

**Blair County Affordable Housing Trust Fund (AHTF/Act 137) Advisory Board  
Meeting Minutes  
Blair County Courthouse: Conference Room 4B  
December 13, 2023**

**Present:** Tricia Maceno, Commissioner Erb, Scott Durbin, Don Delozier, Susan Eberhart, Jim Gehret, Missy Gillin, Jean Puskar, Trina Illig, Wendy Melius, Lisa Hann and Jennifer Kensinger

**Approval of Advisory Board Meeting Minutes**

The minutes of the August 9, 2023 meeting were emailed to the Advisory Board members prior to today's meeting.

*Scott Durbin made the motion to accept the minutes as presented. Jim Gehret seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.*

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

Missy Gillin reviewed the AHTF Current Accounts as shown below:

**Act 137 Account Balance**

Affordable Housing Trust Fund (AHTF)	Operation Safe Space 5/25/23 Approved	Team Effort Committed Meeting 3/2/23 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	\$20,000	\$15,000	\$50,000	\$50,000 8/18/2022	\$3,000	\$150,000	
Paid Out as of 10/31/23	-\$4,449.70	-\$15,000	-\$49,726.20	-\$41,819.55	-\$12,000	-\$37,225.04	
<b>Program Available BALANCE 10/31/23</b>	<b>\$15,550.30</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$273.80</b>	<b>\$1,677.03</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$112,774.96</b>	<b>\$130,276.09</b>

**AHTF Bank Statement Balance of 10/31/2023: \$398,462.35**

<b>AHTF Recording Fee Deposits (excluding interest)</b>	
November 2022	\$7,241
December 2022	\$6,890
January 2023	\$7,527
February 2023	\$4,849
March 2023	\$4,680
April 2023	\$5,954
May 2023	\$5,772
June 2023	\$7,176
July 2023	\$7,735
August 2023	\$6,799
September 2023	\$7,150
October 2023	\$6,825
November 2023	

### **Demo Fund Current Account**

<b>Demolition Fund Bank Statement 10/31/23</b>	\$328,673.45
<b>Demolition Projects Committed Not Paid</b>	\$0
<b>Demolition Program Funds Available Non-committed</b>	\$328,673.45
<b>Pending Board Approval</b>	\$0.00

### ***Blight/Demolition Fund***

- Missy included a list of approved demolitions in the agenda packet.
- There are not any pending projects.
- All projects are completed and paid.
- Trina stated that Nathan Karn, County Solicitor, has been asked how this funding may be used to help “clean up” the repository.

### **Program Updates**

#### *First Time Home Buyer Program (Missy)*

- The Commissioners are to approve (1) First Time Home Buyer \$3,000 payment on December 14, 2023.
- There are several more people participating in the program. Tricia suggested informing Blair County Community Action Program (BCCAP) staff to let DSS know sooner when a \$3,000 payment may be needed.

### *Weatherization/Housing Rehab Program (Wendy)*

- Wendy Melius, Center for Community Action Executive Director, doesn't have a weatherization program in Blair County, only a utility program. She stated that CCA had nine (9) audits with utilities and nine (9) completed.

### *Operation Safe Space (Wendy)*

- No update on Operation Safe Space

### *Warming Center*

- Lisa Hann reported that a warming center is to open at the Overflow Church, starting on January 8. Individuals will be able to sleep there and then go to another location in the morning to get breakfast. The men and women will be kept in separate areas.

### *Homeless Family Shelter Update (Lisa Hann)*

- 31 individuals in the shelter (11 men, 8 women & 12 children)
- 268 individuals served since opening
- 10 emergency overnight stays
- 2 individuals were discharged last week.
- 3 extension requests were granted.
- 1 extension request was denied.
- 1 eviction on 12/8/23 due to non-compliance of shelter rules

### *Other Family Shelter Data for November 2023:*

#### *Individuals keeping employment outside of the shelter:*

- *After 2 weeks – 80%*
- *After 6 weeks – 80%*

#### *Individuals keeping housing outside of the shelter*

- *After 2 weeks – 100%*
- *After 6 weeks – no data available*

Lisa stated that they are continuing to have “no shows” for intakes.

Lisa reported that the Housing Task Force met a few weeks back to discuss the needs in the community, but no grand plans have been established.

### **Other Programs:**

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

- Trina stated that 13 units are being worked on in Lead Abatement program.
- 9 applications that were received for the Whole Home program were moved to the Lead Abatement program to do a risk assessment, because the properties were identified as being built before 1978. In addition to, there were children under the age of 6 living in those homes.

#### *Owner Occupied Rehab – Trina Illig*

- Trina reported that she has been working with BCCAP on weatherization deferrals. Any City of Altoona residents need to be referred to the City of Altoona and anyone outside of the City can go through Trina's program. BCCAP is not able to do gas hot water tanks, so Trina's program has done four (4) prior to November 1, 2023.

- Wendy is going to look into this further.

#### ***Whole Home Program – Trina Illig***

- Trina reported that the Whole Home program has received ninety-three (93) applications. Two (2) units have been completed. There is a different formula being used to determine income guidelines for the program.
- Trina stated that half of the applications received were from the City of Altoona, so the plan is to allocate funding to the City for those properties.

#### ***TEAMeffort – Scott Durbin***

- Scott shared a video of TEAMeffort showing some of the participates and the light construction work that was done over the summer, during their six (6) weeks in Blair County.
- Don suggested increasing TEAMeffort’s allocation of funding from \$15,000 to \$20,000.
- ***Don Delozier made a motion to recommend to the Commissioners to approve an allocation up to \$20,000 in funds to TEAMeffort, for the Summer of 2024, to be used to buy materials to do light construction work for Blair County individuals in need. Scott Durbin seconded the motion. All present were in favor. Motion carried.***
- Commissioner Erb advised the Board to wait to make this funding request until February 2024. He also felt that Scott, due to his credibility, should be present during that Commissioners’ meeting.

#### ***Sustainable Housing Program – Missy Gillin***

##### ***Greg Werstil Project Update – Greenfield Township, Claysburg***

- Missy spoke with Greg Werstil who stated that he has not moved forward with creating new affordable housing, due to the numbers not working out, but he has renovated some of his existing properties and made them affordable housing units.

##### ***Cornerstone Builders & Supplies (Susan Bonsell) Project Update – 1310 Washington Ave, Tyrone & 612 Park Ave, Tyrone***

- Missy reported that Susan Bonsell is on track for getting her units completed. An invoice was submitted and a partial payment was approved and paid.

Discussion ensued regarding the Greg Werstil Project. The Board agreed that if Greg Werstil is unable to create new affordable housing with the \$50,000 that he would need to update his project plans and reapply for the funding. If he decides not to reapply for the funding, the Board will reopen the application process for two (2) new applicants. Don added, to garner interest, that this program should be presented to the Landlords’ Association.

#### ***Emergency Repairs – Tricia, Trina, Missy & Scott***

- Scott described the need for the Emergency Repair program to help homeowners, who may have or are in jeopardy of having a codes violation, with doing minor home repairs, up to \$5,000. Income guidelines would apply.
- Commissioner Erb stated that the program qualifications must be defined prior to implementing the program.

- Trina has reached out to Nathan Karn to see what pot of funding will be used for this program.
- Missy added that the program would be administered elsewhere, but the projects would be approved through Social Services AHTF.
- Trish suggested forming an Emergency Repair Fund sub-committee to discuss the program prior to the February 14, 2024 meeting.

**Next Steps:**

- Formation of an Emergency Repair Fund sub-committee
- Jim Gehret has resigned his position with Hollidaysburg Borough. He will consult with the City of Altoona to see if he is still able to serve as an AHTF board member.

**Next Meeting:**

The next meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, February 14, 2024** at 8:15am in Conference Room 4B