

**HIGHLANDS DEVELOPMENT CREDIT BANK
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MAY 5, 2022**

VIA TELECONFERENCE:

ROBERT F. HOLTAWAY)	CHAIRMAN
DALE DAVIS III)	DIRECTOR
HEBERTON "RUSTY" FRICKE)	DIRECTOR
CARL J. RICHKO)	DIRECTOR
GREG ROMANO)	DIRECTOR
DANIEL VAN ABS)	DIRECTOR

ABSENT:

RICH NIEUWENHUIS)	DIRECTOR
SUSAN E. PAYNE)	DIRECTOR

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Robert F. Holtaway, called the 27TH meeting of the Highlands Development Credit Bank Board of Directors to order at 4:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Roll call was taken. Directors Nieuwenhuis and Payne were absent. All other directors were present via video/teleconference. *The following Council staff members were present: Lisa J. Plevin, Gabrielle Gallagher, James Humphries, Tom Tagliareni, Neda Hartman, Herb August, Carole Dicton, Allison Bittner, Annette Tagliareni, and Karen Castanbas. Also, present Jason Kane, Deputy Attorney General (DAG).*

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT was then recited.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was then recited.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

There was no Chairman's report.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Ms. Plevin provided the following report:

Highlands Development Credit (HDC) Allocation Update

To date, staff have reviewed 191 HDC allocation applications, resulting in 4,231 allocated HDCs, representing 8,788 acres and a total value of over \$67.7 million.

HDC Purchase Program Update

- The HDC Bank has purchased easements on 70 properties, providing nearly \$28 million to landowners in the Highlands.

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- 3 additional properties have placed easements on their properties and are holding the credits for future sale.
- The Highlands Council leveraged \$4.5 million in federal Highlands Conservation Act funds to complete those transactions.
- In total, 2,565 acres have been preserved.

Ms. Plevin then introduced Allison Bittner, Highlands Council Regional Planner/Land Preservation Coordinator.

Ms. Plevin added that the next HDC Bank meeting is scheduled for August 4, 2022.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES FOR DECEMBER 1, 2021

Director Davis made a motion to approve the minutes and Director Van Abs seconded it.

A roll-call vote was taken, and the Minutes were APPROVED 6-0

Municipal Average Update

Chairman Holtaway introduced Chief Counsel Gabrielle Gallagher for an update on the municipal average contract. Ms. Gallagher reported that Council staff had a kick-off meeting with Integra Realty Resources (Integra) on May 2nd. Integra is currently reviewing information provided by Council staff. Additionally, Integra requested a meeting be set up with the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) at the end of May or early June. The purpose of this meeting is to review a proposed approach and ensure the municipal average values developed by Integra will be of use to SADC. Next steps will be determined after that meeting. Chairman Holtaway added some of his concerns.

Resolution – Approval of Highlands Development Credit Bank Authorization to Acquire Highlands Development Credits

Chairman Holtaway introduced a resolution for the HDC Bank to acquire HDCs for property in Bloomingdale Borough, Passaic County (Intellect Realty Partners.) Chairman Holtaway then introduced Mr. Humphries to give his summary.

At this time, Director of Planning, Science, & GIS James Humphries gave a presentation of the details and history of the Bloomingdale Borough property. The presentation may be found on the Council's website: www.nj.gov/njhighlands/about/calend/2022/may5_hdc/ppt_hdc_050522.pdf

Director Comment

Director Van Abs commented that in reading through the materials, it stated that the applicant would reserve the right to build one house on the property, but that doesn't seem to be the case anymore.

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Mr. Humphries confirmed that the property owner was no longer reserving the right to an exemption to construct on the property.

Director Van Abs asked if there have been any discussions with Green Acres for full acquisition of the property, instead of HDCs.

Mr. Humphries responded that the Highlands Council staff met with Green Acres multiple times as the property is across the road from Norvin Green State Forest, but the property didn't qualify for any of the Green Acres programs and there was no interest from Green Acres. There was also no interest in the property from SADC or non-profit land conservation agencies. This is the only way to preserve the property.

Ms. Plevin added that the Highlands Council does intend to have another conversation with Green Acres to see if their interest has changed regarding the purchase of the property after the HDC Easement has been placed upon it.

Director Davis asked if the property owner is happy with keeping the property after it is preserved or whether they want to have it sold to Green Acres for a total acquisition.

Mr. Humphries added that the property owner has not expressed to staff an interest in selling the land, however, Mr. Del Balso, who is the principal of the property is present today and can answer the question during public comment.

Chairman Holtaway asked if there were any other comments.

There were no further comments by Directors.

Chairman Holtaway asked for a motion on the resolution.

Director Van Abs made a motion. Director Davis seconded it.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Danny Del Balso, Intellect Realty Partners – Mr. Del Balso responded to Director Davis' question if he is interested in selling the preserved land to Green Acres and Mr. Del Balso responded "yes."

At this time, there were some technical difficulties.

Gordon Levy, Jefferson Township – Mr. Levy commented on why this property is being singled out for HDCs.

A roll-call vote was taken. The Resolution was APPROVED 6-0.

Chairman Holtaway opened the floor for public comment on any other matters.

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PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

In closing, Bank Chair Holtaway added that he has a lot of compassion for people like Mr. Levy as well as others regarding their properties.

Council Chair Richko made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Director Davis seconded it. The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of the minutes of the meeting of the Highlands Development Credit Bank Board.

Date: 6/16/2022

Name: Karen Castanhas

Karen Castanhas, Administrative Assistant

Highlands Council approved the Highlands Development Credit Bank minutes of May 5, 2022 at its meeting on June 16, 2022.

Vote on the Approval of The Minutes	Motion	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Councilmember Alstede			√			
Councilmember Dougherty						√
Councilmember Dressler			√			
Councilmember Francis			√			
Councilmember Holtaway	√		√			
Councilmember James			√			
Councilmember Sebetich						√
Councilmember Van Abs						√
Councilmember Visioli		√	√			
Councilmember Vohden			√			
Chairman Richko			√			

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Vote on the Approval of Minutes	<u>Motion</u>	<u>Second</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Abstain</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Director Davis						
Director Fricke						
Director Holtaway						
Director Nieuwenhuis						
Director Payne						
Director Richko						
Director Romano						
Chairman Holtaway						