



**Regular Meeting Minutes
Auburn Industrial Development Authority
Wednesday, August 21, 2024 @ 5:00pm
Remote and board attendance
2 State St., Auburn, NY**

Board Present: Gwen Webber-McLeod (Chair)
Jimmy Giannettino (Council Member)
Tessa Crawford (Treasurer & Member at Large)
Dan Lovell (Representative of Auburn School District)
Katie MacIntyre*
Karen Walter
Terry Cuddy (Secretary & Council Member)

Excused: William Andre (Vice-Chair & Member of Labor)
Stephanie Leone

Staff & Guests: Rob Poyer, Hancock Estabrook
Tracy Verrier, MRB Group
Jeff Dygert, City of Auburn

**Remote attendance*

REGULAR MEETING

Ms. Webber-McLeod called the meeting to order at 5:03pm and a roll call was taken.

MEETING MINUTES:

The minutes of the July regular meeting and August Finance Committee meeting were reviewed. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Giannettino, seconded by Mr. Lovell. All present voted in favor, motion carried.

BILLS AND COMMUNICATION:

Ms. Verrier reviewed the bills.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Ms. Crawford noted that she now has access to the bank account and QuickBooks for additional oversight. She explained that the new checking account and CD were established. Some items in Quickbooks are still being reconciled, including the Due to Government account. Ms. Crawford reviewed the profit and loss statement and explained the expenses and income, noting that for July contract services include MRB Group and the travel and meetings expense was for the recent IDA Academy. She noted that there is nothing is out of the ordinary.

Ms. Webber-McLeod praised Ms. Crawford for her actions to put AIDA in alignment with the agreed-upon corrective action plan following the 2023 audit.

Mr. Lovell motioned to pay the bills as presented and approve the treasurer's report, seconded by Mr. Cuddy. All present voted in favor, motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

Report from IDA Academy

Ms. Walter attended the IDA Academy and presented her takeaways to the board. She noted that there are two things on the horizon to be aware of: 1) DEC is expected to expand wetland buffers and review of endangered species, and 2) there is a bill pending that will require IDAs to consider whether a project will provide childcare.

Ms. Walter explained some additional topics she found interesting from the Academy. One presenter mentioned that IDAs should be thinking long-term, about what a project will look like 30 years ahead. Another mentioned that if something doesn't seem right, it is okay to slow down, say something, and ask questions. Presenters recommended that IDAs talk to their energy providers to better understand their power capacities. Ms. Walter also noted that state auditors that presented encouraged IDAs to think about additional ways to verify job creation. Ms. Verrier noted that state auditors want verification beyond the NY45s. Currently, the existing monitoring policy includes an annual visit, which could help on this front. Ms. Verrier noted that this topic should be revisited as the transition progresses. Mr. Poyer noted that collecting NY45s and periodic inspections should satisfy state auditors. He explained that he thinks it's also a matter of tracking change of circumstances at projects, which the site visits would accomplish.

Ms. Walter said that presenters explained that HCR's Low Income Tax Credits are now only for new construction, and can no longer be used for rehabilitation of existing housing stock. Mr. Giannettino expressed disappointment at this and said that this change will make reaching the state's Pro Housing goals more difficult.

Ms. Walter finished her summary of the IDA Academy by noting that she learned that every dollar of IDA tax abatement generates \$6.57 in new tax revenues.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Updates

Regarding the transition of county-wide economic development efforts, Ms. Webber-McLeod noted that it would be good to have public communication about where people can go for assistance and where the county is in the process. Mr. Giannettino said that he would not support AIDA joining a one-stop under CCDC as AIDA is not represented in the CCDC board starting now. He suggested that they submit a letter to CCDC outlining what is needed for them to consider participating. Ms. Verrier disclosed that she is on the CCDC board, and as such cannot represent AIDA in those discussions given her fiduciary duty. She agreed that a letter communicating from the board to CCDC directly would be helpful in that regard. Mr. Cuddy added that he wants to see clearer community about economic development activities in the long-term. He explained that it sometimes felt like they were left in the dark with CEDA and wants to ensure that is not going to be the case with CCDC.

Ms. Webber-McLeod noted that it sounds like they are in agreement about sending CCDC a letter to outline what they are looking for in terms of their participation. The board discussed and agreed that the letter should request:

- That two City of Auburn representatives, one being an AIDA member, be added to the CCDC board as soon as possible and prior to the engagement of an executive director search firm;
- That AIDA have representation in the CCDC executive director search;
- Clarity and communication regarding the the interim plan/process;
- communication from CCDC to AIDA about the status of the process; and
- information about the nature and timing of public communication about the process and interim supports.

Ms. Walter said she was disappointed to hear the response that CCDC did not want to add new board members now since this was launched as a partnership.

Ms. Webber-McLeod agreed to draft the letter.

BOARD EDUCATION: HOUSING

Ms. Webber-McLeod explained the importance of continuing the discussion about housing to establish clarity and understanding about AIDA's role in the overarching conversation, as well as ensuring cohesion about their point of view during ongoing conversations about economic development. She noted that they want to be speaking with one voice about emerging opportunities and scenarios. Additionally, even if AIDA can't do something directly, they can help advocate and facilitate activities to improve Auburn's position for economic development.

Ms. Verrier presented on why IDAs are getting involved in housing, the housing continuum, what some other IDAs are doing in their UTEPs around housing, and best practices for establishing "but for". Mr. Giannettino noted that they should be in the housing conversation. He expressed wanting to target specific types of projects that would have the greatest impact, rather than it being a free-for-all for all housing development projects. Mr. Giannettino asked if there is market data to show that additional rental units lead to more single-family homes going on the markets (e.g. seniors downsizing to apartments and selling their homes). Ms. Verrier will look into that.

Ms. Crawford asked if they have to limit the types of housing projects they are involved in. Ms. Verrier explained that right now, the only projects AIDA can be involved in are those that can be justified as commercial. Right now that tends to be rental projects. They can advocate and get creative with single family projects, but cannot provide incentives for that type of housing. Ms. Crawford noted that if that is the case, then they can put together incentive packages for specific project types they'd like to support and advertise that. Ms. Verrier noted that it would be good to come to an agreement about what the IDA wants to support and how, then updating the UTEP accordingly.

Ms. Walter asked how the Pro Housing initiative impacts or interacts with AIDA's incentives. Ms. Verrier explained that like ESD grants, IDA incentives could layer with some of the Pro Housing grants quite well. They play a different role for developers than the grant funding. The IDA PILOT helps to manage developer costs over time and encourages long-term financial sustainability of the projects, while grants tend to help offset the upfront cost.

Ms. Webber-McLeod thinks it is important to understand the city's perspective on how they'd like to see the IDA get involved with the Pro Housing work. Mr. Jeff Dygert, City Manager,

noted that they should have a workshop or educational session to learn about housing and potential places for collaboration with the city and other partners. Ms. Walter noted that they should also work to involve the stakeholders being impacted by certain projects more.

BOARD UPDATES

There were no board updates.

CLOSING

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

The meeting adjourned at 6:33pm.