**City of Valdosta Land Bank Meeting
Thursday, July 1, 2021**

City of Valdosta – City Hall Annex, Multi-Purpose Room

**Members Present:** Karla Walker, Jack Oliver, Sandra Tooley, Joyce Evans and Burke Sherwood

**Others Present:** Vanassa Ross, Mark Barber, JD Dillard, Sara Toering and Odetta MacLeish-White

The meeting was called to order by Vanassa Ross.

Ms. Ross briefly discussed the two representatives, Sara and Odetta, from the Center for Community Progress who came into town to complete the stakeholder meeting providing technical assistance. Sara Toering and Odetta MacLeish-White will be formulating a plan to assist the Land Bank with becoming self-sufficient and with hopes of employing part time personnel to assist the Land Bank.

Mr. Mark Barber spoke about the important issue of revitalizing the Land Bank and what an important board that Land Bank is to Valdosta/Lowndes community.

Burke Sherwood spoke thanking Sara and Odetta for the work they have completed thus far and looking forward to the reports they will provide the board next month.

Vanassa Ross opened the floor for questions by board members. Members commented and asked questions.

Mark Barber suggested that the board come up with one project to show what the Land Bank can do and does.

Sara Toering and Odetta MacLeish-White addressed the board concerning possible funding sources for Land Bank such as Covid Relief from the federal government that the State will receive. Economic Development is a committee that will receive grant applications, Sara and Odetta is requesting money from this source to receive funds for Land Banks across Georgia. Sara and Odetta expanded on this topic making the board aware of the process and what the aforementioned entails.

Sara Toering discussed the next steps for the board. Sara provided information about the upcoming memo and report and what the board should look for in a director and the support a director would need and how in a few years the Land Bank could become self-sustaining.

Commissioner Evans and City Manager Mark Barber reiterated that political support is important for the board to succeed.

Vanassa Ross thank Sara Toering and Odetta MacLeish-White and concluded the meeting.