

**ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY**

Meeting of February 22, 2022

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Staples calls the meeting to order at 4:04 PM in the Thomas A. Plastino Conference Room at the Ernest J. LaBaff Industrial Building, Canton.

ROLL CALL:

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

Mr. Kelly announces there is a quorum.

Others: IDA Staff (Patrick Kelly, Kimberly Gilbert, Richard Williams, and Lori Sibley); Christopher C. Canada, Esq. (Bond Counsel for Hodgson Russ, LLP) via teleconference.

PUBLIC NOTICE: Public notifications sent February 16, 2022, to at 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 December 21, 2021 meeting by Mr. Reagen, seconded by Mr. McMahon. Motion carried unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORTS: *November 2021:* Ms. Gilbert refers to the summary of highlights sheet for the November 2021 financials and notes that \$284,295 has been generated in project fees. She also points out that there were some additional building costs, the purchase of a new laptop, and a couple of NYSEDC events included in this month's expenses. Mr. McMahon motions to accept the November 2021 financials, seconded by Mr. Reagen. Motion carried unanimously.

REPORT OF COMMITTEES: The Audit/Finance Committee met this afternoon. Mr. McMahon (Chair), Mr. Hall, and Mr. Staples. On behalf of the committee, Mr. McMahon notes only a few simple changes in the audit requirements for this year. The audit is expected to be completed before the end of March.

STAFF REPORT: Patrick Kelly reports the following:

North American Forest Group: Mr. Kelly mentions that project is moving forward with the grant from the NBRC. As a summary, the IDA received a grant for \$535,000 to purchase equipment for the facility, which will then be leased to the company. The total project is \$1,070,000, the IDA is expending \$805,000 (which will be reimbursed by the \$535,000 NBRC grant, with the entire \$805,000 repaid through the equipment lease. The balance of \$265,000 will be funded by the Company (which may be funded through the established line of the credit Curran Renewable Energy, a related company to NAFG, has in place with the St. Lawrence River Valley Redevelopment Agency). Mr. Reagen asks about the difference between the equipment there now and the new equipment. Mr. Kelly states that the new equipment will make for a more efficient operation and enhance their capabilities for improved production at the facility. He continues on to say there are five (5) employees working at the facility now, and there could potentially be up to 20 employees when the project is finished. Hourly wages average between \$15.00 to \$20.00 per hour.

NYS Department of Transportation (“DOT”) Awards: Mr. Kelly mentions the recent grant awards for Dunn Paper in the amount of \$1.8 million and Alcoa for \$900,00 which our staff has worked on for a couple of years now. He adds that the Agency has advertised for a Rail Consultant RFQ and four (4) inquiries have been received so far. the grant agreements are received, Mr. Kelly will review the details with the group. Additionally, IDA staff have worked with Dunn Paper on an NBRC grant application last year and will work on another submission this year.

Procurement Technical Assistance Center (“PTAC”): In partnership with the Development Authority of the North Country, we have assisted with marketing the services offered by PTAC which is currently housed out of the Greater North County Chamber of Commerce offices. PTAC provides assistance to local businesses to help them understand the process for procuring military and other federal, state, and local government contact work that will enable them to grow their client base. PTAC schedules office hours here once a month to meet with local businesses in-person. We will be continuing our agreement with the PTAC providing \$2,500 for these services.

Workforce Pipeline Committee: **Business Connections: Spotlight on Resources,** a subcommittee of the St. Lawrence County Workforce Pipeline Committee, of which the IDA is a member, held an event last week at BOCES in Ogdensburg that included group tours with students and instructors, to help spotlight the programs and services offered at the Tech Centers and to demonstrate how businesses can connect with students via internship and employment opportunities. Future events are also planned at the Tech Centers in Norwood and Fowler.

Career Pathways Grant: We submitted a grant application the Economic Development Administration through the “Good Jobs Challenge” program seeking \$5.2 million in funding to help build a more refined career ladder training system to support and develop the local workforce.

Massena Downtown Revitalization Initiative (“DRI”): IDA CEO Patrick Kelly has been named Co-Chair, along with the Mayor of Massena Greg Paquin, of the Massena DRI Local Planning Committee.

NYS Comptroller Audit: A Corrective Action Plan will be provided to the NYS Comptroller’s office that will demonstrate how the IDA plans to correct the minor recommendations provided in the report.

Annual Reports: On an on-going basis, staff reach out to companies to evaluate projects and to report on the progress being made. Currently, staff are following up with businesses again to collect information that is required on an annual basis for input into the PARIS database. Mr. Kelly reminds the board members that they should also submit their annual reporting documents as soon as possible.

COVID Test Kits: As part of a combined effort with the St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce, we are contacting businesses to see if they are interested in obtaining COVID Test Kits for their employees. St. Lawrence County received a shipment and to date we have delivered over 1,000 kits to area manufacturing businesses where there are typically larger numbers of employees working together in a confined space. This effort has been well received by the businesses.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (“CEDS”): An evaluation matrix has been provided in the revised CEDS document and will be provided as a basis of activity tracking as requested by Mr. McMahon. Staff will deliver updates at upcoming meetings and more enhanced information will be included in the meeting packets.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

Resolution IDA-22-02-01: Inducement Resolution and Preliminary Agreement for LF Bioenergy LFI, LLC. Mr. Kelly highlights the importance of the agricultural industry in the County and that the IDA is always seeking ways to support the agricultural sector. For example, we sponsored a National Grid grant program for research the biodigester project at Woodcrest Dairy in Lisbon. LF Bioenergy is interested in securing tax-exempt bond financing for an anaerobic digester that would take manure waste from Staffer Farms in North Lawrence and turn it into renewable natural gas. Mr. McMahon mentions that Liberty Utilities is working with local farmers to inform them about his process as well. Mr. Kelly adds that Liberty Utilities is the injection point into the natural gas distribution system. Mr. Morrill details the potential for dairy farmers with huge credits for the renewable attributes of the gas created by these projects. He adds that making methane gas is a great advantage for local farmers. Mr. Kelly suggests this will be an asset for the agricultural community and we can help the farmers in a way we haven't been able to assist them before. Mr. Reagen asks who will own the methane digester. Mr. Kelly explains that the owner is LF Biofuels. They are a private, special purpose, business entity doing this with a supply agreement with Stauffer Farms. Mr. Reagen then asks about employment projections and Mr. Kelly responds that two (2) Technicians will be employed when the project is finished. Mr. LaBaff makes a motion to approve resolution IDA-22-02-02, seconded by Mr. McMahon. The motion is approved by unanimous vote.

Resolution IDA-22-02-02: Accepting the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy ("CEDS"): Mr. LaBaff commends Mr. Kelly for the level of work that went into providing this excellent document. Mr. Kelly adds that numerous partners assisted with providing detailed information for inclusion in the strategy. The report is updated every five (5) years. Mr. Hall motions to approve resolution IDA-22-02-02, seconded by Mr. LaBaff. The motion is approved by unanimous vote.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

ADJOURNMENT: A motion to adjourn is made by Mr. LaBaff and seconded by Mr. Reagen. The meeting adjourns at 4:34 PM by unanimous vote.

(Mr.) Lynn Blevins, Secretary