittsburgh Operating Budget and the Housing Opportunity Fund. The Chair expressed a preference to fund PLB Operations through public funds, and to look at private funding sources (corporate and community foundations, eg) for soft funds for programming. Staff will set up meetings to begin these discussions, as well as arrange initial informational meetings with local foundations.

◇ Motion to accept the financial report. **[Bey/Mazza]** Passed Unanimously.

Communications Committee:

Committee Chair Dr. Bey reviewed the work of the Communications Committee with the newly contract web designer. The goal is to have a new website launched by mid-May. Member Kail-Smith thanked the committee for all of their work.

Legislative Update:

The Board discussed the recent meet & greet with state elected officials and/or their representatives. Dir. Davidson thanked Senator Fontana for the support and guidance, and lending his staff to assist with the event. Senator Fontana suggested following up with attendees and distributing contact information to the Board.

Member Kail-Smith mentioned the new legislation introduced by Representative DeLuca on Bank and Bank-owned inventories. Member Lavelle informed the Board that the City of Pittsburgh has a local ordinance in place, which has not been fully implemented. Interested Board members will follow-up on their own with the Department of Permits, Licenses, and Inspections.

New Business:

Chair Burgess reminded the Board and public that the PLB is the only land bank in Pennsylvania with a state elected official on its Board of Directors and expressed his official personal note of thanks to Senator Fontana. Member Kail-Smith echoed the Chairs sentiments.

Adjournment:

There was no more business and the Chair called for adjournment.

◇ Motion to adjourn. **[Walker/Leger]** Passed unanimously.