

**Blair County Housing Trust Fund (Act 137) Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
Blair County Courthouse BlueJeans Meeting Only
February 10, 2021**

Present: Jim Hudack, Melissa Gillin, Sergio Carmona, James Gehret, Donald Delozier, Scott Durbin, Lisa Hann, Commissioner Bruce Erb, Buddy Hann, Jean Cupp, Christina Stacey and Jennifer Kensinger

Board Members Absent: Cheryl Johns

Missy brought the meeting to order and asked for roll call.

Approval of Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the November 12, 2020 meeting and agenda were emailed to the Advisory Board members prior to today's meeting.

Lisa Hann made the motion to accept the minutes as presented. Scott Durbin seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Act 137 Account Balance

- Act 137 Account current balance, as of January 31, 2021, stands at \$556,835.95.
 - ❖ Committed funds total \$226,357.48 (Shelter, TeamEffort, Lead Abatement)
 - ❖ Uncommitted funds total \$330,478.47

Missy stated that the allowable 10% for administrative costs accrued in 2019/2020 still needs subtracted from that non-committed fund balance.

Blight/Demolition Fund Account Balance

- The Blight/Demolition Fund Account Balance, as of January 31, 2021, stands at \$102,412.76.
 - ❖ Unpaid, but committed funds total \$23,950.00.
 - ❖ Uncommitted funds total \$78,462.76

Program Updates

COVID19 Update

- Missy reported that the \$50,000 in funds used from the Affordable Housing Trust Fund to “house the homeless” in hotels and motels, during the outbreak of the pandemic, has been reimbursed by the Blair County CARES Act funding. That \$50,000 amount was included in the current Act 137 account balance.

First Time Home Buyer Program

- Sergio Carmona, Blair County Community Action Program (BCCAP) Executive Director, stated that there are no new applicants.
- Sergio reported that BCCAP had to hire new educational staff who will need training in the program.
- Sergio stated that they are reengaging with participants who have been on hold.

- In response to Don Delozier’s question asking if BCCAP partners with any local banks in regards to the 1st Time Home Buyers Program, Sergio answered that BCCAP is not able to promote any banks products over another bank due to strict guidelines through Housing and Urban Development (HUD), but bank representatives can present educational programs to participants without promoting any of their products.

Weatherization/Housing Rehab Program

- Sergio reported that BCCAP is in the process of reviewing the guidelines of the State’s deferral program. The application process will begin in a couple of weeks. BCCAP will have a contracted amount to use as needed which would be more expedient than using County funds. There are maximum limits. BCCAP will review to see if can use both the State and County programs simultaneously or one program versus the other. There is a possibility that the county weatherization program may need modified, depending on what Sergio Carmona learns after reviewing the state’s guidelines.

Homeless Shelter

- Lisa Hann, Family Services Executive Director, reported that the demolition of the Shelter is ahead of schedule. The ramp demo is complete. They are moving forward with the other required projects including remediation.
- Target date for completion is March 11, 2021, but may come in a little ahead of that date.
- Two contractor invoices were received to be paid: KLA: \$9,500 and Canfield: \$10,027.50
- Shelter Fund Balance stands at \$84,873.08.
- A \$200,000 loan with Reliance Bank has been signed. Reliance Bank Board Members approved 3.2 million dollar loan, but the paperwork has not been done yet.
- Last week, a team meeting was held with the engineers to establish the HVAC system, plumbing and electric. This week they are meeting to look at the interior design.

Other Programs:

Lead Abatement Program (Christina Stacey)

- Funds available: \$16,357.48
- Leveraged: \$148,820
- Assisted 9 households (21 individuals)

Blight/Demolition Fund

Missy reported that there are three (3) City of Altoona properties to be presented to the Board for approval:

Site Location	Total Cost	Requested
1530 2 nd St Altoona	\$8,000	\$4,000
1616 11 th St Altoona	\$13,819	\$7,319
1902 10 th St Altoona	\$13,000	\$6,500
TOTAL	\$34,819	\$17,819

Missy asked the Board for a motion to approve the three demolition projects so that they can be presented to the County Commissioners for approval.

Scott Durbin made a motion to approve the three demolition projects in the total amount of \$17,819.00. Donald Delozier seconded the motion. All present were in favor. Motion carried.

Update on Increasing County Fee for Recording of Deeds and Mortgages from \$7.50 to \$15.00:

Jim Hudack reported, since the last Advisory Board meeting, that he has had discussions with Commissioner Erb (and one other Commissioner) in regards to increasing the aforementioned fee. According to the collected data, especially the Demo Fund, Jim explained with every dollar the County invests that it is getting matched by about \$1.50. Jim stated, within the next month, the Department of Social Services will be moving forward with a formal request for the County Commissioners to increase the current fee of \$7.50 to \$15.00.

TEAMeffort

- Scott reported that he has spoken with members of Teameffort and that they are planning on coming to the area this summer to do light repair/construction jobs. Teameffort will be coordinating with area churches to identify those in need of their help. Jim Hudack asked for Scott to arrange a meeting with Teameffort members and Social Services to determine how they are going to bill and to discuss what outcomes need to be measured.

Next Steps

Furnace Repair or Replacement Proposal

- Sergio stated that this topic was covered in the weatherization portion of updates.

Landlord/Tenant Mediation Program

- Lisa Hann reported that the Landlord/Tenant Mediation Program had its first successful mediation. The tenant will be moving out, but they did reach a payment agreement. A follow-up will be completed within thirty (30) days. At this time, the program is still looking for eligible participants.

Future Projects to Consider:

Missy stated that she and Jim had discussed the need for affordable housing in the area, whether it consist of renovating and/or repurposing existing properties or constructing new, in the County and asked the Advisory Board members for their opinions on the subject. Lengthy discussion ensued. Scott Durbin stated renovation or new construction both come with their own set of challenges. Sergio commented that a property on Lexington was being looked at for senior housing, but it can't be moved forward on at this time. Jim Hudack stated that affordable housing would be beneficial to the County and that there would be other funding streams available, in addition to, the Affordable Housing Trust Funds. Jim asked Scott, Sergio and Don to come forward with any housing ideas for future discussions. Commissioner Erb commented that he would like to see the housing stock improve in the county and asked if there was any way to work with the City of Altoona to somehow utilize the narrow city lots for some type of micro-housing units. Sergio commented that the local Area Agency on Aging is looking into pre-fab modulars for senior housing to put on the narrow lots. Sergio stated a pilot project would be a tremendous step forward. Jim is to reach out to Rebecca Brown or Ken Decker to schedule a meeting to

discuss this possible initiative. In regards to senior housing, Don suggested talking to places like Home Nursing and Homewood to discuss next level of care in housing.

Jim Hudack answered two of Don Delozier's questions:

1. Would tax credits be possible for this project?

○ Answer: Anything is possible depending on criteria and ingenuity.

2. Does the Housing Trust Fund partner with Blair County Drug and Alcohol Program (BDAP) on any projects?

○ Answer: The Affordable Housing Trust Fund (AHTF) does not work with BDAP. The AHTF is the payers of the development of projects, as well as, initiators. Jim stated that BDAP recently got a large sum of funding for housing purposes.

Open Forum:

Scott stated that the food bank, located next to BCCAP, is up and running.

Missy thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, May 12, 2021** at 8:15am at Conference Room 4B. If COVID-19 restrictions are in place, the meeting may be held via Social Services' BlueJeans Account.