

RESOLUTION 201522

Incentive Program

(Board Approved 5/5/15)

WHEREAS, the Nobles County Auditor-Treasurer has identified certain property within Nobles County as tax-forfeited, and

WHEREAS, every year additional properties may become tax-forfeited, and

WHEREAS, tax-forfeited property often has on it a residence and/or associated garage that is damaged, neglected or otherwise unsafe and that needs to be either rehabilitated (returned to inhabitable condition in that hazardous materials such as asbestos, lead and mold are removed, in that it is structurally sound and in that it meets building codes for electricity and plumbing) or demolished (completely and properly destroyed, with the debris disposed of and unless a replacement building is planned the property is returned to a natural setting), and

WHEREAS, the County has an interest in the rehabilitation or demolition of certain structures on tax-forfeited properties in that the County has an interest in reducing nuisance properties and in that the County believes that improvement of those properties may help keep the properties from becoming tax-forfeit again in the future, and

WHEREAS, the County has the ability to budget a certain limited amount of money that can be allocated to provide reimbursement (and therefore incentive) for new owners to rehabilitate or demolish unsafe structures on properties that have been sold as tax-forfeited properties,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,

1. That as an incentive to clean up those properties the Nobles County Board of Commissioners authorizes the Auditor-Treasurer or her/his designee shall:

- A. Budget a certain amount of money each year to use in an incentive program to help compensate buyers of tax-forfeited properties after the fact for work they do to rehabilitate or demolish certain buildings on that property. The Board will determine on an annual basis the amount that will be set aside for the purpose of providing reimbursement of some of the costs associated with the cleanup of certain properties forfeited to the County for non-payment of taxes and later sold at auction to new owners.
- B. Provide applications for applicants to the program. Applications should only be given to owners whose properties have been previously identified by the Auditor-Treasurer as needing rehabilitation or demolition, and the application form must contain a statement from the Auditor-Treasurer attesting to that need.
- C. Review completed applications for compliance, doing site visits if required and determine which applicants meet the qualifications, and if funding is available, award those applicants a reimbursement grant to the extent appropriate under the guidelines set out below. In determining whether and to what extent any application qualifies for reimbursement, the Auditor-Treasurer may consult or investigate as deemed necessary.

2. The minimum requirements to qualify for this limited reimbursement program are:

- A. The residence and/or associated garage must be in need of rehabilitation or demolition. The owner must have pre-approval by the Auditor-Treasurer that the property qualifies for the program before any work has been done, or the owner must be able to demonstrate (with photographs or other means) that the property required rehabilitation or demolition.
- B. Prior to rehabilitation or demolition, the owner must obtain at least two written estimates for the work that needs to be done, and must attach those to the application.
- C. The rehabilitation or demolition must be completed within 365 days of the purchase of the property by the owner.
- D. The application for reimbursement may not be submitted until all the work has been completed and all the bills have been received and paid by the owner.
- E. The owner must submit the completed application for reimbursement to the Auditor-Treasurer along with:
 - 1). At least two written estimates completed prior to the work being started, and
 - 2). A copy of all the bills that the owner has paid and seeks reimbursement for (bills not submitted with the application will not be considered for reimbursement), and
 - 3). Proof that at the time of the application the residence meets applicable codes, and
 - 4). Photographs of the completed work (this is optional, but may speed up the processing of the application if the Auditor-Treasurer decides to accept them in lieu of a site visit).
- F. The following costs do not qualify for reimbursement: costs of conditional use permits or variance requests; costs that exceed the amount actually necessary to demolish or rehabilitate the property. The burden is on the owner to show that the cost was necessary.
- G. The amount of the actual reimbursement shall be determined by the Auditor-Treasurer based on determination of whether the cost demolition/rehabilitation was reasonable or whether the cost exceeded what was necessary for that property. The Auditor-Treasurer may deny an application, or may pay any amount up to and including 75 per cent of the actual costs over and above any other grants from other entities and paid by the owner. However, the amount awarded for any one property may not exceed \$2,500.00

3. The decision of the Auditor-Treasurer with regard to any award is final and may not be appealed to the board.

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