

Chapter 1724: COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT CORPORATIONS

1724.01 Community improvement corporations

(A) As used in this chapter:

(1) "Community improvement corporation" means an economic development corporation or a county land reutilization corporation.

(2) "Economic development corporation" means a corporation organized for the purposes described in division (B)(1) of this section.

(3) "County land reutilization corporation" means a corporation organized under section 1724.04 of the Revised Code for the purposes described in division (B)(2) of this section.

(B) A corporation not for profit may be organized in the manner provided in section 1702.04 of the Revised Code, and as provided in sections 1724.01 to 1724.09 of the Revised Code, for the purposes of:

(1) Advancing, encouraging, and promoting the industrial, economic, commercial, and civic development of a community or area; or

(2)(a) Facilitating the reclamation, rehabilitation, and reutilization of vacant, abandoned, tax-foreclosed, or other real property within the county for whose benefit the corporation is being organized, but not limited to the purposes described in division (B)(2) of this section;

(b) Efficiently holding and managing vacant, abandoned, or tax-foreclosed real property pending its reclamation, rehabilitation, and reutilization;

(c) Assisting governmental entities and other nonprofit or for-profit persons to assemble, clear, and clear the title of property described in this division in a coordinated manner; or

(d) Promoting economic and housing development in the county or region.

Effective Date: 08-17-1961; 2008 SB353 04-07-2009

1724.02 Powers of corporation

In furtherance of the purposes set forth in section 1724.01 of the Revised Code, a community improvement corporation shall have the following powers:

(A)(1) To borrow money for any of the purposes of the community improvement corporation by means of loans, lines of credit, or any other financial instruments or

securities, including the issuance of its bonds, debentures, notes, or other evidences of indebtedness, whether secured or unsecured, and to secure the same by mortgage, pledge, deed of trust, or other lien on its property, franchises, rights, and privileges of every kind and nature or any part thereof or interest therein; and

(2) If the community improvement corporation is a county land reutilization corporation, the corporation may request, by resolution:

(a) That the board of county commissioners of the county served by the corporation pledge a specifically identified source or sources of revenue pursuant to division (C) of section 307.78 of the Revised Code as security for such borrowing by the corporation; and

(b)(i) If the land subject to reutilization is located within an unincorporated area of the county, that the board of county commissioners issue notes under section 307.082 of the Revised Code for the purpose of constructing public infrastructure improvements and take other actions as the board determines are in the interest of the county and are authorized under sections 5709.78 to 5709.81 of the Revised Code or bonds or notes under section 5709.81 of the Revised Code for the refunding purposes set forth in that section; or

(ii) If the land subject to reutilization is located within the corporate boundaries of a municipal corporation, that the municipal corporation issue bonds for the purpose of constructing public infrastructure improvements and take such other actions as the municipal corporation determines are in its interest and are authorized under sections 5709.40 to 5709.43 of the Revised Code.

(B) To make loans to any person, firm, partnership, corporation, joint stock company, association, or trust, and to establish and regulate the terms and conditions with respect to any such loans; provided that an economic development corporation shall not approve any application for a loan unless and until the person applying for said loan shows that the person has applied for the loan through ordinary banking or commercial channels and that the loan has been refused by at least one bank or other financial institution. Nothing in this division shall preclude a county land reutilization corporation from making revolving loans to community development corporations, private entities, or any person for the purposes contained in the corporation's plan under section 1724.10 of the Revised Code.

(C) To purchase, receive, hold, manage, lease, lease-purchase, or otherwise acquire and to sell, convey, transfer, lease, sublease, or otherwise dispose of real and personal property, together with such rights and privileges as may be incidental and appurtenant thereto and the use thereof, including but not restricted to, any real or personal property acquired by the community improvement corporation from time to time in the satisfaction of debts or enforcement of obligations, and to enter into contracts with third parties, including the federal government, the state, any political subdivision, or any other entity. A county land reutilization corporation shall not acquire an interest in real property if such acquisition causes the percentage of unoccupied real property held by the corporation to become less than seventy-five per cent of all real property held by the corporation for reutilization,

reclamation, or rehabilitation. For the purposes of this division, “unoccupied” has the same meaning as in section 323.65 of the Revised Code.

(D) To acquire the good will, business, rights, real and personal property, and other assets, or any part thereof, or interest therein, of any persons, firms, partnerships, corporations, joint stock companies, associations, or trusts, and to assume, undertake, or pay the obligations, debts, and liabilities of any such person, firm, partnership, corporation, joint stock company, association, or trust; to acquire, reclaim, manage, or contract for the management of improved or unimproved and underutilized real estate for the purpose of constructing industrial plants, other business establishments, or housing thereon, or causing the same to occur, for the purpose of assembling and enhancing utilization of the real estate, or for the purpose of disposing of such real estate to others in whole or in part for the construction of industrial plants, other business establishments, or housing; and to acquire, reclaim, manage, contract for the management of, construct or reconstruct, alter, repair, maintain, operate, sell, convey, transfer, lease, sublease, or otherwise dispose of industrial plants, business establishments, or housing.

(E) To acquire, subscribe for, own, hold, sell, assign, transfer, mortgage, pledge, or otherwise dispose of the stock, shares, bonds, debentures, notes, or other securities and evidences of interest in, or indebtedness of, any person, firm, corporation, joint stock company, association, or trust, and while the owner or holder thereof, to exercise all the rights, powers, and privileges of ownership, including the right to vote therein, provided that no tax revenue, if any, received by a community improvement corporation shall be used for such acquisition or subscription.

(F) To mortgage, pledge, or otherwise encumber any property acquired pursuant to the powers contained in divisions (C), (D), or (E) of this section.

(G) Nothing in this section shall limit the right of a community improvement corporation to become a member of or a stockholder in a corporation formed under Chapter 1726. of the Revised Code.

(H) To serve as an agent for grant applications and for the administration of grants, or to make applications as principal for grants for county land reutilization corporations.

(I) To exercise the powers enumerated under Chapter 5722. of the Revised Code on behalf of a county that organizes or contracts with a county land reutilization corporation.

(J) To engage in code enforcement and nuisance abatement, including, but not limited to, cutting grass and weeds, boarding up vacant or abandoned structures, and demolishing condemned structures on properties that are subject to a delinquent tax or assessment lien, or property for which a municipal corporation or township has contracted with a county land reutilization corporation to provide code enforcement or nuisance abatement assistance.

(K) To charge fees or exchange in-kind goods or services for services rendered to political subdivisions and other persons or entities for whom services are rendered.

(L) To employ and provide compensation for an executive director who shall manage the operations of a county land reutilization corporation and employ others for the benefit of the corporation as approved and funded by the board of directors. No employee of the corporation is or shall be deemed to be an employee of the political subdivision for whose benefit the corporation is organized solely because the employee is employed by the corporation;

(M) To purchase tax certificates at auction, negotiated sale, or from a third party who purchased and is a holder of one or more tax certificates issued pursuant to sections 5721.30 to 5721.43 of the Revised Code;

(N) To be assigned a mortgage on real property from a mortgagee in lieu of acquiring such real property subject to a mortgage.

(O) To do all acts and things necessary or convenient to carry out the purposes of section 1724.01 of the Revised Code and the powers especially created for a community improvement corporation in Chapter 1724. of the Revised Code, including, but not limited to, contracting with the federal government, the state or any political subdivision, and any other party, whether nonprofit or for-profit.

The powers enumerated in this chapter shall not be construed to limit the general powers of a community improvement corporation. The powers granted under this chapter are in addition to those powers granted by any other chapter of the Revised Code, but, as to a county land reutilization corporation, shall be used only for the purposes enumerated under division (B)(2) of section 1724.01 of the Revised Code.

Amended by 128th General Assembly File No. 31, HB 313, § 1, eff. 7/7/2010.

Amended by 128th General Assembly File No. 9, HB 1, § 101.01, eff. 10/16/2009.

Effective Date: 08-29-2003; 2008 SB353 04-07-2009

1724.03 Regulations for government of corporation - board of directors

(A) After the articles of incorporation have been filed, and at the first meeting of the board of directors of a county land reutilization corporation, the board shall adopt regulations for the government of the corporation, the conduct of its affairs, and the management of its property, consistent with law and the articles. The content of the regulations shall be governed by section 1702.11 of the Revised Code to the extent not inconsistent with this chapter.

(B) The board of directors of a county land reutilization corporation shall be composed of five, seven, or nine members, including the county treasurer, at least two of the members of the board of county commissioners, one representative of the largest municipal corporation, based on the population according to the most recent federal decennial census, that is located in the county, one representative of a township with a population of at least ten thousand in the unincorporated area of the township according to the most recent federal decennial census, if such a township exists in the county, and any remaining members selected by the treasurer and the county commissioners who are members of the corporation's board . At least one board member shall have private sector or nonprofit experience in rehabilitation or real estate acquisitions. A county treasurer and the county commissioners each may appoint a representative, as a director of the corporation, to act for the officer at any of the meetings of the corporation. Except as may otherwise be authorized by the regulations of the corporation, all members of the board of directors shall serve without compensation, but shall be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses.

Amended by 128th General Assembly File No. 31, HB 313, § 1, eff. 7/7/2010.

Effective Date: 11-01-1965; 2008 SB353 04-07-2009

1724.04 Articles of incorporation

A county having a population of more than sixty thousand as of the most recent decennial census that elects under section 5722.02 of the Revised Code to adopt and implement the procedures set forth in sections 5722.02 to 5722.15 of the Revised Code may organize a county land reutilization corporation under this chapter and Chapter 1702. of the Revised Code for the purpose of exercising the powers granted to a county under Chapter 5722. of the Revised Code. The county treasurer of the county for the benefit of which the corporation is being organized shall be the incorporator of the county land reutilization corporation. The form of the articles of incorporation of the corporation shall be approved by resolution of the board of county commissioners of the county.

When the articles of incorporation of any community improvement corporation, or any amendment, amended articles, merger, or consolidation which provides for the creation of such a corporation, are deposited for filing and recording in the office of the secretary of state, the secretary of state shall submit them to the attorney general for examination. If such articles, amendment, amended articles, merger, or consolidation, are found by the attorney general to be in accordance with Chapter 1724. of the Revised Code, and not inconsistent with the constitution and laws of the United States and of this state, the attorney general shall endorse thereon the attorney general's approval and deliver them to the secretary of state, who shall file and record them pursuant to section 1702.07 of the Revised Code.

Amended by 128th General Assembly File No. 31, HB 313, § 1, eff. 7/7/2010.

Amended by 128th General Assembly File No. 9, HB 1, § 101.01, eff. 10/16/2009.

Effective Date: 08-17-1961; 2008 SB353 04-07-2009

1724.05 Annual report

Each community improvement corporation shall prepare an annual financial report that conforms to rules prescribed by the auditor of state pursuant to section 117.20 of the Revised Code, that is prepared according to generally accepted accounting principles, and that is certified by the board of directors of the corporation or its treasurer or other chief fiscal officer to the best knowledge and belief of those persons certifying the report. The financial report shall be filed with the auditor of state within one hundred twenty days following the last day of the corporation's fiscal year, unless the auditor of state extends that deadline. The auditor of state may establish terms and conditions for granting any extension of that deadline. The financial report shall be published on the corporation's web site, or if the corporation does not have a web site, on the web site of the county in which the corporation is located.

Each community improvement corporation shall submit to audits by the auditor of state, the scope and frequency of which shall be in accordance with section 117.11 of the Revised Code as if the corporation were a public office subject to that section. However, a community improvement corporation may request in accordance with section 115.56 of the Revised Code, as if the corporation were a public office subject to that section, the performance of any of those audits by an independent certified public accountant or firm of certified public accountants.

The auditor of state is authorized to receive and file the annual financial reports required by this section and the reports of all audits performed in accordance with this section. The auditor of state shall analyze those annual financial reports and the reports of those audits to determine whether the activities of a community improvement corporation involved are in accordance with this chapter.

Amended by 128th General Assembly File No. 31, HB 313, § 1, eff. 7/7/2010.

Effective Date: 03-12-2001; 2008 SB353 04-07-2009

1724.06 Failure to file annual financial report

If any community improvement corporation fails to prepare an annual financial report as required by section 1724.05 of the Revised Code and to file that report with the auditor of state within ninety days of the time prescribed for that filing by that section, or if the auditor of state determines by applying the standards applicable to a public office under section 117.41 of the Revised Code that any community improvement corporation cannot be audited and declares it to be unauditible and the corporation fails to then prepare an annual financial report as required by section 1724.05 of the Revised Code and to file that

report with the auditor of state within ninety days of the time that the auditor of state declared the corporation to be unauditabile, the auditor of state shall certify that fact to the secretary of state. The secretary of state then shall cancel the articles of the community improvement corporation involved by filing and recording the certificate of the auditor of state or a true copy of it. All of the rights, privileges, and franchises conferred upon that community improvement corporation by those articles of incorporation then shall cease. The secretary of state shall immediately notify that community improvement corporation of the action taken. Reinstatement may be accomplished within two years after that cancellation upon proper filing of all delinquent annual financial reports to the satisfaction of the auditor of state and the filing of the auditor of state's certificate reflecting that satisfaction with the secretary of state, who shall be entitled to a fee of ten dollars for recording the certificate in the corporate records. That filing may be made by any officer, member, creditor, receiver, lessee, or sublessee of the community improvement corporation involved, and any such person or agent of any such person shall be granted access to the books and records of the corporation for that purpose. The rights, privileges, and franchises of a community improvement corporation whose articles have been reinstated are subject to section 1702.60 of the Revised Code.

Effective Date: 03-12-2001

1724.07 Application of remaining assets after dissolution or liquidation

In the event of any voluntary or involuntary dissolution, liquidation, or failure to reinstate the articles after cancellation of the community improvement corporation, any remaining assets shall be applied as follows:

(A) In the case of an economic development corporation, to such civic projects or public charitable purposes in the community or area as may be determined by the directors with the approval of the court of common pleas of the county wherein the corporation has its principal place of business;

(B) In the case of a county land reutilization corporation, as determined by the board of county commissioners with the written approval of the county treasurer. Pending the determination, the remaining assets shall be transferred to the general fund of the county to be held and accounted for in a separate account until applied as determined by the board.

Effective Date: 08-17-1961; 2008 SB353 04-07-2009

1724.10 Political designating community improvement corporation as agency for development

(A) A community improvement corporation may be designated :

(1) By a county, one or more townships, one or more municipal corporations, two or more adjoining counties, or any combination of the foregoing as the agency of each such political subdivision for the industrial, commercial, distribution, and research development in such political subdivision when the legislative authority of such political subdivision has determined that the policy of the political subdivision is to promote the health, safety, morals, and general welfare of its inhabitants through the designation of a community improvement corporation as such agency;

(2) Solely by a county as the agency for the reclamation, rehabilitation, and reutilization of vacant, abandoned, tax-foreclosed, or other real property in the county;

(3) By any political subdivision as the agency for the reclamation, rehabilitation, and reutilization of vacant, abandoned, tax-foreclosed, or other real property within the political subdivision if the subdivision enters into an agreement with the community improvement corporation that is the agency of a county, under division (A)(2) of this section, designating the corporation as the agency of the political subdivision.

(B) Designations under this section shall be made by the legislative authority of the political subdivision by resolution or ordinance. Any political subdivision which has designated a community improvement corporation as such agency under this section may enter into an agreement with it to provide any one or more of the following:

(1) That the community improvement corporation shall prepare a plan for the political subdivision of industrial, commercial, distribution, and research development, or of reclamation, rehabilitation, and reutilization of vacant, abandoned, tax-foreclosed, or other real property, and such plan shall provide therein the extent to which the community improvement corporation shall participate as the agency of the political subdivision in carrying out such plan. Such plan shall be confirmed by the legislative authority of the political subdivision. A community improvement corporation may insure mortgage payments required by a first mortgage on any industrial, economic, commercial, or civic property for which funds have been loaned by any person, corporation, bank, or financial or lending institution upon such terms and conditions as the community improvement corporation may prescribe. A community improvement corporation may incur debt, mortgage its property acquired under this section or otherwise, and issue its obligations, for the purpose of acquiring, constructing, improving, and equipping buildings, structures, and other properties, and acquiring sites therefor, for lease or sale by the community improvement corporation in order to carry out its participation in such plan. Except as provided for in division (C) of section 307.78 of the Revised Code, any such debt shall be solely that of the corporation and shall not be secured by the pledge of any moneys received or to be received from any political subdivision. All revenue bonds issued under sections 1724.02 and 1724.10 of the Revised Code are lawful investments of banks, savings and loan associations, deposit guarantee associations, trust companies, trustees, fiduciaries, trustees or other officers having charge of sinking or bond retirement funds of municipal corporations and other subdivisions of the state, and of domestic insurance companies notwithstanding sections 3907.14 and 3925.08 of the Revised Code. Not less than two-fifths of the governing board of any economic development corporation

designated as the agency of one or more political subdivisions shall be composed of mayors, members of municipal legislative authorities, members of boards of township trustees, members of boards of county commissioners, or any other appointed or elected officers of such political subdivisions, provided that at least one officer from each political subdivision shall be a member of the governing board. Membership on the governing board of a community improvement corporation does not constitute the holding of a public office or employment within the meaning of sections 731.02 and 731.12 of the Revised Code or any other section of the Revised Code. The board of directors of a county land reutilization corporation shall be composed of the members set forth in section 1724.03 of the Revised Code. Membership on such governing boards shall not constitute an interest, either direct or indirect, in a contract or expenditure of money by any municipal corporation, township, county, or other political subdivision. No member of such governing boards shall be disqualified from holding any public office or employment, nor shall such member forfeit any such office or employment, by reason of membership on the governing board of a community improvement corporation notwithstanding any law to the contrary.

Actions taken under this section shall be in accordance with any applicable planning or zoning regulations.

Any agreement entered into under this section may be amended or supplemented from time to time by the parties thereto.

An economic development corporation designated as the agency of a political subdivision under this section shall promote and encourage the establishment and growth in such subdivision of industrial, commercial, distribution, and research facilities. A county land reutilization corporation designated as the agency of a political subdivision in an agreement between a political subdivision and a corporation shall promote the reclamation, rehabilitation, and reutilization of vacant, abandoned, tax-foreclosed, or other real property in the subdivision.

(2) Authorization for the community improvement corporation to sell or to lease any lands or interests in lands owned by the political subdivision determined from time to time by the legislative authority thereof not to be required by such political subdivision for its purposes, for uses determined by the legislative authority as those that will promote the welfare of the people of the political subdivision, stabilize the economy, provide employment, assist in the development of industrial, commercial, distribution, and research activities to the benefit of the people of the political subdivision, will provide additional opportunities for their gainful employment, or will promote the reclamation, rehabilitation, and reutilization of vacant, abandoned, tax-foreclosed, or other real property within the subdivision. The legislative authority shall specify the consideration for such sale or lease and any other terms thereof. Any determinations made by the legislative authority under this division shall be conclusive. The community improvement corporation acting through its officers and on behalf and as agent of the political subdivision shall execute the necessary instruments, including deeds conveying the title of the political subdivision or leases, to accomplish such sale or lease. Such conveyance or lease shall be made without advertising and receipt of bids. A copy of such agreement shall be recorded

in the office of the county recorder of any county in which lands or interests in lands to be sold or leased are situated prior to the recording of a deed or lease executed pursuant to such agreement. The county recorder shall not charge a county land reutilization corporation a fee as otherwise provided in section 317.32 of the Revised Code for the recording, indexing, or making of a certified copy or for the filing of any instrument by a county land reutilization corporation consistent with its public purposes.

(3) That the political subdivision executing the agreement will convey to the community improvement corporation lands and interests in lands owned by the political subdivision and determined by the legislative authority thereof not to be required by the political subdivision for its purposes and that such conveyance of such land or interests in land will promote the welfare of the people of the political subdivision, stabilize the economy, provide employment, assist in the development of industrial, commercial, distribution, and research activities to the benefit of the people of the political subdivision, provide additional opportunities for their gainful employment or will promote the reclamation, rehabilitation, and reutilization of vacant, abandoned, tax-foreclosed, or other real property in the subdivision, for the consideration and upon the terms established in the agreement, and further that as the agency for development or land reutilization the community improvement corporation may acquire from others additional lands or interests in lands, and any lands or interests in land so conveyed by it for uses that will promote the welfare of the people of the political subdivision, stabilize the economy, provide employment, assist in the development of industrial, commercial, distribution, and research activities required for the people of the political subdivision and for their gainful employment or will promote the reclamation, rehabilitation, and reutilization of vacant, abandoned, tax-foreclosed, or other real property in the subdivision. Any conveyance or lease by the political subdivision to the community improvement corporation shall be made without advertising and receipt of bids. If any lands or interests in land conveyed by a political subdivision under this division are sold by the community improvement corporation at a price in excess of the consideration received by the political subdivision from the community improvement corporation, such excess shall be paid to such political subdivision after deducting, to the extent and in the manner provided in the agreement, the costs of such acquisition and sale, taxes, assessments, costs of maintenance, costs of improvements to the land by the community improvement corporation, service fees, and any debt service charges of the corporation attributable to such land or interests.

Effective Date: 07-01-1993; 2008 SB353 04-07-2009

1724.11 Confidentiality of information

(A) When a community improvement corporation is acting as an agent of a political subdivision designated pursuant to section 1724.10 of the Revised Code and at all times as a county land reutilization corporation, both of the following apply:

(1) Any financial and proprietary information, including trade secrets, submitted by or on behalf of an entity to the community improvement corporation in connection with the

relocation, location, expansion, improvement, or preservation of the business of that entity, or in the pursuit of any one or more of the purposes under division (B) of section 1724.01 of the Revised Code for which a county land reutilization corporation is organized, held or kept by the community improvement corporation, or by any political subdivision for which the community improvement corporation is acting as agent, is confidential information and is not a public record subject to section 149.43 of the Revised Code.

(2) Any other information submitted by or on behalf of an entity to the community improvement corporation in connection with the relocation, location, expansion, improvement, or preservation of the business of that entity held or kept by the community improvement corporation, or by any political subdivision for which the community improvement corporation is acting as agent, is confidential information and is not a public record subject to section 149.43 of the Revised Code, until the entity commits in writing to proceed with the relocation, location, expansion, improvement, preservation of its business, or other purpose under division (B) of section 1724.01 of the Revised Code.

(B)(1) When the board of directors of a community improvement corporation or any committee or subcommittee of such a board meets to consider information that is not a public record pursuant to division (A) of this section, the board, committee, or subcommittee, by majority vote of all members present, may close the meeting during consideration of the confidential information. The board, committee, or subcommittee shall consider no other information during the closed session.

(2) Any meeting at which a decision or determination of the board is required in connection with the relocation, location, expansion, improvement, or preservation of the business of the entity or is required in pursuit of any purpose under division (B) of section 1724.01 of the Revised Code for which a county land reutilization corporation is organized shall be open to the public.

Effective Date: 05-17-2000; 2008 SB353 04-07-2009