



CUYAHOGA LAND BANK

**Cuyahoga County Land Reutilization Corporation
Minutes for the Board of Directors
Regular Quarterly Meeting of June 27, 2025**

LOCATION: Caxton Building
812 Huron Road E., Conference Room 830
Cleveland, OH 44115

DATE/TIME: June 27, 2025 at 10:00 a.m.

PURPOSE: Regular quarterly meeting to consider the following business:

1. Call to Order by the Chair. The regular quarterly meeting of the Cuyahoga County Land Reutilization Corporation Board of Trustees was held on June 27, 2025 at 812 Huron Road, E., Conference Room 830, Cleveland, Ohio and called to order at 10:00 a.m. A quorum of the Board was present: Board Chair Brad Cromes, Treasurer of Cuyahoga County; Vice Chair Anthony Brancatelli, Former Council Member, City of Cleveland; Mayor Annette Blackwell, City of Maple Heights; Michael King, representative of Cuyahoga County Council President Dale Miller; Sally Martin O'Toole Director of Building and Housing, City of Cleveland; and Katie Gallagher representative for County Executive Chris Ronayne constituted a quorum.

After calling the meeting to order, Board Chair Cromes notified the public of the Board's process for public comment during the public comment portion of the meeting.

Thereafter, Board Chair Cromes invited Corporation President Ricardo Léon to provide the Board with a staffing update and to introduce several interim employees to the Board. Interim Chief Financial Officer William Aamoth, Interim Chief Operating Officer, Steve Weitzner, and Board Counsel Ben Chojnacki introduced themselves. Board Member Jasmin Santana, Council Member, City of Cleveland, arrived at 10:05 a.m.

2. Approval of the minutes from the Board Meeting of March 28, 2025. The minutes of the March 28, 2025 meeting were distributed to the Board for review prior to the meeting. A motion for approval was made by Mayor Blackwell, seconded by Ms. Gallagher. The motion was unanimously approved by voice vote without abstention or objection.
3. Executive session to consider the appointment or employment of a public employee or official. Director Martin O'Toole made a motion for the Board to enter into executive session to consider the appointment or employment of a public employee or official. Ms. Gallagher seconded the motion. After a unanimous voice vote was initially taken, Mr. King asked that the vote to adjourn into executive session be conducted by roll call vote. Roll call vote was conducted with the following Board Members voting aye: Board Chair Brad Cromes, Treasurer of Cuyahoga County; Vice Chair Anthony Brancatelli, Former Council Member, City of Cleveland; Mayor Annette Blackwell, City of Maple Heights; Michael

King, representative of Cuyahoga County Council President Dale Miller; Sally Martin O'Toole Director of Building and Housing, City of Cleveland; Katie Gallagher representative for County Executive Chris Ronayne; and Jasmin Santana, Council Member, City of Cleveland. No Board Members voted nay or abstained from voting.

The Board entered into executive session at 10:08 a.m. to consider appointment or employment of a public employee or official.

Board Member Mayor Michael Booker, City of Highland Hills arrived at 10:10 a.m.

The Board returned to its regular meeting at 10:22 a.m.

Mr. King moved to appoint Ben Chojnacki to serve as Board Secretary. Ms. Santana seconded the motion. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote without abstention or objection.

4. *President's Report.* Board Chair Cromes offered the floor to President Léon for his report. President Léon explained to the Board that he has been working to improve the efficiency of the Board's meetings and to ensure his reports provide the Board with the appropriate balance of high-level and project-specific information. As an example, President Léon called the Board's attention to the Demolition and Asbestos Abatement Contractors Report – Q2 2025 and the Payments YTD made to Clean Harbors Environmental Services, Inc. (\$638,551). President Léon explained that the payments made to Clean Harbors Environmental Services was significant because of the size and scale of the Project. President Léon asked the Board how much detail the Board wanted to see in his reports on items of this nature. Mr. Brancatelli suggested that President Léon identify significant expenditures in his reports to the Board. President Léon thanked the Board for its feedback and proceeded with the remainder of his report.

During review of the Cumulative Expenditures Report for Renovation and Construction General Contractors, Mayor Blackwell asked President Léon why only 6% of payments to general contractors were made to MBE/FBE contractors. President Léon acknowledged that the figure was low and offered that part of the reason for the low number was because only 25% of the general contractors were MBE/FBE contractors. President Léon also suggested that the timing and cycle of payments to contractors may have contributed to those numbers being lower than desired. President Léon advised the Board that it was his goal to continue to increase the number and amount of payments to MBE/FBE contractors.

President Léon discussed the Production Report through May 31, 2025. President Léon explained that his goal in creating the report was to show the Board the activity since the last meeting. President Léon highlighted some of the key figures in the report, including eight in-house new construction homes underway, seven in-house home renovations underway, and 10,315 demolitions.

President Léon went on to discuss the Cuyahoga County Housing Program Board Report for Q2. President Léon explained that the report shows a total available balance of

\$10,916,259.00 and the goal is to spend down as much of that balance as possible by the end of 2025. President Léon indicated that he hopes to achieve his spenddown goal by: (1) continuing to work on acquiring Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority's scattered site portfolio; (2) utilizing the municipal gap grant; (3) hiring full-time employees; and (4) providing deeper subsidies, where needed.

Director Martin O'Toole asked President Léon whether the CMHA's scattered site portfolio properties were occupied. President Léon advised the properties are not occupied.

Mayor Blackwell asked President Léon about real estate located in Maple Heights. Mayor Blackwell conveyed to President Léon a desire that the Corporation work to ensure that Cuyahoga County mayors and managers are apprised of the Corporation's efforts in their respective municipalities. President Léon committed to working to ensure lines of communication between the Corporation and municipal leaders are open and functional.

President Léon advised the Board that the Corporation planned another round of the Municipal Gap Grants. President Léon explained that the Corporation is now requiring developers hoping to receive Municipal Gap Grants to receive design and/or zoning approval from the municipality before asking the Corporation for gap funding.

President Léon explained that much of the inventory the Corporation is receiving is in need of greater rehab, thereby increasing renovation costs and creating a need for deeper subsidies.

Mayor Blackwell asked whether the Corporation intended to rent or sell properties when rehabilitation or construction efforts were complete. President Léon explained that he did not want the Corporation to enter into the rental market.

President Léon provided the Board with several project updates, including a \$1,000,000 award for housing development in Cuyahoga County District 10 (30 units across the district with a mix of market and affordable housing).

President Léon advised that the Corporation established a partnership with First National Bank to encourage investment in the Circle East District. First National Bank is working with the Corporation to provide up to \$40,000 in homebuyer assistance to eligible homebuyers for new units in the Circle East District single-family homes and townhomes along Woodlawn Avenue in East Cleveland.

Director O'Toole asked for more details about how the homebuyer assistance program would work. President Léon explained that the interested homebuyer could be eligible to receive \$15,000 in down payment assistance from First National Bank, along with \$5,000 towards closing costs; the Corporation would provide \$20,000 in grant funding to assist as well.

Mayor Blackwell asked how this information was being shared in the community. President Léon advised that the information is being shared on social media, through other

organizations, and that the Corporation was directly reaching out to realtors to find and educate prospective home buyers.

Mayor Blackwell stated that success stories like this need to be shared with other realtors and to a broader audience in order to counteract stories she had heard at other events/conferences in Ohio.

Mayor Blackwell emphasized the importance of ensuring that people are aware that paths to homeownership are available. President Léon agreed to include the Board on certain messaging efforts the Land Bank pursues moving forward. Mayor Blackwell suggested that there be outreach made to pastors of churches in the City of East Cleveland.

President Léon provided a report of the ODOD Brownfield Program. The Corporation was awarded \$17.9 Million for 8 new projects in the latest round; \$129 Million total were awarded for 42 projects across all rounds.

President Léon discussed how the state budget would likely impact the Corporation. President Léon explained that access to Brownfield funding is going to be more broadly available, and fund distributions will be based on a score card, rather than on a first come, first served basis. Land banks statewide advocated to preserve some level of local control. However, it appears those efforts were unsuccessful. President Léon advised that state lawmakers still have to create the scorecard for project funding and the Ohio Landbank Association is going to work with the Ohio Department of Development to see if they can preserve some local control through the scoring system. President Léon also advised that there is another opportunity to retain local control through “priority investment areas.”

Board Chair Cromes asked about the status of the Frangos Act. General Counsel Doug Sawyer explained the bill has passed out of the House of Representatives and the hope is to have it pass out of Senate before technical changes are made during the reconciliation between the House and Senate.

Board Chair Cromes asked about adding a legislative update to the quarterly discussions. Mr. Sawyer agreed.

5. *Review of Quarterly Finances.*

Board Chair Cromes asked President Léon to review the Corporation’s quarterly finances. President Léon explained the format of the Corporation’s quarterly financial report has changed; the report is now a straight-line monthly budget as opposed to annualized budget. President Léon explained that the intention is to build the Corporation’s 2026 budget to more accurately reflect and account for the cyclical nature of the Corporation’s operations, which should provide the Board with more meaningful budgetary information.

Interim CEO Aamoth explained that the Corporation’s financials are healthy, and his review of the Corporation’s income statements show that revenues are on track and program expenses are trending in the right direction.

Interim CEO Aamoth stated that the Corporation is looking to increase its D&O and cybersecurity insurance policy limits to \$5 Million each.

Interim CEO Aamoth stated the Corporation's total general operating expenses are trending high but on budget.

Director Martin O'Toole moved to approve the Corporation's financials. Ms. Gallagher seconded the motion. By voice vote, all approved with no objections.

6. Discussion of President's Working Groups (Finance & Audit; Governance; Strategic Planning).

Board Chair Cromes asked President Léon to discuss the status of three working groups he was in the process of creating. President Léon explained that he plans to have his administrative team work internally to develop policies and meet with designated Board liaisons as needed to ensure the administration's efforts are consistent with the Board's desires. Board Chair Cromes indicated that he had already reached out to Board members about working cooperatively in this endeavor.

The Board had a brief discussion about the need for the Board to receive paper packages in advance of regular meetings.

The Board had a discussion about Ohio law changing to allow certain public agencies to have hybrid meetings or remove meetings.

7. Public Comment. No members of the public exercised their opportunity to participate in the public comment portion of the meeting.

8. Adjournment. There being no other business to come before the Board, Director Martin O'Toole moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mayor Blackwell. A roll vote was called with all members present voting to adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:21 a.m.

CERTIFICATE

The undersigned Secretary of the Board of Directors of the Cuyahoga County Land Reutilization Corporation hereby certifies that the forgoing is a true copy of the Minutes duly adopted by the Board of Directors of said Corporation on June 27, 2025.


Secretary, Board of Directors
Cuyahoga County Land Reutilization Corporation