

After Agenda

**Board of Commissioners of Spalding County
Work Session
Thursday, June 9, 2022
4:00 PM
Room 108, Spalding County Annex Building**

The Spalding County Board of Commissioners held a joint work session with the City of Griffin and the Land Bank Authority on Thursday, June 9, 2022 at the Historic City hall beginning at 4:00 p.m.

Present for Spalding County were Chairman Clay Davis and Gwen Flowers-Taylor were present for the meeting. Also present were County Manager, Dr. Steve Ledbetter, Director of Community Development, Kellie Littlefield and County Clerk, Kathy Gibson to record the minutes.

Present for the City of Griffin were Mayor Doug Hollberg, Commissioners Cora Flowers, David Brock, Cynthia Reid Ward and Truman Tinsley. Also present were City Manager Jessica O'Connor, Director of Planning and Development Chad Jacobs and Administrative Secretary Susan Bartholomew to record the minutes.

Present for the Land Bank Authority were Newton Galloway, Sharon King, Bruce Ballard, Patty Beckham and Patsy Copeland.

I. OPENING (CALL TO ORDER)

Chairman Davis called the meeting to order for Spalding County.

Mayor Hollberg called the meeting to order for the City of Griffin.

Newton Galloway called the meeting to order for the Land Bank Authority.

PLEASE SILENCE YOUR CELL PHONES AND ALL OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES.

II. AGENDA ITEMS

1. Presentation of the findings of a study regarding the structure, function and viability of the Griffin-Spalding County Land Bank Authority. Consultant, KB Advisory Group, will address.

Ms. O'Connor introduced the KB Advisory Group representatives. Mr. Geoff Koski addressed the attendees and explained who KB Advisory Group is and what it does. He displayed the agenda for the presentation of KB Advisory's report, stating that Alex Seidenberg would be presenting the findings. Mr. Koski continued, stating that KB Advisory Group has performed housing analyses across the state of Georgia. He enumerated the issues that were presented to the advisory group for research and analysis, and those issues included leadership, lack of funding, legal challenges of inventory with title issues, and private developers undermining the goal and practices of Land

Bank by purchasing renovated properties and renting them. Mr. Koski then introduced Mr. Seidenberg for the presentation of the findings.

Mr. Seidenberg began by noting that KB Advisory used the Georgia Land Bank Resource manual published in 2013 as a foundation for best practices for land banks throughout the state. KB Advisory conducted internal stakeholder interviews and extensive interviews with land banks across Georgia.

There were a number of key findings. The Griffin Spalding County Land Bank Authority (GSCLBA) holds just under 400 properties, one of the largest inventories in Georgia. By comparison land banks in similar size jurisdictions hold 8 to 20 properties, and larger jurisdictions such as Savannah may hold 40-60 properties. Additionally, 80 to 85% of the properties held have unclear titles. GSCLBA is not suited to hold several hundred properties because of a lack of funding and human resources. The GSCLBA's attorney's capacity for completing the legal work necessary for property transition is five titles per month. At the current rate, it would take six years to clear title for all properties being held.

Another finding was the consensus among land bank professionals of the necessity of a full-time executive director or a combination of staff that can perform the job of a full-time director. KB Advisory also found that building a trusted network of robust partners who are frequent recipients of land bank properties can help ensure the results match the strategic goals of the land bank. GSCLBA operates largely without replicable procedural guidelines to steer strategic decision making for property acquisition, holding and selling. The GSCLBA needs a cohesive, consistent process.

The GSCLBA has two funding mechanisms: funding from the City and County and revenue from the sale of properties. Current operations cannot produce a self-sustaining land bank. Also, private sector home buyers undermine the Land Bank's mission of increasing home ownership.

A positive finding is the success of the side lot program. This program helps residents update property to meet current standards for lot sizes, setbacks, etc. while increasing the taxable value of the residents' properties. It has also alleviated some of the Land Bank's large inventory by identifying willing local buyers.

Mr. Seidenberg displayed a Priority Index for suggested actions for the GSCLBA. The index classifies the recommendations by urgency and impact.

The High Urgency/High Impact actions were: pause additional property acquisition; conduct a property audit; pursue a full-time director.

Lower Urgency/ High Impact actions were: identify and pursue additional partnerships; assess GSCLBA properties for uses other than homeownership; consider methods to sustain long-term affordability and homeownership.

High Urgency/Lower Impact actions were: utilize mapping and GIS to identify geographic trends, market property and increase public transparency; identify additional funding mechanisms and revenue streams to strive toward financial sustainability; explore adopting the 2012 Land Bank Act.

Lower Urgency/Lower Impact actions were: operate GSCLBA inside the Griffin Housing Authority building; continue the side lot program; operate within targeted areas; consider the impact of conducting a citywide or countywide housing plan; participate in the statewide network of land banks in Georgia.

Mr. Koski and Mr. Seidenberg opened the floor for questions.

After addressing questions from Ms. King and Mr. Galloway, Mr. Koski thanked all for participation.

III. ADJOURNMENT

Motion/Second by Flowers-Taylor/Davis to adjourn the meeting for Spalding County at 4:43 p.m.

Motion/second Brock/Tinsley to adjourn the meeting the meeting for the City of Griffin at 4:43 p.m.

The Land Bank Authority then continued their Regular Meeting.