

ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Meeting of March 26, 2024

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Staples requests that Mr. Hall lead the meeting. Mr. Hall calls the meeting to order at 3:02 PM in the main conference room at the Ernest J. LaBaff Industrial Building, Canton.

ROLL CALL:

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

A quorum is recognized.

IDA Staff present: Patrick Kelly, Kimberly Gilbert, Lori Sibley, and Richard Williams. Bob Ahlfeld attends via Zoom.

PUBLIC NOTICE: Public notifications sent March 22, 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: Andrew Gardner, Reporter for Johnson Newspapers, is in attendance via Zoom. Mr. Gardner has no comment.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion to accept the minutes of the February 27, 2024 meeting by Mr. LaBaff, seconded by Mr. Morrill. 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 committee met with the audit team of Pinto, Mucenski, Hooper, VanHouse, and Company CPAs, PC. to review the annual financial audit. The opinion is unmodified for all entities. No material weakness in the internal controls. No instances of non-compliance with provisions of laws, no difficulty in performing the audit and no disagreements with management. Mr. LaBaff motions to accept the Audit and Finance Committee report, seconded by Mr. Reagen. The motion is approved unanimously.

The Governance Committee also met this morning (Mr. Hall, Mr. Blevins, and Mr. LaBaff). Committee Chair Mr. Blevins provides the following summary: The policies contained in today’s meeting packet were reviewed by the committee members and determined there are no recommended changes to any of the policies at this time. The Board Member evaluation forms were reviewed in executive session and the committee recommends that we add a comment line to next year’s evaluation forms to allow members to explain if they do not fully agree with any of the board performance criteria. The annual financial disclosure forms have been distributed to all board members and staff and will be submitted to the Board of Ethics office prior to the March 31st filing deadline. Lastly, the committee reviewed the Mission Statement and Performance Measures and determined there is no need for revisions at this time. Mr. LaBaff motions to accept the Governance Committee report, seconded by Mr. Reagen. Motion is approved unanimously.

STAFF REPORT: Mr. Kelly highlights recent activities.

Property: *Canton Industrial Building:* We are working with National Grid to have lighting upgrades and improvements completed in this building, which are expected to begin next week. This is a \$9,000 expenditure, of which we will pay a little more than \$4,000 using National Grid incentives, and it's estimated we will see about \$2,700 in savings each year. Our return is about a year and a half. In addition to getting higher quality and more efficient lighting for the Canton Industrial Building, our experience with this program will be beneficial as we refer it to other businesses and property owners.

Marketing: Bob Ahlfeld attended a *Business Connections: Spotlight on Resources* event this morning featuring BOCES Northwest Tech Center in Ogdensburg. Lori and Bob attended a *Gateways to Careers* event at SUNY Canton on March 13th to conduct mock interviews with high school students to help them prepare for real-world job interviews. Bob attended the *Quebec-NY Transportation Rendezvous and B2B* event on March 19th.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

Resolution IDA-24-03-06: Annual Review of Code of Ethics: The Governance Committee reviewed the policy and determined no changes are needed at this time. Mr. LaBaff motions to approve Resolution IDA-24-03-06, seconded by Mr. Reagen. Motion is approved by unanimous vote.

Resolution IDA-24-03-07: Annual Review of Compensation, Reimbursement, and Attendance Policy: The Governance Committee reviewed the policy, and no changes are recommended at this time. Mr. LaBaff motions to approve Resolution IDA-24-03-07, seconded by Mr. Reagen. The motion is approved by unanimous vote.

Resolution IDA-24-03-08: Annual Review of Defense and Indemnification Policy: After review by the Governance Committee, there are no recommended changes to this policy. Mr. LaBaff motions to approve Resolution IDA-24-03-08, seconded by Mr. Reagen. The motion is approved by unanimous vote.

Resolution IDA-24-03-09: Annual Review of Whistleblower Policy: The Governance Committee has reviewed this policy and recommends no changes. Mr. LaBaff motions to approve Resolution IDA-24-03-09, seconded by Mr. Reagen. The motion is approved by unanimous vote.

Resolution IDA-24-03-10: 2024 Review of Disposition of Real Property Guidelines and 2023 Report of Property: Upon review, the Governance Committee has determined there is no need for revisions at this time. Mr. LaBaff motions to approve Resolution IDA-24-03-10, seconded by Mr. Reagen. The motion is approved by unanimous vote.

Resolution IDA-24-03-11: Amendatory/Approving Resolution for PIVOT Solar NY 10, LLC. A Mortgage Recording Tax Exemption was approved for PIVOT Solar NY 10, LLC in 2023. The company's financing mechanism will not enable it to take advantage of this exemption for the project. As a result, the company has requested approval for a Sales and Use Tax Exemption and amend their project approving resolution accordingly. The benefit provided as a result will actually be slightly lower than the initial approval. Mr. Kelly refers to page 26 of today's meeting packet and notes this project is in line with the \$10,000/megawatt sales tax exemption threshold used for other projects. Mr. LaBaff motions to approve Resolution IDA-24-03-11, seconded by Mr. Morrill. The motion is approved by unanimous vote.

Resolution IDA-24-03-12: Project Authorizing Resolution for CIVES Steel Company. Mr. Kelly notes the IDA has done a number of projects with CIVES Steel Company over the years for the Gouverneur facility. The Company is requesting a Sales and Use Tax Exemption for the purchase of an Angle Formation Machine - a fabrication machine, to help modernize and update their facility. Mr. Kelly refers to the highlights noted in the Cost Benefit Analysis contained in the meeting packets. Mr. Reagen comments that this is a terrific project. The company employs 135 people, offers good wages and benefits, and is involved in major projects around New York State and the Northeast. He adds that it is good to see the IDA involved in companies like this to help retain well-paid industrial jobs in our area. Mr. Hall adds that the format of the Cost Benefit Analysis makes it an easily read document when reviewing projects. Mr. Blevins motions to accept Resolution IDA-24-03-12, seconded by Mr. Reagen. Motion is approved by unanimous vote.

Resolution IDA-24-03-13: Accepting the FY2023 Audit: Mr. Hall summarized the audit during his report of the Audit and Finance Committee. Mr. LaBaff motions to approve Resolution IDA-24-03-13, seconded by Mr. Reagen. The motion is approved by unanimous vote.

NYS PARIS Annual Reporting: Mr. Kelly explains the process for collecting, compiling, reviewing, and distributing the annual Comptroller reports that were entered into the *PARIS Reporting System* and the *Mission and Performance Review/Report*. He adds there were 45 active projects reported in the PARIS system for just the St. Lawrence County IDA and reviews the list of projects via the St. Lawrence County IDA 2023 Annual Assessment of Active IDA Projects report, which highlights the performance status of each project. He adds that the IDA is overwhelmingly meeting project and retention goals, with 615 existing jobs retained, and 225 jobs created, higher than the 161.5 jobs proposed to be created.

Mr. Kelly summarizes the report by stating there are currently 840 jobs affected by our project work. Mr. Reagen reiterates our assistance with 45 companies and adding 225 jobs is a huge accomplishment. He believes the public perception of the economy is that things are always negative in the County and the North Country. The fact that we have worked with these companies to expand and add jobs is a huge accomplishment. Mr. LaBaff notes the importance of retaining jobs. Mr. Reagen continues by stating the IDA is keeping people here, retaining jobs, and adding new jobs. Mr. LaBaff notes that it is difficult to count the number of jobs that are being retained over the years. Mr. Kelly points out that this report shows active projects, not an accumulation of all the projects and jobs we have helped with over the years. Mr. Reagen is pleased that we have demonstrated how we have helped businesses all around the county.

Mr. LaBaff encourages staff to get the report out to residents in the County so they better understand the work the IDA is doing. Mr. LaBaff motions to approve both the *PARIS Annual Report* documents and *Mission and Performance Review* documents, seconded by Mr. Reagen. The motion is approved unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: A motion is made by Mr. LaBaff to go into executive session at 3:31 PM to discuss the financial, credit, or employment history of a particular person or corporation, seconded by Mr. Morrill. A motion to return to regular session is made by Mr. LaBaff, seconded by Mr. Reagen at 3:45 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-24-03-14: 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-24-03-14, seconded by Mr. Morrill.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion to adjourn is made by Mr. LaBaff/Mr. Morrill. The meeting adjourns at 3:46 PM by unanimous vote.

Mr. Ernest LaBaff, Secretary