

**ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY  
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION  
Meeting of June 14, 2021**

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**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Staples requests that Mr. Blevins (who is attending the meeting in person) direct the meeting until his arrival. Mr. Blevins calls the meeting to order at 3:06 PM in the main conference room at the Ernest J. LaBaff Industrial Building, Canton.

**ROLL CALL:**

Blevins .....	Present	Reagen.....	Present
LaBaff .....	Present (via teleconference)	Hall.....	Present
Staples .....	Present	McMahon .....	Absent
Morrill.....	Present (via teleconference)		

Mr. Blevins announces there is a quorum.

Others: IDA Staff (Patrick Kelly, Kimberly Gilbert, and Lori Sibley)

**PUBLIC NOTICE:** Public notifications sent June 9, 2021 to, a minimum: newspapers designated for the publication of local laws and other matters required by law to be published; additional local media sources and websites.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Motion to accept the minutes of the March 26, 2021 meeting by Mr. LaBaff seconded by Mr. Hall. Motion carried unanimously.

**FINANCIAL REPORTS:** Motion to accept the December 2020, January 2021, February 2021, March 2021, and April 2021 financial reports by Mr. LaBaff, seconded by Mr. Morrill. Ms. Gilbert notes that the December financials reconcile back to the audit that was approved in March. Highlights for January include an administrative fee paid by the St. Lawrence River Valley Redevelopment Agency (“RVRDA”) to the SLCIDA-LDC. In February, a first quarter retainer was paid for legal expenses. In March, the RVRDA administrative fee was paid to the SLCIDA and in April, revenue was received for administrative services provided by the SLCIDA-LDC for the Town of Brasher Loan Fund. Ms. Gilbert distributes a loan summary sheet. Mr. Reagen requests that a column including job numbers is added to the spreadsheet going forward. Also, Attorney Silver will be sending a letter to Gordon’s Frame to Finish to advise them that payments need to be more consistent. Additionally, Attorney Silver is sending a collection letter to Pro Sport Trailers if a payment agreed upon by both parties is not received soon. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Staples enters the room and assumes role chairing the meeting.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:** None

**STAFF REPORT:** Patrick Kelly reports the following:

**Clarkson University:** A closing is scheduled for June 24<sup>th</sup> for the bond issuance recently approved by the SLCIDA-CDC to Clarkson University. The final bond amount totals \$43 million, which includes refinancing and the issuances of new money.

**COVID 19 Response:** We continue to work with local development partners to inform as many businesses as possible about the new COVID relief programs. The SLCIDA will sponsor a webinar with Empire State Development this Friday to introduce the new Small Business Recovery Grant Program.

Empire State Mines: As a way of providing periodic updates to the membership, Mr. Kelly notes that the current price of zinc is at \$1.37 per pound this morning. This is a modest increase considering prices have been as low as \$.80 plus cents per pound since the COVID pandemic started.

Alcoa/Arconic: The current price of aluminum is also on the rise. Will continue to monitor as the price appears to be on the decline.

Former Newell Manufacturing Facility: The most recent remodeling work includes a new staircase and porch, new water/sewer, and flooring.

Star Lake Grocery Store: A meeting is scheduled for this week with our funding partners to coordinate the removal of liens and existing mortgages from the property. The purchase price of \$225,000 will be applied to the outstanding balance of \$355,000 on the loans. If all goes through as expected, a closing will be slated for June 21<sup>st</sup>.

Nature and Networking Events: The first couple of events held in Rensselaer Falls and Ogdensburg have been well received with about 20-25 in attendance. The next event is scheduled for Tuesday, June 29<sup>th</sup> at the Canton Heritage Trail. These events are a way of getting program information out in-person and gradually bringing back networking opportunities for businesses. The topic of 'Workforce Needs' is generating a lot of interest from businesses that are recruiting employees during these challenging times.

Potential Federal Funding Sources: Federal earmarks are available again and other stimulus-related funding sources may soon be developed. We have developed and submitted proposals for a manufacturing facility modernization fund to upgrade and modernize facilities, help bring in new manufacturing capabilities, and to increase efficiencies of existing plants to better position their operations for global competitiveness.

We have also submitted a proposal for a training program to provide financial assistance to companies to reimburse a portion of the costs associated with training either incumbent workers or new employees to supplement (and provide more flexibility to) the current workforce funding sources. Mr. Kelly asks Mr. Reagen to keep these proposals in mind if the County receives funds that could be used to support these kinds of programs.

Unemployment Rates: Mr. Kelly mentions that St. Lawrence County's unemployment rate for April 2021 (the most recent report numbers available) was 5.9% with 39,200 people employed and 2,500 people unemployed, while the New York State average was 7.8%. In April 2020, the County's unemployment rate was 15.4% with 35,300 people employed and 6,500 people unemployed. In February 2020, prior to the COVID Pandemic, the unemployment rate in St. Lawrence County was 6% with 41,400 people employed and 2,700 unemployed, and the New York State average was 3.9%. The numbers indicate that St. Lawrence County's unemployment rate for April 2021 is closer to where it was prior to the Pandemic and lower than the New York State average, which is typically higher. However, what is most notable, is that there are far fewer people in the workforce now than in years past when St. Lawrence County saw employment numbers closer to 50,000 or more workers.

LC Drives: Mr. LaBaff mentions a recent news article concerning a request by LC Drives for the Town of Potsdam to work with them on a future grant opportunity which could help pay for construction of a dedicated electric substation to service the town's Route 56 development corridor. Mr. LaBaff adds that LC Drives has been vocal about potentially leaving the area and taking jobs away from St. Lawrence County if they don't receive tens of millions of dollars from New York State for their proposed building project in the Town of Potsdam. With numerous incentives that have been awarded to LC Drives thus far, Mr. LaBaff thinks the company has an obligation to keep the jobs local in St. Lawrence County.

OLD BUSINESS: None

EXECUTIVE SESSION: At 3:27 PM, Hall/Staples motion/second to go into executive session to discuss the financial aspects of the Community Development and Environmental Improvement Program applications. Motion passes unanimously.

At 3:59 PM, Blevins/Hall motion/second to return to regular session. Motion passes unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

Resolution LDC-21-06-11: Authorizing Funds through the St. Lawrence River Valley Redevelopment Agency 2021 Community Development and Environmental Improvement Program: Mr. Kelly mentions that 15 applications were received for the 2021 program. The applicants requested \$250,292 in funding as part of \$2.2 million in total projects. The RVRDA members met on two occasions as a group to discuss the notes from each individual review of the applications. Mr. Blevins suggests an amendment to the resolution to remove the correct a typographical error listed on one of the applicant names located within its project description. Mr. Hall motions to accept the amendment to the resolution, as indicated by Mr. Blevins and Mr. LaBaff seconds the motion. The amendment is approved by unanimous vote. Mr. Blevins motions to approve amended Resolution LDC-21-06-11, seconded by Mr. Hall. The motion is approved by unanimous vote.

Resolution LDC-21-06-12: Authorizing Subordination of the Potsdam Specialty Paper Inc. Loan: Mr. Kelly highlights the excellent credit history of Potsdam Specialty Paper Inc. (PSPI) and adds that the loan has been paid down to \$50,000. The Company originally planned to create 20 new jobs for the coating project. However, the COVID-19 Pandemic set the company back, especially with the lack of available workers due to the pandemic. Despite these challenges, the loan repayment performance has been exemplary. Mr. Hall motions to approve Resolution LDC-21-06-12, seconded by Mr. LaBaff. The motion is approved by unanimous vote.

Resolution LDC-21-06-13: Authorizing Release of Corporate Guarantee of ATL Engineering, P.C.: Mr. Kelly reviews that Atlantic Testing Laboratories was approved for loans to purchase drilling rigs through the River Valley Fund via resolutions RVR-16-12-15 and RVR-21-03-04. One of the conditions of the loans was the corporate guarantee of ATL Engineering, P.C. Atlantic Testing Laboratories has asked that we remove the corporate guarantee by ATL Engineering, P.C, which is owned by James Kuhn, a minority owner of Atlantic Testing Laboratories. Mr. Kelly explains that a corporate guaranty is typically sought when corporate entities have either common ownership or are owned by a majority shareholder of a borrower, neither of which are the case in this instance. The board reviews Atlantic Testing Laboratories' excellent repayment history on prior loans, the personal guarantees of James Kuhn and Marijean Remington, the sufficient collateralization of the loans, and the nature of the ownership structure of the companies. The motion passes unanimously.

Resolution LDC-21-06-14: Authorizing Modifications to Grant Funds Previously Awarded through the St. Lawrence River Valley Redevelopment Agency's Community Development & Environmental Improvement Program. As part of the award process this year, the staff looked back at previous applications to see how to utilize unused funds from previous projects. In light of the extraordinary circumstances as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic, Mr. Hall motions, seconded by Mr. Reagen, to approve Resolution LDC-21-06-14 to extend the expiration dates on those projects that were not completed but still have work to finish. The motion is approved by unanimous vote.

Mr. Kelly mentions that the staff, along with the assistance of Mr. LaBaff, have been working on the monetization of the 20 megawatts of St. Lawrence County Economic Development Power. The proceeds of the monetization go into a fund through which projects are recommended for funding to NYPA by the Northern New York Power Proceeds Allocation Board, of which Mr. Kelly is Chair. Currently, per the law that created St. Lawrence County Economic Development Power, only 10 of the 20MW are being monetized for the NNYPAB fund. Letters in support of using all 20MW for the fund have been sent to our local New York State elected officials. Mr. Kelly adds that efforts to increase the local monetization of power will continue.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion to adjourn is made by Mr. Blevins, seconded by Mr. Morrill. The meeting adjourns at 4:13 PM by unanimous vote.

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(Mr.) Lynn Blevins, Secretary