

**Blair County Affordable Housing Trust Fund (AHTF/Act 137) Advisory Board  
Meeting Minutes  
Blair County Courthouse: Conference Room 4B  
November 9, 2022**

**Present:** Jim Hudack, Buddy Hann, Scott Durbin, James Gehret, Christine Zernick, Jodi Williams, Wendy Melius, Trina Illig and Jennifer Kensinger

Jim Hudack welcomed everyone. Self-Introductions were made.

**Approval of Advisory Board Meeting Minutes**

The minutes of the August 10, 2022 meeting were emailed to the Advisory Board members prior to today’s meeting.

*James Gehret made the motion to accept the minutes as presented. Buddy Hann seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.*

**Public Comment:** *No public comments were made.*

Jim Hudack reviewed the AHTF Current Accounts as shown below:

**Act 137 Account Balance**

Affordable Housing Trust Fund (AHTF)	Emergency Shelter Committed Meeting 11/13/19	Team Effort Committed Meeting 2/9/22 Approved	Lead Committed Meeting 12/13/18	Owner Occupied Rehab Meeting 3/12/21	1 <sup>st</sup> Time Homebuyer Commissioner Meetings 4/5/22, 5/5/22, 5/12/22, 5/27/22	Sustainable Housing Program	TOTAL
Allocation	\$201,500	\$15,000	\$50,000	\$50,000 8/18/2022	\$3,000	\$150,000	
Paid Out as of 10/31/22	-\$1,500.00	\$0	-\$49,726.20	-\$12,001.24	\$12,000	\$0	
<b>Program Available BALANCE 10/31/22</b>	<b>\$200,000.00</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>	<b>\$273.80</b>	<b>\$37,998.76</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$150,000</b>	<b>\$421,961.25</b>

**AHTF Bank Statement Balance of 10/31/2022: \$621,988.18**

**AHTF Committed Pending Payments: \$421,961.25**

**AHTF Available Non-Committed Funds: \$200,026.93**

**Jim stated that the \$200,000 allocated to Family Services Emergency Shelter should be “going out the door” within the next month.**

## **Program Updates**

### *First Time Home Buyer Program*

- Jodi Williams stated, at this time, a staff member is working on getting certified to handle the First Time Home Buyer Program.

### *Weatherization/Housing Rehab Program*

- Jodi Williams stated that BCCAP is, currently, only using state funding for this program.
  - Wendy Melius, Executive Director of Center of Community Action (CCA), asked if this funding can be used for utilities. Jim Hudack answered that the weatherization program is mainly used for replacing/repairing roofs or furnaces. Currently, Blair County Community Action Program (BCCAP) is the agency that handles those funds. Wendy stated that they get referrals from First Energy for their weatherization program and could use the County funding. Jim asked for Wendy to compile information about their program to present at the next meeting in February 2023 so that the Board can further discuss whether to include CCA in the Weatherization program.

### *Homeless Shelter*

- Lisa Hann, Family Services Executive Director, was not in attendance, but emailed pictures of the newly constructed homeless shelter.
- Opening date is projected to be late November 2022.

## **Other Programs:**

### *Lead Abatement Program (Trina Illig)*

- Trina reported that Blair County has 12 lead abatement units that are being worked on.
- Trina stated that the lead assessment number has been lowered from 5 to 3, indicating if a child has an elevated lead level, which will lead to more positive diagnoses.
- Trina said that the state passed a “water-downed” health bill requiring children who are on Medicaid or some type of healthcare assistance to be tested for lead.
- Referrals are coming from pediatricians.
- Trina added that she received a \$50,000 allocation from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to use for her Lead Abatement Program. Another \$25,000 is available.
- Trina stated that the Blair County participates in the PA Lead-Free Promise Project, which has a resource guide. Wendy asked for a resource guide that she could get out to providers.
- Trina is also working with COBRAH (Blair County Housing Authority) to do risk assessments on rental units.
- Trina has talked with Children, Youth & Families (CYF) about doing lead risk assessments.

## Demo Fund Current Account

Demolition Fund Bank Statement 10/31/22	\$245,075.18
Demolition Projects Committed Not Paid	\$14,250.00
Demolition Program Funds Available Non-committed	\$230,825.18
Pending Board Approval	\$0.00

### *Blight/Demolition Fund*

- Missy included a list of approved demolitions in the agenda packet.
- No new demolition requests were made.
- One Outstanding Project: 424 West 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Williamsburg
- Jim Hudack stated that the County Maintenance staff will be going out in 2023 to look at properties that need to be disposed of.
- Currently, the Demo Fund is accumulating an average of \$10,000 a month.
- Municipalities are not applying for demo funds, possibly due to not wanting to take ownership of the property. Jim Hudack stated that perhaps the municipality could take conservatorship of the property. Trina questioned if Act 152 allows for conservatorship to demo a property. Jim stated that the County Solicitor would probably know that answer.

### *Owner Occupied Rehab – Trina Illig*

- Trina stated that the AHTF dollars that were awarded to her Owner Occupied Rehab are being used for properties that are not eligible for other program funding or if it's an emergency situation.

### *TEAMeffort – Scott Durbin*

- Scott stated in the Summer 2022, TEAMeffort had 550 campers (volunteers), stay in Blair County for six weeks to do light construction and/or repairs on local properties identified by area churches.
- Scott will attend a Commissioners' meeting in January 2023 to give a brief presentation on TEAMefforts' Summer of 2022 projects.
- ***Scott Durbin made a motion to recommend to the Commissioners to approve an allocation for up to \$15,000 in funds to TEAMeffort, for the Summer of 2023, to be used to buy materials to do light construction work for Blair County individuals in need. Buddy Hann seconded the motion. All present were in favor. Motion carried.***

## ***Sustainable Housing Program – Jim Hudack***

- Jim reported that the Sustainable Housing Program received four applications.
- Scott, Buddy and Don reviewed the applications with Missy Gillin. Jim did not sit in on the review process.
- Scott described the approval process for the applications stating that two applicants submitted all the required paperwork. Location of the property was also a factor.
- Approved Applicant 1: Cornerstone Builders for two properties: 1310 Washington Avenue, Tyrone and 612 Park Avenue, Tyrone
- Approved Applicant 2: Jack Levine & Associates LLC (A. Werstil Companies Affiliate) for an expansion of the existing Greenfield Commons housing community associated with address 113 Rush Drive, Claysburg. This project includes the development of two new duplexes (four total residential units).
- ***Jim Gehret made a motion to recommend to the Commissioners to approve an allocation of \$50,000 for Cornerstone Builders LLC to use to renovate two properties (1310 Washington Avenue, Tyrone and 612 Park Avenue, Tyrone), and an allocation of \$50,000 for Jack Levine & Associates LLC (A. Werstil Companies Affiliate) to use to develop two new duplexes (four total residential units), which would be an expansion of the existing Greenfield Commons housing community associated with address 113 Rush Drive, Claysburg. These funded projects would create affordable housing options in Blair County. Scott Durbin seconded the motion. Buddy Hann abstained. All others present were in favor. Motion carried.***

### **Next Steps:**

#### ***Emergency Repairs:***

- Scott Durbin stated that City of Altoona residents are getting hit with fines for code violations due to not having the money to do the repairs. Because of that, he would like to explore using the AHTF dollars to help Blair County homeowners with code violation repairs.
- Jim Hudack will make so inquiries to see if any other counties have such a program.
- Discussions will continue at future meetings.

Jim Hudack thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

### **Next Meeting:**

The next meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, February 8, 2023** at 8:15am in Conference Room 4B