



Delaware County Commissioners

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Oct. 8, 2021

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Sale of Delaware County's Old Jail Closes

DELAWARE, Ohio — The sale of Delaware County's historic Old Jail and Sheriff's Residence has closed. On Wednesday, Oct. 6, the \$350,000 sale from the Delaware County Land Reutilization Corporation to the Delaware County Historical Society was completed.

A land-reutilization corporation, often referred to as a "land bank," is a public entity best known for helping communities return abandoned or blighted properties to productive use. But state law also enables the counties that have established land banks to transfer property they own to those land banks for sale and redevelopment.

Delaware County's land bank was established in 2018 and has played a critical role in helping the county find a suitable new owner for the property at 20 W. Central Ave. in downtown Delaware. The 0.45-acre site is adjacent to a number of county-owned facilities, including The Historic Courthouse. County Commissioner Jeff Benton serves as chairman of the land bank, along with fellow Commissioner Gary Merrell, County Treasurer Don Rankey, Liberty Township Administrator Mike Schuiling and Delaware City's Planning and Community Development Director Dave Efland. The land bank received a \$7,000 commission for its role in the sale. Benton noted the money will be rolled into the land bank's coffers to help facilitate other projects.

"Working with The Robert Weiler Company, one of the top commercial real-estate brokerage firms in the region, we were able to attract four offers," Benton said. "The Historical Society's bid was the highest, but we also had to consider the intended use for the property, as well as the potential economic and community impact of whatever went in there. We felt very strongly that the Historical Society ticked all the boxes and will make great new neighbors."

Benton also pointed out that permanent deed restrictions exist that will protect the historic integrity of the building, which dates from 1878 and served as the county's jail until 1988. It was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1990. Until recently, the building housed the Delaware County Law Library, which completed its move to the Carnegie Building at 101 N. Sandusky St. last week. The Fifth District Court of Appeals satellite office is remaining in the building for now, leasing its space from the new owner and will move to the Delaware County Courthouse when space there has been readied.

The Historical Society is initially financing the purchase through an interest-free loan from local retired architect and philanthropist Roger Koch. The Society intends to create office space in the front portion of the building, which had been a residence for county sheriffs and their families. The Old Jail, which remains much as it was 33 years ago when a new jail opened, will be preserved and used for events and educational programming.

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