

ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Meeting of February 27, 2024

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Staples calls the meeting to order at 1:01 PM in the main conference room at the Ernest J. LaBaff Industrial Building, Canton.

ROLL CALL:

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

A quorum is recognized.

IDA Staff present: Patrick Kelly, Kimberly Gilbert, Lori Sibley, and Richard Williams. IDA-LDC Staff present: John Pinkerton.

Others present: Andrew Gardner, Reporter for Johnson Newspapers (via Zoom).

PUBLIC NOTICE: Public notifications sent February 20, 2024, 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 20, 2023 meeting by Mr. LaBaff, seconded by Mr. Reagen. The motion is approved unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORTS: None

COMMITTEE REPORTS: The Audit and Finance Committee met this morning (Mr. Hall and Mr. Staples). On behalf of the committee, Mr. Hall provides the following summary: The annual financial audit is underway. The auditors are currently in-house conducting fieldwork. Reports will be drafted soon.

STAFF REPORT: Mr. Kelly highlights some recent activities.

Air Products and Chemicals: The site clearing completed and there was a recent article referencing the potential lowering of the speed limit at the site. Also, IDA staff have been meeting with company officials to discuss resources available for workforce development.

Property: *Canton Industrial Building:* St. Lawrence-Lewis BOCES (Adult Education and Workforce Development) is interested in occupying space in the Ernest J. LaBaff Industrial Building. As part of the partnership we've developed with BOCES, staff recently served on an advisory committee to help evaluate programs to make sure they are aligned to local workforce needs for the BOCES Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment.

Lighting updates and improvements: We are working with National Grid to utilize their incentives to get higher quality and more efficient lighting for the Canton Industrial Building.

Massena Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI): A resolution will be presented today for architecture and engineering design services for the Massena School of Business DRI project. A kick off meeting for the project with the Village is expected to be held later this week.

St. Lawrence-Lewis BOCES: *Business Connections – Spotlight on Resources (BOCES)*: Staff assisted with organizing the January 23rd event at Seaway Tech in Norwood. The opportunity to connect businesses with programs and students at the BOCES Career and Technical Education Centers has been positive. Staff are beginning outreach efforts now to invite businesses to the next event at Northwest Tech in Ogdensburg on March 26th.

Training Programs: The next cohort for the Certified Clinical Medical Assistant program and the Heavy Equipment Operator Training Program is full. Both of those programs are offered through St. Lawrence-Lewis BOCES Adult Education and Workforce Development. Also, the CDL-A program offered through the SUNY Canton CREST Center is full through October. All of these programs receive funding support through the St. Lawrence County ARPA funds.

Fort Drum: Ms. Sibley attended a job fair at Fort Drum on February 1st and is connecting transitioning soldiers with employers in the County.

Gateways to Careers: Ms. Sibley and Mr. Ahlfeld will attend Gateways to Careers at SUNY Canton on March 13th.

Tradeshows: Mr. Ahlfeld will attend the Québec-New York Transportation Rendezvous on March 19th in Plattsburgh.

Adirondack Park Community Smart Growth Program: Staff recently submitted an application to the NYS Grants Gateway Program for an Adirondack Smart Growth Grant for funding up to \$61,000. If awarded, the grant will allow funds for a digital sign to be placed on State Highway 3 in the Town of Fine, in the hamlet of Star Lake, to welcome visitors and tourists to the Adirondack Park region.

Annual Reports: Annual *PARIS* report documents for the Comptroller's Office have been distributed to companies. About 90% of those forms have been returned so far. *Annual Financial Disclosure forms* have been sent to IDA members and staff, *Board Evaluation Forms* were sent to IDA members, and the Annual Mission and Performance Report is being compiled as part of our annual reporting requirements.

PILOT bills totaling \$483,254 went out to companies in January. When payments are received, the money is provided to the affected taxing jurisdictions. The county will receive approximately \$127,000, the towns will receive approximately \$67,000, one village will receive approximately \$15,000, and the local schools with *PILOT* projects will receive approximately \$272,000. This is above and beyond the taxes paid on the underlying property for the projects. Mr. LaBaff and Mr. Reagen request the *PILOT* billing information be compiled in a report to show the total *PILOT* generated by IDA projects and paid to the taxing jurisdictions in St. Lawrence County. Mr. Kelly notes that the information will be highlighted in the annual report to the St. Lawrence County Board of Legislators.

Governance Committee: A Governance Committee meeting will be scheduled in March.

Appointments/Reappointments: Mr. Morrill has been reappointed to the IDA Board for another three-year term by the St. Lawrence County Board of Legislators.

SLC Correctional Facilities Task Force: In response to the Governor's budget proposal that includes closing up to five correctional facilities, a number of representatives from the Ogdensburg and Gouverneur areas, including legislative representatives from the County and the IDA, have come together in support of keeping the facilities in operation. Legislator and IDA member Reagen is the Chair of the group.

A document of talking points in support of the facilities which has been created by the group is circulated. Mr. LaBaff comments that the messaging in support of the facilities should be highlighted and kept as short and simple as possible.

NYS Economic Development Council: The annual meeting for the New York State Economic Development Council is scheduled for May 22-24.

NEW BUSINESS:

Resolution IDA-24-02-01: Standard Workday and Reporting Resolution: In order to calculate days worked for an employee in the New York State and Local Employees Retirement System, the number of hours that constitute a standard workday for each position must be established. These hours represent the minimum number of hours per day a full-time employee in that title is required to work to be eligible for benefits through the New York State retirement system. Hours worked for the affiliated development corporations are in addition to the standard workday hours of the IDA. Mr. LaBaff motions to accept Resolution IDA-24-02-01, seconded by Mr. Reagen. The Resolution is approved by unanimous vote.

Resolution IDA-24-02-02: Support for the Continued Operation of the New York State Correctional Facilities in St. Lawrence County: A Task Force Committee has been established to help relay important messaging to our state leaders that closing either of the correctional facilities in St. Lawrence County would be devastating to this area. Mr. Reagen motions to accept Resolution IDA-24-02-02, seconded by Mr. LaBaff. The Resolution is approved by unanimous vote.

Resolution IDA-24-02-03: Approving a Lease for Space in the Canton Industrial Park Ernest. J. LaBaff Industrial Building to St. Lawrence-Lewis BOCES: The St. Lawrence-Lewis BOCES Adult Education and Workforce Development program has requested to lease space within the Canton Industrial Building. The three-year lease will include a two -year extension and will create a greater and more significant connection with BOCES. The space will be used for offices, training, and development. Mr. LaBaff motions to approve Resolution IDA-24-02-03, seconded by Mr. Reagen. The motion is approved by unanimous vote.

Resolution IDA-24-02-04: Authorizing an Agreement with Aubertine and Currier for the Massena School of Business DRI Project: After an RFP process, Aubertine and Currier Architects, Engineers & Land Surveyors, PLLC is recommended to provide Architecture and Engineering Design Services for the Massena School of Business DRI project. Mr. LaBaff motions to approve Resolution IDA-24-02-04, seconded by Mr. Reagen. The motion is approved by unanimous vote.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: A motion is made by Mr. LaBaff to go into executive session at 1:23 PM to discuss the financial, credit, or employment history of a particular person or corporation, seconded by Mr. Hall. A motion to return to regular session is made by Mr. LaBaff, seconded by Mr. Reagen at 1:53 PM. Mr. Kelly clarifies that discussions regarding potential litigation and the proposed acquisition, sale, or lease of real property were also discussed in the executive session.

Resolution IDA-24-02-05: Authorizing Allocations through the St. Lawrence County American Rescue Plan Act “ARPA” Economic Development and Tourism Funding Program: Mr. Kelly mentions that an Exhibit A has been attached to the resolution indicating the awards that are being presented for approval. Mr. LaBaff motions to accept Resolution IDA-24-02-05, seconded by Mr. Reagen. Mr. Blevins abstains due to a personal affiliation with one of the applicants. The motion is approved with four yes votes.

OLD BUSINESS: None

ADJOURNMENT: A motion to adjourn is made by Mr. Blevins/Mr. Hall. The meeting adjourns at 1:44 PM by unanimous vote.

Mr. Ernest LaBaff, Secretary