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Marketing Committee Meeting Minutes
Auburn Industrial Development Authority
Tuesday July 14, 2026
Memorial City Hall, 24 South Street, Auburn, NY 13021

Members Present:	Gwen Webber-McLeod Matthew DelFavero Ed Sayles Melody Smith-Johnson
Staff & Guests:	Tracy Verrier, Director

MARKETING COMMITTEE MEETING

The meeting was called to order at 4:07pm with the presence of a quorum.

COMMITTEE CHAIR

Motion to appoint Ms. Smith-Johnson as the committee chair by Ms. Webber-McLeod, second by Mr. Sayles. Motion passed unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Committee Charge & Process Document

Ms. Smith-Johnson explained that she looked at what similar organizations regionally are doing from a marketing perspective to better understand the feeling/vibe of what's already happening in the area. From there she created a draft charge and executive summary for the committee to review and edit. This includes the committee purpose, a priority pathway, and intended outcomes. The first step in the priority pathway is to clarify a strategy so our audiences and messaging are clear, then build from there. Ms. Verrier suggested adding "defining metrics" somewhere early in the pathway. Ms. Webber-McLeod suggested adding this to the first step of clarifying strategy. She also noted that we should develop or better promote a value proposition for the IDA and Auburn. Define goals, strategies, and what success looks like.

Mr. Sayles clarified that the purpose is really the committee goal. Ms. Webber-McLeod agreed, but added that one of the first things we need to define is what success looks like how to measure that. Ms. Verrier further clarified that the purpose is about the committee's goals, but there should also be measurable goals for the strategy.

Ms. Verrier noted that the pipeline of potential projects has slowed down a little. That could be related to economic conditions, but it could also be that there hasn't been coordinated messaging about AIDA and economic development. So there is definitely space to reintroduce ourselves.

Ms. Smith-Johnson noted that the Intended Outcomes in the executive summary describe where we are looking to go. So the key is to decide how we want to measure those outcomes. Ms. Webber-McLeod mentioned that this kind of granular information might not be as public facing, but is critical to the overall strategy.

The next piece of the charge is are the initial 90 day priorities, which outlines the first steps in the strategy process. These priorities will help us to keep on track and report back to the board. Ms. Verrier noted that completion of these priorities could be a part of the metrics/tracking.

Mr. Sayles asked about how this all gets operationalized and who is responsible for what parts of the strategy. Ms. Verrier suggested that this committee is responsible for creating the strategy (goals, activities), and then the board is responsible for resourcing it (money, capacity). Ms. Smith-Johnson noted that there is a section in the full charge document about the general relationship between the board and the committee. Mr. Sayles reviewed the responsibilities in that section and agreed with the way it is laid out. Ms. Webber-McLeod agreed that this explicit delineation is critical for governance. This committee should make recommendations as to what the board should do themselves and/or with organizational resources, including who we think should be involved in implementation.

The charge also includes a 90-day priority list/work plan. Ms. Smith-Johnson hopes that the board will have some feedback and really consider if these are priorities or not for them. Ms. Verrier expressed agreement with the fact that the 90-day plan prioritizes internal stakeholders so that we can work on getting back in touch with businesses and help the community understand what we do.

Ms. Webber-McLeod noted that we can make the business case for why this work is critical for the organization's future. It is critical for the community to know what we do, but promoting Auburn as a place to do business as well.

The committee agreed to finesse the charge documents over the next month and present to the board in August. Ms. Webber-McLeod suggested making this the board education agenda item for that board meeting. Mr. Sayles expressed that the board and committee are the number one stakeholders, and Ms. Smith-Johnson noted that they should be able to speak clearly about AIDA in the rooms that they are in.

The committee discussed regional relationships, noting that AIDA has relationships but they can be formalized and more intentional.

Asset List

Ms. Verrier reviewed that this is an overview of the community assets that we have used in the past for business attraction. She invited the committee to continue adding to it. The committee discussed that we don't need to get into details, like every historic site, but rather can link to partner organizations that have those details. She will reshare the Google doc for collaboration. The committee also discussed how this information could be used, like by a committee/ambassador who is courting a business looking to move to the area or updated testimonials on the website talking about what it's like to do business in Auburn and calling out specific assets.

AIDA Overview

Ms. Verrier reviewed the overview she drafted and asked committee members to let her know if there is anything missing or should be added. The committee felt it was helpful. Agreed that past projects could be added to provide context.

AIDA Org Chart

Ms. Verrier explained that the governance committee would be reviewing the new org chart at their meeting tomorrow, then the board would consider it for approval.

NEW BUSINESS

Define Audiences & Outreach Methods

Ms. Verrier showed the committee a matrix of audiences and outreach mechanisms that the committee should work on populating to guide our future activities. Ms. Webber-McLeod suggested adding “in-person” as an outreach mechanism. Ms. Smith-Johnson asked whether there are any podcasts that might be a good outlet for AIDA. Ms. Webber-McLeod noted that CenterState does a podcast that might be a good fit. The committee asked about social media. Ms. Verrier explained that AIDA does have a couple of pages, but we don’t currently have access to them.

NEXT STEPS

The committee agreed to hold off on a website review until the audience definition is complete. So the next steps are:

1) Look at/tweak the charge document
2) Continue adding to the asset list
3) Add past projects to the AIDA Overview

ADJOURMENT

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Sayles, second by Ms. Webber-McLeod. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 5:10pm.