

**Crawford County  
Delinquent Tax Committee Meeting  
July 25, 2019**

**Call to order**

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Chairman Derek Flansburgh. In attendance were: Committee members Derek Flansburgh, Henry Esser and Kersten Rocksvold, Tom Cornford – County Board Chairman, Deanne Lutz – County Treasurer, Mark Peterson – Corporate Counsel, Gionne Collins – Real Property Lister and Julie Jackson – Chief Deputy Treasurer.

Others attending: Duane Rogers – County Finance Committee Chairman, Jim Bowman – Executive Director of Driftless Development, Karl Colsch, Chris Herbst and Ted Pennenkamp.

**Verify posting  
and Approval of  
Minutes**

Flansburgh verified that the meeting notice was properly posted. Motion made by Esser, seconded by Rocksvold to approve the minutes of the previous (May 29, 2019) meeting. Motion carried with no negative votes cast.

**Discussion on  
Blackhawk  
Junction**

Deanne Lutz provided a brief description regarding the possibility of Blackhawk Junction LLC redeeming their property back after foreclosure. Lutz informed the committee that she and Peterson had been contacted by Len Levenson, an attorney representing the former owner. She provided Levenson with the total amount due for redemption, including all foreclosure fees, and specifically noted that the fees were subject to change. Lutz then gave the committee members an explanation of the foreclosure fees charged and reported that she'd offered Levenson the option to submit something in writing that she would present to the committee; however, he declined her offer.

Peterson suggested that the closed session be deferred until the end of the meeting, to discuss the rest of the agenda items. He then provided a brief description of the leases and his contact with Levenson.

The discussion continued with questions from the members relating to whether or not the former owner had secured the funds to redeem the property, if there was any obligation to give the municipality priority, the resolution governing foreclosure procedures and the contamination on the property. Lutz stated that Levenson had verbally requested to be placed on the agenda for committee approval and that he was aware of the meeting date.

Cornford asked about the status of the City. Bowman gave an update on his correspondence with the City of Prairie du Chien as they're working with a consultant to draft a critical path for purchasing the property. He felt that it was progressing more quickly than expected. The City has secured funds for cleanup of the environmental contamination and he is relatively confident that the City is extremely interested. He has reviewed the City's finances and feels they have the wherewithal to fund it. Bowman stated that there have been countless attempts on both the County's and City's part to contact Gialamas with no response. Peterson spoke on the August 1<sup>st</sup> deadline for redemption and the need to make a decision. There was a brief financial discussion on our

commitment to the City by the Joint Committee, potential reimbursement of costs for the study and the impact on County budget if the property were to be redeemed. Bowman stated that the City has funding for development and is willing to work with the County. He did not specifically know the City's purchase plan, but felt they have the ability to fund it.

Flansburgh then proposed to address the remainder of the agenda items and any further comments on this matter would be taken later in closed session.

**Discussion/action  
Fire Alarm System**

Lutz provided copies and explained the annual contract for the fire alarm system at Blackhawk Junction. Since the County's ownership is intended to be short-term, the contract can either be rolled over to the new owner or cancelled altogether. The contractor will go to each business and get the system working properly. Steps have already been taken to reactivate the phone lines for the system.

Motion made by Esser, seconded by Rocksvold to approve the contract for the fire alarm system.

Motion carried with no negative votes cast.

**Discussion/action  
Outstanding  
Water/Sewer bills**

Lutz explained the delinquent water and sewer charges for Blackhawk Junction in the amount of \$4,752.83, as she'd ordered a final meter reading when the County took ownership. This amount can either be paid by the County, or rolled over onto the tax bill. There was a brief discussion on the past water leaks due to abandonment and frozen pipes. Lutz reported that each tenant will now be billed for their own water/sewer bills individually, per the new lease agreements.

Motion made by Esser, seconded by Rocksvold to approve putting the delinquent water and sewer charges on the tax bill.

Motion carried with no negative votes cast.

**Discussion/action  
on other fore-  
closed properties**

Lutz gave an update on the status of the Mezera and France properties. Cletus Mezera came into the Treasurer's office and he does have the amount due, in writing, but Lutz was unsure of whether extensions are being granted. Also, Ida France's daughter was in the office and hoping for an extension while Richard Marks completes the survey, as the property has survey issues and they were unable to sell the house due to the boundary issues. The cost of Marks' survey was added onto the foreclosure costs for the France property. Lutz stated that she's spoken with Deputy Hutchison of the Sheriff's Department, and he will go out to make contact with property owners before the county makes their inspections. Peterson felt that business and homestead properties are distinguishable and the homestead could be addressed once Deputy Hutchison comes back with his report. Lutz suggested that a 10-day notice be given to contact the County Treasurer's Office, along with a letter explaining the fees and requirements, with the 15-day eviction process starting after the ten days have lapsed.

Motion made by Esser, seconded by Rocksvold to approve the 10-day notice and the 15-day eviction afterward, as proposed.

Motion carried with no negative votes cast.

**Discussion/action  
on penalty charges**

Lutz reported that there are two property owners, Wendolyn Olson and Gerald Roesler, who have requested that penalty charges be waived on their delinquent taxes. Olson felt that Spring flooding impacted her business, while Roesler cited health issues. A brief discussion followed.

Motion made by Esser, seconded by Rocksvold to leave the penalties in place.

Motion carried with no negative votes cast.

**Closed Session**

Motion made by Esser, seconded by Rocksvold to move into closed session pursuant to Section 19.85(1)(g) to confer with legal counsel regarding the Blackhawk Junction property.

Motion carried unanimously by a roll call vote with all members present.

**Open Session**

Motion made by Rocksvold, seconded by Esser to reconvene into open session pursuant to Section 19.85(2).

Motion carried with no negative votes cast.

**Action from  
Closed Session**

Motion made by Rocksvold, seconded by Flansburgh to honor our commitment to the City of Prairie du Chien and deny the request of the previous property owner for redemption of delinquent property taxes and have Attorney Mark Peterson contact Len Leverson to relay the information.

Motion carried with no negative votes cast.

**Adjournment**

Motion made by Esser, seconded by Rocksvold to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried with no negative votes cast.

Meeting adjourned at 2:09 p.m.

**Julie Jackson, Chief Deputy Treasurer**