



**DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOOD PROGRAMS**  
500 West Markham, Suite 120W  
Little Rock, AR 72201  
Phone (501) 371-6825 Fax (501) 399-3461  
www.littlerock.gov

## **Land Bank Commission Minutes**

**MEETING DATE:** November 20, 2019

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 PM by Commissioner Leta Anthony at Willie Hinton Neighborhood Resource Center.

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:**

Ken Wade  
Al. B. Moore

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:**

Juanita Dodd  
Mark Leggett  
Frances Frazier  
Leta Anthony  
Jennifer Herron  
Monique Sanders  
Karyn Coleman  
Angela Neal

**BOARD MEMBERS AND STAFF**

Ruby E. Dean  
Kevin Howard  
Director Joan Adcock

Dr. Stephanie Gardner, Provost & Chief Strategist for UAMS gave a presentation regarding the potential partnership with UAMS and their employees benefiting from the land bank properties. Dr. Gardner referenced the 2029 Vision and indicated that UAMS is exploring employer-assisted housing programs (forgivable loans, matching allowance, financial counseling, etc.) for recruiting/retention and to improve well-being of employees. Dr. Gardner also stated that an anonymous survey was sent to about 4,000 UAMS employees with salaries less than \$52,000 to gauge interest. Within a week 670 responses was received indicating that 76% was interested in the benefit for housing. The next steps are as follows:

- First Stakeholders meeting with Employer to include UAMS, ACH, Baptist, & UALR



- Forming Community Housing Coalition to include community members, stakeholders employer

The Committee had formulated the following list of questions for Dr. Gardner prior to the meeting. Dr. Gardner answered those inquiries throughout the presentation.

Questions are as follows:

1. What is the Hospital Commitment? The Hospital is very committed
2. What is the targeted population and guidelines?
3. Who are the stakeholders? UAMS, ACH, Baptist & UALR
4. Criteria for program-Collecting of information from Coalition and input from the Land Bank Commissioners
5. Length of time to reside in property – 5 years
6. Boundaries – 630 to Roosevelt, Broadway, and Fair Park
7. Monthly Updates-Will provide updates to Commissioner's
8. Land Bank Representative on Board- Yes, Director Adcock volunteered
9. Rehab for existing properties – Definitely yes
10. New lots/rehab properties – Both
11. Timeframe- Plans to put together over the next six months
12. Number of employees in targeted area, and will they be eligible for rehab dollars-still exploring
13. Implement some of Land Bank policies- Definitely

Commissioner Leggett inquired whether the benefits would include other hospital staff. Dr. Gardner indicated yes. Commissioner Leggett also inquired whether hospital or employers already owning property or already in a lease agreement benefit from the program. Dr. Gardner indicated they are possible looking at creating another entity or consortium to address these concerns.

Director Adcock asked whether UAMS had considered the Opportunity Zone funding. Dr. Gardner stated that she had only attended one meeting regarding the discussion of the Opportunity Zone and will explore further.

Commissioner Coleman inquired that in the event employees receive raises, what impact will this have on their eligibility. Dr. Gardner stated that the procedures and guidelines had not been finalized. Dr. Gardner agreed to continue with researching the process hence visiting with other states and will report by the Commissioners. Commissioner Anthony thanked Dr. Gardner and her staff for the presentation.

**DECLARATION OF QUORUM-QUORUM**

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

A motion to approve the Agenda was made by Commissioner Frances Frazier with correction of date change from October 15, 2019 to October 16, 2019, seconded by Commissioner Leggett, 7 ayes, zero nays, motion carried.

## **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion to approve October's minutes was made by Commissioner Mark Leggett and seconded by Commissioner Juanita Dodd 7 ayes, zero nays, motion carried.

### **Staff Reports was given by Ruby E. Dean**

Ruby Dean indicated that Victor Turner, HNP Director took a similar job in Fort Worth, TX, therefore, Kevin Howard was recently appointed Interim Director.

Laura McKinney resigned as Commissioner at Large, therefore we have a vacant position.

### **Financial Report was given by Ruby E. Dean**

Ruby Dean discussed the 79 properties remaining properties in the Land Bank Inventory (79 vacant lots with 5 structures)

A motion was made by Commissioner Mark Leggett to approve the financial report, seconded by Commissioner Karyn Coleman. 7 ayes 0 nays, motion carried.

## **Old Business**

- A. Land Bank Transfer Application-Friendship Education Foundation a nonprofit organization is requesting to transfer 9200 Adkins-Parcel # 450110000400- Offering \$9,600.00. The intended property will be at 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade middle school with a total enrollment of 750 students. The school, Friendship Academy Middle School expects to open by the year 2012-2022. The proposed development plan for the property will include new construction

Mr. Harris presented to the Commissioner's the proposal to build a Charter Middle School. Mr. Harris introduced his staff and other members present, in addition to updating the Commissioner's on the already existing Charter School in Arkansas and other states.

Friendship Education Foundation is a Little Rock based non-profit charter school management organization.

Director Adcock inquired as to whether the organization had contacted the Neighborhood Associations within the area. Mrs. Perry indicated that she had visited with a few of the Associations, and plans to attend a meeting on Monday, November 25, 2019. Director Adcock

stated that the organization visit with Planning and Development prior to the Board of Directors meeting. Director Adcock also suggested not voting until the Planning & Development Community provide input.

Commissioner Sanders inquired about the letter grade performance that the other schools received according to the State's guidelines and standard. Mr. Harris indicated that the school doesn't have a letter grade per the State's standard.

Commissioner Leggett inquired about the other parcels surrounding the Land Bank's parcel. Mr. Harris stated that there are existing agreements in place for the other parcels, thus the Land Bank's Property is the missing link to complete the project. Mr. Harris also stated that they already received a letter of financing approval.

Commissioner Anthony expounded upon Director's Adcock's suggestion that we tabled application until input is received from Planning and Development.

Commissioner Anthony also stated that we table item until Friendship visits with the other Neighborhood Associations in the area in addition to providing letters of recommendations, Commissioner Anthony also deferred to Kevin Howard to offer assistance to the entity so that the process can move along without further delay.

Mr. Harris stated that the Land Bank's property is the only parcel holding up the process and they need to start the development as soon as possible or look for other land.

After much discussion Commissioner Leggett made a motion to approve application, seconded by Commissioner Dodd **8** ayes, **0** nays. Motion carried.

#### **New Business- None**

**Citizens Communication-** Kelvin Browning & Feto Browning expressed interest in the Land Bank's process and procedures. Ruby Dean invited them to her office for further training and in-depth information.

**Adjourn:** Commissioner Herron made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Juanita Dodd. **8** ayes, **0** nays. Meeting adjourned.