Regular Meeting Minutes
Auburn Industrial Development Authority
Wednesday, August 19, 2026
Memorial City Hall, 24 South Street, Auburn, NY 13021

Board Present:	Gwen Webber-McLeod (Chair) Courtney Hennigan (Member at Large) Karen Walter (Member at Large) William Andre (Member of Labor) Matthew Del Favero (Member of Industry) Mayor Jimmy Giannettino (Council Member). Councilor Terry Cuddy (Vice-Chair & Council Member) Dan Lovell (Secretary & Rep. of Auburn School District)
Excused:	Tessa Crawford (Treasurer & Member at Large)
Staff & Guests:	Tracy Verrier, Director Rob Poyer, Whiteford Law Brandon Dries, Indus Hospitality Group Robert Harding, The Citizen Melody Smith-Johnson, Marketing Committee Ed Sayles, Marking Committee

**remote attendance*

REGULAR MEETING

Ms. Webber-McLeod called the meeting to order at 5:01pm, noting the presence of a quorum.

MEETING MINUTES

There were two corrections noted by Ms. Walter: 1) that Mr. Lovell is noted as both the motion and second for approval of the July minutes which should not be the case, and 2) the minutes noted a construction start date of 2028 for the Indus project, but it should say 2027. Ms. Verrier will use the recording of the July meeting to find the correct motion and second for the minutes, and will correct the construction date.

Motion to approve the minutes as amended by Mr. Lovell, seconded by Mr. Giannettino. Motion passed unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Resolution: Authorizing Project Resolution – Indus Hospitality
Ms. Webber-McLeod noted that this is the authorizing resolution. Ms. Verrier explained that the authorizing resolution would award or not award incentives. She then spoke about the local labor waiver and that in speaking with Mr. Poyer and Indus the best path forward would be to hold off on addressing the local labor waiver until the project bidding is complete. That will ensure that any waiver is needed and based on fact rather than guesses. The board asked what their recourse is to ensure that the waiver is submitted later if

needed. Mr. Poyer explained that the agreement will have all the standard recapture and termination clauses that the board can invoke if the applicant does not follow through with the local labor requirements and request waivers as dictated in the policy. Ms. Verrier also noted that Indus has requested a reduction in the administrative fee.

Mr. Dries noted that they have spoken with three general contractors about local labor and they all feel that the initial estimates about local labor utilization are conservative. So hopefully they will be able to use more than originally guessed. They intend to use local labor as much as possible. The project will take about 12 weeks to get drawings complete, then 6-8 weeks to get hard bids, and then another few weeks of review. Then they should be able to have a meaningful conversation about local labor utilization. Ms. Verrier asked Mr. Dries to speak to the block and plank concrete work since there has been some confusion about that component. Mr. Dries noted that there are two reputable manufacturers that they have found and tend to use, one in Ohio and one in Pennsylvania. In speaking with the contractor from the recent Henrietta project, it appears that there is a warranty consideration with the manufacturer for the planks specifically.

Ms. Walter noted that she spoke with a contractor and they indicated that the block and plank is available through contractors in the Southern Tier and Buffalo. She expressed concern that the approval of the project might be moving too fast since we don't have the information about the local labor yet. She also noted that the draft local labor wavier included procurement of furniture and fixtures, which is about $1m of the budget. Ms. Verrier clarified that the local labor policy only covers labor, not materials. Ms. Walter is also concerned that there is a hotel project in Syracuse that is of similar magnitude (~$19m), and the PILOT was reduced from 10 years to 5 years, but we are considering a 25 year PILOT for this project. We need to make sure to do our due diligence. She wants to make sure that there is a partnership between AIDA and the applicant, if we are going to provide incentives they need to provide community benefit. Part of that benefit is using local labor.

Mr. Andre explained that he had done some research, both union and nonunion, and the local contractors/union representatives noted that they all said the block and plank installation is done locally on a regular basis. There is no reason that work shouldn't be able to be done with local labor. Mr. Dries noted that they are committed to using local labor where possible, so if there are local contractors that do it they are happy to vet them and consider them.

Ms. Walter noted that one of her main concerns is the length of the PILOT.

Mr. Dries also spoke to the FF&E component, which is somewhat specialized for hotels because the furniture needs to be made and installed in a way that it can't be taken out the door. The manufacturer they use is out of Jamestown, NY, it's a company that builds a lot of furniture for major hotel brands.

Ms. Walter clarified that if the resolution is approved, the expectation would be that local labor will be used. Then Indus would need to submit a waiver request to go outside of that expectation.

Ms. Walter asked they have a specific contractor in mind right now that they will be using. Mr. Dries said that they have an internal construction department, but they typically only use the internal team for smaller projects. For this project, they have been talking to three general contractors but none have been promised or awarded at this time. It will be bid out.

Ms. Walter asked if the subcontracts will be handled by the GC without a bid process. Mr. Dries explained that Indus tends to hold the contracts, so they plan to bid for all components and the GC will just manage the day to day of the project.

Ms. Walter asked if AIDA has done any 25 year projects before. Ms. Verrier confirmed that the Hilton has a 25 year PILOT. Mr. Poyer noted that the Hilton project was quite complicated, so it is not an exact comparison. Ms. Verrier added that there are a few other projects with 20 year PILOTS, and Central Building received a 20 year PILOT plus a 10 year extension for a total of 30 years.

Ms. Walter asked if they have spoken with the Department of Social Services about housing the homeless population. Mr. Dries said that they have done some work with that in some of their properties, but not typically the higher end properties. They are willing to have a conversation to help in certain circumstances, but it is not the intent for this hotel.

Mr. Cuddy asked about the market feasibility of the project. Mr. Dries explained that there is not currently a Marriot in the market and they believe there is an opportunity to bring new commerce to Auburn.

Mr. Giannettino asked Mr. Dries to reiterate why a 25 year PILOT is necessary. Mr. Dries explained that construction costs have increased substantially in the last few years, plus higher interest rates than a few years ago. This puts a lot of pressure on financing these kinds of projects. He also noted that they are exploring other mechanisms of support for the project, such as support from Marriot and NYSEG. They are not just relying on AIDA to make the project work. He also referred to the Camoin test of reasonableness report that confirmed the need for the PILOT. Mr. Giannettino stressed that the PILOT was vetted by a third party, so due diligence was done to make sure this level of benefit is necessary for feasibility.

Mr. Giannettino asked if the style of construction is the reason this project is bit more expensive than the project in Syracuse mentioned earlier. Mr. Dries stated that is likely the case, but the construction style they use holds up much better, improves energy efficiency, and improves guest satisfaction.

Mr. Giannettino asked for confirmation that the intention is to operate the property once it's built. Mr. Dries confirmed that is the plan, noting that they have never sold a property.

Mr. Giannettino noted that some of their business travelers have to stay in Syracuse during the summer.

Ms. Walter asked about the jobs and whether they will be full time or part time. Mr. Dries noted that it will be a mix.

Mr. Dries explained that they are requesting an administrative fee of .75% of the total project cost instead of the normal 1% based on the same cost considerations as for the PILOT schedule. Mr. Cuddy asked if a discount on the admin fee has ever been given. Ms. Verrier confirmed that she is not aware of that being done before. Mr. Poyer also did not believe AIDA had done that before, but other IDAs do provide discounts on occasion.

RESOLUTION APPROVING THE GRANT OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND THE EXECUTION BY THE AUBURN INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF AN AGENT AGREEMENT, LEASE AGREEMENT,

LEASEBACK AGREEMENT, PILOT AGREEMENT, AND RELATED DOCUMENTS WITH RESPECT TO THE INDUS GRANT AVENUE, LLC PROJECT.

Motion to approve the Authorizing Project Resolution without a reduction to the administrative fee and without consideration of the Local Labor Waiver by Mr. Lovell, second by Mr. Cuddy. The question of the adoption of the Resolution was duly put to a vote, which resulted as follows:

	Yea	Nay	Absent	Abstain
Gwendolyn Webber-McLeod, Chair	x			
Terrence Cuddy, Vice Chair	x			
Daniel Lovell, Secretary	x			
William Andre, Member		x		
Tessa Crawford, Member			x	
Matthew DelFavero, Member	x			
James N. Giannettino, Jr., Member	x			
Courtney Hennigan, Member	x			
Karen Walter, Member		x		

The resolution was duly adopted.

NEW BUSINESS

Marketing Committee Charge and Workplan

Ms. Webber-McLeod noted that Ms. Smith-Johnson was appointed as the chair of the committee.

Ms. Smith-Johnson presented the executive summary of the committee charge that the Marketing Committee has drafted. This included the purpose, roles, critical pathway, and intended outcomes of the committee, as well as a 90 day workplan. Mr. Sayles added additional context regarding how this work might move forward and presented the asset list that the marketing committee has been working on. Ms. Webber-McLeod added that the committee feels we need to do this marketing work from the inside out, making sure that the community is involved and aware.

The Board was comfortable with the committee charge and workplan as presented.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no Executive Session.

BILLS & TREASURER'S REPORT

Ms. Verrier reviewed the bills. Motion to approve the bills by Ms. Walter, second by Mr. Cuddy. Motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURMENT

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Cuddy, second by Mr. Giannettino. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 6:55pm.