



Auburn Industrial
Development Authority

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
AUBURN INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Wednesday, May 20, 2020 @ 5:00pm
Remote due to COVID-19

- Board Present:** James Dacey (Chair & Member of Business)
William Andre (Vice-Chair & Member of Labor)
Ron LaVarnway (Member at Large)
Brandon Gravius (Member of Industry)
Jeff Gasper (School Board Member)
Terry Cuddy (Council Member)
Jimmy Giannettino (Council Member)
Gwen Webber-McLeod (Member at Large)
- Board Excused:** Roger Beer (Member at Large)
- Staff & Guests:** Tracy Verrier, Executive Director
Samantha Frugé, Assistant Treasurer

Mr. Dacey, Chair called the meeting to order at 5:00pm, noting the presence of a quorum.

MEETING MINUTES

Mr. LaVarnway moved to accept the minutes from the April 15th Regular meeting and May 1st Special Meeting; seconded by Mr. Andre. All members present voted in favor; motion carried.

BILLS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Frugé presented the following bills: CEDA for the first quarter administrative services (\$5,015.20) and the Citizen for a public hearing notice (\$44.28).

REPORT OF THE TREASURER

Ms. Frugé reviewed the April budget report and noted that they received interest income from savings accounts totaling \$24.93, but otherwise had no other transactions or revenues in April. Mr. Cuddy motioned to approve the report of the Treasurer, seconded by Mr. Giannettino. All members present voted in favor; motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Secretary Nomination: Mr. Dacey asked if there were any Board members interested in filling the Secretary seat? Mr. Cuddy volunteered to fill the position. Mr. Dacey motioned to appoint Mr. Cuddy as the Secretary, seconded by Mr. Giannettino. All members present voted in favor; motion carried.

Board Priorities & Project Evaluation Discussion: Ms. Verrier summarized discussions from the last regular meeting regarding project priorities and explained that there was an opportunity to re-evaluate how the Board considered different projects and

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their outcomes. Mr. Andre said, from his perspective, it appeared they had drifted from job creation as a primary outcome for projects. He added that it also appeared that the local labor policy had not been fully enforced. Ms. Verrier said that they have been seeing projects from both IDAs having difficulty meeting the local labor policy and suggested that the percentages may need to be adjusted. She noted that the particular scope of work being done for a project should be kept in consideration when looking at local labor percentages as well. She added that the current percentages required 65% of labor to be from within Cayuga County. She said that a number of projects that had requested a waiver provided their bid lists that showed local businesses were not responding to bids. Sometimes it is also an issue of timing as a project may not realize they need a waiver until after benefits are approved, but that both IDAs had seen projects come back to seek waivers. Mr. Giannettino said that City projects were also getting a lot of no-bids from local contractors on projects, or with local companies coming in significantly more expensive than other companies. Mr. Andre said that the current labor percentages may be high and should be evaluated for adjustment. Mr. Dacey said that his issue was with projects that went forward with the construction and then later asked for a waiver. Ms. Verrier suggested they review the policy and discuss it further at the next meeting to allow time for everyone to consider.

Mr. Andre discussed what types of projects the organization should be working with, noting that he wished to see more industrial projects per the original goal of the organization. Mr. Dacey said that the original goal does not necessarily align with the changing economic atmosphere and that the organization should help businesses that support the community. Mr. Dacey said that there were quite a few existing PILOTs that were structured to where the projects were not building up to their actual tax liability and were over 10 years. He expressed that he wanted to move away from non-traditionally structured PILOTs that had long lengths. Ms. Verrier said that the Board could establish policies delineating what the "standard" PILOT should look like and decide on any other criteria a project could meet in order to negotiate a deviation from that standard. Mr. Dacey reviewed his list of criteria suggestions such as job creation, adherence to local labor policy, compatibility with local businesses (increases tourism, increases local sales tax base), communication with existing businesses in order to be proactive with their needs, and PILOT term length. Mr. Cuddy said that, along the lines of considering community welfare as criteria, they should also consider qualitative criteria, such as projects offering childcare or higher-than-average wages. Ms. Webber-McLeod agreed, noting that the quality of jobs created can impact the quality of life for residents in the community. Ms. Webber-McLeod also noted other topics they may explore, such as studying what types of projects are requesting assistance and why local companies are not bidding on projects. Ms. Verrier said that one answer to the no-bid situation was that there may not be enough companies or workers to service the area for specific scopes of work. Ms. Webber-McLeod said that if they could make this an area of study it could improve the decision-making of the Board members when considering projects. Mr. Dacey noted that it was important to consider the needs of existing businesses and how to fill and attract the gaps in industry. Ms. Verrier said that they should consider how the organization can be involved with potentially home-growing those businesses to fill industry gaps and how entrepreneurial businesses fit into this category. Mr. Gasper said that internships and co-op models were beneficial for individuals to get a first-hand experience of working with specific companies or industries while also observing any gaps in the industry. He also explained that having a framework for PILOT criteria would be useful, so that even if a project deviated from the standard PILOT, the organization could justify the deviation due to the project meeting specific criteria. Mr. Cuddy said that it might be useful to develop criteria for specific industries, as not every industry will be able to meet certain criteria. Ms. Verrier agreed, noting that breaking down targeted criteria for different industries is considered best practice; whereas their

current policies met State law but were very broad. Ms. Verrier said that she would summarize some of the ideas from this meeting for the Governance Committee to review.

Mr. Giannettino asked if there has ever been any effort to market the Auburn area and if there were funds they could use to market? Mr. Dacey said that CEDA would be a more appropriate avenue to market the Auburn area for potential businesses. Ms. Verrier said that CEDA was currently working on an attraction plan focused on placemaking, which focuses on the community as opposed to just incentives and benefits. Mr. Giannettino suggested that if AIDA had the funds it might be useful to do attraction through AIDA as well. Ms. Verrier said that coordinating approaches was important, because if CEDA and AIDA were both marketing the Auburn area, it becomes an issue of competing messages. Mr. Dacey said that this could be something they could discuss again.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Ms. Verrier advised to check the Chamber events page to see what events were being held remotely.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Mr. Cuddy, seconded by Mr. Gravius. All members present voted in favor; meeting adjourned at 5:52pm.

Next regularly scheduled meeting Wednesday, June 17th, 2020 @ 5:00pm.