



**Marketing Committee Meeting Minutes
Auburn Industrial Development Authority
Thursday, September 26, 2024 @ 4:00pm
Memorial City Hall, 24 South Street, Auburn, NY**

Board Present: Katie MacIntyre (Committee Chair)
Terry Cuddy
Dan Lovell

Excused:

Staff & Guests: Tracy Verrier, MRB Group
Gwen Webber-McLeod, Board Chair

Ms. MacIntyre called the meeting to order at 4:02pm noting that a quorum was present.

COMMITTEE PURPOSE & GOALS

Ms. MacIntyre read the original intention of the committee and expressed her excitement for the committee's first meeting.

MARKETING PRIORITIES & NEEDS

Ms. Webber-McLeod asked that the committee think about the first strategic priority: "Market the benefits of doing business in Auburn and the incentives available through AIDA to eligible projects that will generate jobs and revenue for the community." She noted that this priority should filter the committee's work, and they should consider a multi-faceted approach:

- Marketing – Strategically promote Auburn as a place to do business. Be intentional about where and why ads are placed and how AIDA's message is shared.
- Branding – Be clear about who AIDA is and how we manifest our mission. Ms. Webber-McLeod recommended the committee consider a one-pager or infographic that includes AIDA's mission, strategic priorities, and success stories to communicate how they add value.
- Positioning – Situate AIDA to be seen as vital to economic development in the city and the immediate region. Define what tables we want to be at, why we want to be at them, when we serve as a catalyst or convener, and who else we want to have relationships with.

Ms. Webber-McLeod also noted that they should think about creating a common language for board members to use to talk about AIDA and its value to the community. This will also help us be proactive in positioning ourselves within the new CCDC ecosystem.

Ms. MacIntyre asked Ms. Webber-McLeod if there is an update on CCDC. Ms. Webber-McLeod explained that they engaged a consultant for the executive search and Ms. Stephanie Leone will represent AIDA on that search committee.

Ms. Verrier noted that they should be cognizant that if AIDA wants to be part of the larger CCDC system, they may need be flexible to align with that system. An early effort for CCDC will be branding and marketing, so the committee should be prepared to intentionally engage in that process.

Ms. Webber-McLeod noted that in the meantime, they should create a strong base and just keep in mind they will need to be flexible later. For now, there's no reason to be in a holding pattern.

Mr. Cuddy agreed with Ms. Webber-McLeod and said that it's good to be aware of their mission and purpose and act upon those. When TGW rolled out their brand and website initially, there were some

concerns around alignment with AIDA's mission. While some of those issues have been addressed and the website is an asset, the committee should consider revisiting and reorganizing the website and branding.

Mr. Lovell agreed with Mr. Cuddy and noted that one of the problems with the website is that a visitor wouldn't find it obvious that it was AIDA's website.

Ms. Webber-McLeod would like the committee to examine the website and identify what needs to happen for it to reflect AIDA's priorities and the actions they need to take for success. She noted that they can look at examples of neighboring IDAs and EDOs as well to gather an understanding of what a good IDA website should focus on. Ms. Webber-McLeod also explained that at the last meeting, the board spoke about inviting prior clients to board meetings to tell us how they are doing and how else AIDA can serve them. This will help them be strategic about with whom they are maintaining and building relationships.

Ms. MacIntyre asked about what organizations they should work with that they are not already. Ms. Webber-McLeod said that they can start thinking about people in close proximity, like Oswego IDA. Additionally, they can look at the other one-stops that the Camoin report pointed to. A driving question should be: Who else do we want to know and understand us?

Mr. Cuddy noted that he likes the idea of an infographic. He can have one of his students work on it, since it's valuable for his students to learn how to design in the style of an existing brand. Mr. Cuddy will have them develop a piece that shows the re-envisioning of AIDA.

The committee discussed how messaging might be different across audiences. For example, the value proposition differs for the general community and elected officials vs. businesses vs. partners. There could be additional historical information for people who are wholly unfamiliar with AIDA as well.

Ms. MacIntyre explained that people have shared challenges with the electric grid, and they should consider how we can engage in that issue.

Ms. Webber-McLeod prompted the committee, asking if they could be engaged in three issues, what would they be? They can create an advocacy agenda for AIDA. Ms. Webber-McLeod also suggested that the committee put together an outline of a marketing strategy.

Ms. MacIntyre suggested that all committee members review the website ahead of the next meeting to compile a list of needed updates. Ms. Webber-McLeod noted that Ms. Karen Walter has also been reviewing the website and suggested asking for her notes. Ms. Verrier noted that her colleague, Ms. Grace Grissett, completed a website compliance audit as well, so she can provide those notes.

Ms. Webber-McLeod said they also need to consider the role of social media in AIDA's strategy, if any.

The board discussed that there is social media for AIDA, but it's been dormant for a while. Ms. Verrier noted that she is having trouble accessing them. The board discussed that Facebook and Twitter hadn't been terribly effective in the past.

Mr. Lovell noted that as it relates to the website, takerootinauburn is the current URL. The auburnida URL doesn't seem to be owned by AIDA anymore. Mr. Lovell suggested they consider repurchasing that URL back. Ms. Verrier noted that she and Ms. Grissett will work on that.

OTHER UPDATES & DISCUSSION

No other discussion.

CLOSING

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

The meeting adjourned at 4:58pm.