



**Regular Meeting Minutes
Auburn Industrial Development Authority
Wednesday, June 19, 2024 @ 5:00pm
Remote and board attendance
2 State St., Auburn, NY**

Board Present: William Andre (Vice-Chair & Member of Labor)
Jimmy Giannettino (Council Member)
Tessa Crawford (Treasurer & Member at Large)
Dan Lovell (Representative of Auburn School District)
Terry Cuddy (Secretary & Council Member)
Karen Walter
Katie MacIntyre

Excused: Gwen Webber-McLeod (Chair)

Staff & Guests: Stephanie Leone (Zoom)
Rob Poyer, AIDA Council (Hancock Estabrook)
Chris and John Geherin, Builder's Choice
Tracy Verrier, MRB Group

Mr. Andre called the meeting to order at 5:03pm and a roll call was taken.

MEETING MINUTES:

The minutes of the May regular meeting were reviewed, and a motion was made by Mr. Giannettino to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Lovell. All present voted in favor, motion carried.

BILLS AND COMMUNICATION:

Ms. Verrier reported that there is an invoice from MRB Group for \$4,500 for services through June 1st. There are two bills from CEDA, one for the first quarter of this year for \$5,000 and one for only April. These are the only bills that need approval. Ms. Verrier also reported that there are also bills for domain renewal and postage. Ms. Verrier noted that there was also one PILOT payment that had not yet been disbursed for \$126,000, which was sent out to the municipality this week.

Mr. Lovell made a motion to approve payment of these bills, seconded by Mr. Giannettino. All present voted in favor, motion carried.

Ms. Verrier noted that after the PILOT disbursements, the checking account is only at about \$23,000, and the savings account is at \$171,854. Ms. Verrier recommended moving money to the checking account in addition to the CD conversation later.

TREASURER REPORT:

Ms. Crawford noted that, as Ms. Verrier had said, of the \$322,000 in AIDA's accounts, \$126,000 just went out for a PILOT payment. Ms. Crawford noted that the receivable balance represents PILOT bills that will be sent out to correct for underbilling in 2023. In the liabilities section, Ms. Crawford noted that the city loan will be discussed in the unfinished business portion of the meeting. For the profit and loss statement, Ms. Crawford explained that there was about \$4,000 in revenue, which came from administrative fees and interest income. She also noted that the audit bill was \$9,950.

Ms. Walter made a motion to approve the treasurer's report, seconded by Ms. MacIntyre. All present voted in favor, motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

Builder's Choice Application

Ms. Verrier presented the Builder's Choice application. They are seeking roughly \$85,000 in AIDA assistance via two tax abatements: the sales use tax exemption and mortgage recording tax abatement. In working through the SEQR process, it was revealed that they property shares about 50 feet of property line with the Seymour Mansion on Genesee Street, which is eligible for listing in the historic register (but is not listed). This triggers different things within the process, so Ms. Verrier recommended that the AIDA board wait until the site plan review done by the City is complete. AIDA can then accept that SEQR finding. No disruption or disturbance to the historic property is anticipated. Builder's Choice will return to AIDA for project approval after the site plan approval. Ms. Verrier introduced Chris and John Geherin of Builder's Choice and asked them to provide an overview of their project.

Mr. Jon Geherin explained that they bought the property last fall because their business has grown to be too large for their current facility. The railroad is adjacent to the new property where they intend to build a new lumberyard. 30% of their materials come in by rail. Currently they use their neighbor's spur, but this is not the ideal situation for Builder's Choice as they then have to truck the materials to their facility. With their own rail access, they believe they can substantially increase their inputs. They are also open to allowing other small business owners in the community to use the rail on the property in the future. The reduced costs of having direct rail access will help them to stay competitive. They have already cleaned up and invested in the property, ensuring the landscaping is maintained.

Mr. Giannettino asked about what the review process is. Mr. Poyer responded that it's a coordinated review process with the City. A property owner can potentially petition to say changes will disturb a historical structure, but this is not an anticipated challenge.

Mr. Chris Geherin showed the property on the map, pointing out the proposed construction relative to the property line and the mansion. Ms. Verrier noted that the proposed construction is a 12,000 square foot building. Mr. Jon Geherin explained that they will have a better idea what it will look like next month.

Videoconferencing Policy

Ms. Verrier explained that current NYS Open Meetings Law allows board members to attend and participate in meetings remotely under "extenuating circumstances" as long as the board has established a policy defining those circumstances and a quorum of the board is present in person. If the board wishes to move forward with this, a policy must first be drafted then presented at a public hearing. Ms. Verrier then described the pros and cons of having a videoconferencing policy from her experience.

Mr. Lovell asked if they have a policy written. Ms. Verrier responded that there is a fairly standard policy that Mr. Poyer can provide. Ms. MacIntyre explained that she thinks it is a good idea to have a policy like this to provide flexibility when needed, but noted that the board should still encourage as much in person attendance as possible.

Ms. Verrier recommended that the policy define "extenuating circumstances" as issues with childcare, illness, and travel.

Mr. Cuddy made a motion to set a public hearing to gather input on a videoconferencing policy, seconded by Ms. MacIntyre. All present voted in favor, motion carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Quickbooks

Ms. Crawford explained that AIDA can no longer use CEDA’s Quickbooks subscription, and recommended obtaining an online Quickbooks Plus subscription for optimum user flexibility. The associated cost is \$45 per month for the first three months, then \$90 per month. The board discussed the online Quickbooks subscription and whether other options might exist.

Mr. Giannettino made a motion to approve the establishment of a Quickbooks Pro online subscription as presented, seconded by Mr. Lovell. All present voted in favor, motion carried.

Resolution: Waiver and Release of PILOT Penalties

RESOLUTION APPROVING THE REQUEST TO AFFECTED TAXING JURISDICTIONS FOR WAIVER AND RELEASE OF INTEREST AND PENALTIES FOR LATE REMITTANCE OF PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF TAXES

Ms. Crawford explained that AIDA owes some penalties and late fees to the three taxing jurisdictions in relation to the 2023 PILOT payment disbursements. Those fees are \$19,631.49 to the City of Auburn, \$28,084.57 to the Auburn School District, and \$12,660.10 to Cayuga County. She explained the resolution, which would authorize Hancock Estabrook to send letters requesting that the jurisdictions waive these penalties and fees, which were discovered and calculated as part of the audit process. The letters would also include a suggested draft resolution for the jurisdictions’ consideration.

Mr. Cuddy motioned to approve the resolution authorizing the request of waivers for PILOT penalties and fees as described. Mr. Lovell seconded the motion. The resolution was put to a roll call vote, which resulted as follows:

	Yea	Nay	Absent	Abstain
Gwendolyn Webber-McLeod, Chair			X	
William Andre, Vice Chair	X			
Terry Cuddy, Secretary	X			
James Giannettino	X			
Katie McIntyre	X			
Daniel Lovell	X			
Tessa Crawford	X			
Stephanie Leone			X	
Karen Walter	X			

The Resolution was thereupon duly adopted.

City Loan Payment

Ms. Crawford noted that as part of their corrective action plan, the Finance Committee is recommending to move forward with paying off the loan to the City. The principal payment is \$23,100 and the interest is \$11,220.

Ms. Crawford motioned to approve the dispersal of funds to pay the principal and interest on the City loan, seconded by Mr. Lovell. All present voted in favor, motion carried.

Budget Amendment

Ms. Crawford explained that the Finance Committee reviewed the 2024 budget adopted last October given the recent changes to staffing. Ms. Crawford reviewed the recommended changes. These changes result in revenue increase of \$1,450 related to anticipated interest income and an increase in expenses of \$5,900, for a net loss of \$20,500 (compared to \$16,050 in the original budget).

Ms. Verrier noticed and reported a typo in the amended budget, which had marketing expenses at \$1,000 instead of \$10,000 as discussed by the committee. Ms. MacIntyre suggested halving the original budget, for a new marketing budget of \$7,500. Other board members agreed with the proposed change.

Ms. MacIntyre motioned to approve the amended budget with a marketing expense of \$7,500. Mr. Giannettino seconded the motion. All present voted in favor, motion carried.

CD

Ms. Crawford explained that in October there was a motion to put \$150,000 into a five-month CD at Generations Bank, but this was never done. Ms. Crawford reviewed the current terms and interest rates provided by Generations Bank, Chemung Canal Trust, Lyons National Bank, and Tompkins Trust Company. She also reviewed the cash position of AIDA, noting that there are sufficient funds to manage the budget and invest into a CD. Ms. Verrier recommended either the Lyons 6 month CD because it has the highest interest rate at that term, or the Chemung 9 month CD because it had the shortest term at 5%. Ms. Crawford noted that all of the banks should offer a checking account option that would work to establish a dedicated account for PILOT payments and disbursements as recommended in the corrective action plan. The board could choose to open that account with the same bank as the CD, or at two separate banks.

The board discussed the various options. Ms. Crawford noted they could safely place \$50,000 to \$75,000 in a CD. Mr. Cuddy expressed that he would prefer \$75,000 in order to generate more interest before rates go down. Ms. Verrier recommended that they transfer \$35,000 to the Generations checking account as well to manage cashflow of the organization.

Mr. Lovell motioned to move \$75,000 into a 9-month CD with Chemung Canal Trust and to establish a dedicated PILOT checking account with Chemung Canal Trust with the minimum deposit amount, as well as transfer \$35,000 to Generations checking, with all funds coming out of the Generations savings account. Mr. Giannettino seconded the motion. All present voted in favor, motion carried.

Committee Appointments

Mr. Andre explained that board needs to finish populating committees, the process for which began during the May meeting. The committee descriptions were listed in the packet. Mr. Andre asked if there were any volunteers for specific committees. The board discussed the committees and where they felt comfortable contributing.

Mr. Andre, Mr. Lovell, and Mr. Cuddy agreed to sit on the Governance Committee, with Mr. Cuddy as the chair.

Ms. MacIntyre asked if they will be RFP-ing the audit this year, and Mr. Verrier noted that they should quickly make a decision about what to do for the 2024 audit so they can get onto a firm's schedule. Ms. MacIntyre volunteered to be on the Audit Committee, as did Ms. Leone and Mr. Giannettino. Ms. Leone volunteered to be the chair of the Audit Committee.

Ms. MacIntyre volunteered to chair the Marketing Committee, and Mr. Lovell and Mr. Cuddy agreed to be the other members of the committee.

Ms. MacIntyre motioned to approve the committee appointments as discussed, seconded by Ms. Walter. All present voted in favor, motion carried.

Ms. Verrier provided options regarding the audit, noting that they have been receiving significant discounts from the auditing firm. She reached out to D&M and they provided an estimate of \$12,000 for the 2024 audit. Ms. Verrier noted that she thinks if they were to RFP the audit they would receive similar or higher quotes. Ms. Walter asked if they can contract a firm for multiple years. Ms. Verrier responded that was an option and recommended that the board seek a 3 year contract. However, the lead auditor does

need to change every 5 years, which has not been an issue. The board agreed that they would like to see a 3 year contract with D&M rather than RFPing. Ms. Verrier will request this and bring it to the next meeting for review.

Resolution: Appoint Interim Executive Director

RESOLUTION OF THE AUBURN INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (THE "AUTHORITY") APPOINTING TRACY VERRIER AS INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.

Ms. Verrier explained the resolution, which appoints her as the interim Executive Director, contracting officer, and designated PARIS certifier.

Mr. Cuddy motioned to approve the resolution as presented, seconded by Mr. Lovell. All present voted in favor. The Resolution was duly adopted.

IDA Academy – 7/25

Mr. Verrier noted that the IDA Academy was rescheduled to July 25th and asked if anyone from the board is interested in attending. She noted the cost is \$125 per person or \$500 for five people. Ms. Verrier noted they can also reimburse mileage for travel to the Academy, but didn't anticipate any lodging costs since it is Binghamton. Ms. Walter and Ms. MacIntyre expressed interest in attending the Academy. Ms. Verrier will follow-up with them as well as ask Ms. Webber-McLeod if she would like to attend.

Ms. Crawford motioned to approve the expenditure associated with three board members attending the NYSEDC Summer IDA Academy, seconded by Mr. Giannettino. All present voted in favor, motion carried.

Other Business

Ms. Verrier explained that CEDA is moving offices, and they need to decide what to do about files. The new tenant in the space will be a Cayuga County department. Ms. Verrier recommended consolidating the files and leaving them locked in cabinets through the County's tenancy. The board agreed with this recommendation.

BOARD EDUCATION: AIDA Property

Ms. Verrier overviewed the properties owned by AIDA. She recommended looking into selling the four smaller parcels on Case and Bradley that are zoned for residential use. The board discussed the possibility of selling these properties. Ms. Verrier agreed to look into whether the parcels will need to be appraised and reach out to the agent that the City has been working with to see if he would be interested in working with AIDA on these parcels.

BOARD UPDATES

There were no board updates.

CLOSING

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Ms. MacIntyre, seconded by Mr. Giannettino. All present voted in favor, motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 6:33pm.