

Jonesboro Land Bank Commission
Minutes for Tuesday, April 12, 2022
City Council Chambers, 300 South Church Street, Jonesboro, AR

Note: We will follow guidelines for public meetings per the Arkansas Department of Health.

1. Roll Call

Present: Jeffrey Herndon, James Hollywood, Jay McLeod, Corey Mills, Dennis Zolper, Drew Waddell, Monica Percy/Planning Gabe Roberts

Absent: Amanda Eaton, Bob Warner

Acting Chair James Hollywood told the commission that Dr. Warner is in emergency surgery and that he asked the commission to excuse his absence.

2. Finding of a quorum

Acting Chair Hollywood ascertained there was a quorum.

3. Approval of Minutes

A. March 8, 2022 – no corrections or discussion

A motion was made by Dennis Zolper to approve the minutes, seconded by Jeffrey Herndon. The motion PASSED unanimously.

4. Old Business

A. 700 Cate Avenue Donation

- I. Title Search
- II. Donation Application

Also known as the Ice House property, per Planning's Monica Percy, STAFF has done a title search on the property at 700 Cate Avenue and have received it back. On the handout provided to the commission, titled "TBD Commitment", on page 2, items 7 & 8 – are the two liens on the property. One is from the City of Jonesboro Code Enforcement and the second is from Christian Contractors. The City Attorney's office will have more information on what would need to be done on those, probably by the next meeting.

COMMISSION: Chair Hollywood asked for any questions related to the 700 Cate Avenue donation. Dennis Zolper asked if it had been determined if the owners are still living.

STAFF: Monica Percy said they are living. Monica has reached out to the property owner and the owner has agreed to donate. She has been sent the donation application for completion.

She is currently in the process of selling some other property and said once she's finished with that, she will complete the donation application and return it.

COMMISSION: Dennis Zolper asked about "the trust" . . (inaudible) . . if there is a trustee. He asked if it's been determined if there is a trustee or if the trust is still viable.

STAFF: Monica Percy said as far as she knows the trust is still viable and she will get additional information from the owner.

COMMISSION: Dennis Zolper said it looks like there are going to be some requirements of the trustee before it can be sold. Chair Hollywood asked if STAFF would be working with Ms. Heather (Owens with City Attorney's office).

STAFF: Responded yes. Planning Director Derrel Smith said Heather is still working on this. This was brought before the commission today for their information but Heather is still working on it now and hopefully will get everything ready to go. There is still concern about the second lien. The city lien is no problem but the other lien – if they will not release it, we don't want the property, so we still have to find out about that.

COMMISSION: Jay McLeod said he was assuming they are talking about both lots, front and back.

STAFF: Derrel Smith responded yes.

COMMISSION: Dennis Zolper said he thinks they only have 15 months in which to file a lawsuit to protect the lien, so it might work out this time.

STAFF: Derrel Smith said we got the title search and sent it over to City Attorney Carol Duncan and Heather Owens' office. Heather has been working on it but she's been in court almost every day recently so as soon as she gets enough time, she'll prepare a report that can be given to commissioners to let them know what the situation will be.

COMMISSION: Mr. Zolper thanked Derrel Smith. Chair Hollywood asked if there were any other questions.

B. Burlington Northern Owned Property
I. Title Search & update

STAFF: Monica Percy said the map provided to commissioners shows the properties owned by the railroad. We might potentially be interested in the lot along North Bridge and the other

one on North Drake. That's something that will need to be discussed and see if we would be interested in seeing if they would be willing to donate or if we would want to purchase.

COMMISSION: Chair Hollywood asked the commission for their thoughts. Dennis Zolper suggested we contact them and see if there is an interest on their part. He would think these two lots in question would be unimportant to the railroad at those locations and suggests the commission ask Monica Percy or the City Attorney, whichever is deemed best, to reach out. Chair Hollywood asked to entertain motions for a vote to proceed in pursuing with a donation or to have a conversation with Burlington-Northern. Jeffrey McLeod made a motion that the City Attorney's office or Planning's Monica Percy reach out to Burlington-Northern, first about a potential donation, and then if they're not willing to donate, commission could revisit and re-discuss. It was seconded by Dennis Zolper. Chair Hollywood asked for discussion. Jeffrey Herndon asked if the commission was sure they are interested in both properties. (Someone) responded that the City already has property on both streets, so the answer is yes. The motion PASSED unanimously.

C. 105 North Drake

STAFF: Planning's Monica Percy had spoken with Ms. Hildebrand one day earlier. This property has been donated, however, there is still an individual living at the property, believed to be her niece. The owner came to Monica with a concern about a date to have her niece move out. She wanted something official. Monica wanted to come before the Land Bank Commission and see if they have a certain date in mind or how they wanted to proceed.

COMMISSION: Dennis Zolper suggested they might give the tenant 30 days. Chair Hollywood said he was thinking to be a little more lenient and say 60 days. Mr. Zolper agreed that 60 days was fine with him also since nothing is being done with the property right now. Dennis Zolper made a motion that she be given 60 days to move out. Gabe Roberts suggested 45 days, as that would give her until the end of May and it might be easier to find a place starting fresh on June 1 than on June 15th. Chair Hollywood agreed that would be better than 30 days. Gabe Roberts made a motion to give the tenant 45 days' notice prior to the commission moving forward with action and Dennis Zolper seconded. The motion PASSED unanimously.

5. New Business

A. New Members Appointed

COMMISSION: Acting Chair Hollywood apologized for not introducing new members at the beginning of the meeting, to have the existing board members introduce themselves, and allow the newly appointed commissioners to be able to introduce themselves.

James Hollywood – Vice Chair for the Land Bank Commission has served four years as one of the co-founding members of the Land Bank

Jeff Herndon – has been serving for four years on the Land Bank Commission

Corey Mills – also has been serving for four years on the commission

Jay McLeod – has been serving on the commission since approximately August of 2020

Drew Waddell – said he is brand new and thanked Gabe Roberts to helping him get started on about a year ago. He said he’s excited to be here.

Dennis Zolper – has been on the Land Bank Commission since its inception. His occupation is an attorney.

Gabe Roberts – also started on the Land Bank Commission in 2020 and his occupation is banker.

Chair Hollywood asked that STAFF introduce themselves & their role for the City of Jonesboro.

STAFF:

Derrel Smith - Director of Planning & Zoning, also with the Land Bank.

Monica Percy – Secretary for the Land Bank and Senior Planner in the City’s Planning & Zoning Department.

I. Bus Tour

COMMISSION: Chair Hollywood said the bus tour will be scheduled at a later date.

STAFF: Derrel Smith asked if there was a certain date they were looking at.

COMMISSION: Mr. Hollywood said within the next month or so. Jay McLeod asked if they might want to do it on the same day as their May meeting since they’ll all be there.

Acting Chair Hollywood said absent Chair Warner would need to get with the members of City Council to get their schedule, along with some other community leaders that would also be on the bus tour. New commissioner Drew Waddell asked for a description of the bus tour. Chair Hollywood explained that they would go throughout the city so Commissioners and other city leaders would be able to see some of the provisional sites of the city and have a better vision to plan ahead on areas of concentration to fight blight within the city. Chair Warner will need to follow up with the other council members and community leaders before a date can be set.

6. Public Comments (3 Minutes Per Person)

None

Acting Chair Hollywood had one announcement. He is resigning from the Land Bank Commission. He is no longer a resident of the City of Jonesboro. He said it has been a pleasure and an honor to work beside the other commissioners. He plans to work within communities across the state of Arkansas, the United States and international foreign relations. It has been his pleasure to work with the commission and the City of Jonesboro. He will be working with the Chair Warner and Mayor Copenhaver in the upcoming weeks on a new appointment for the commission. He encouraged the new members that they will enjoy serving. He thanked the commission.

7. Adjournment

Dennis Zolper made a motion to adjourn. The motion PASSED unanimously.