

COUNTY OF OTSEGO INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

April 3, 2014

DRAFT Meeting Minutes SUBJECT TO BOARD APPROVAL

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Sharon Oberriter called to order the meeting of the COIDA at 7:32 a.m. at the County offices at 242 Main Street, Oneonta, NY. Voting members present included Sharon Oberriter, Joe Bernier, Len Marsh, Betty Anne Schwerd, Jeff Lord, Jim Salisbury and Bob Hanft.

Also in attendance:

Staff: Sandy Mathes, Elizabeth Horvath and Kurt Schulte

Guests: Mayor Miller, Chair Clark, Mike Long, Phil Balantic, Rebecca Morgan, Carli Ficano, Betsy Babcock and Mark Davies

MEETING MINUTES

Minutes for March 6th, 2014 were reviewed. Minor corrections were identified. Mr. Lord made a motion to accept the minutes, Mr. Bernier seconded, and the motion carried. Minutes for the March 27th, 2014 meeting were reviewed. Discussion ensued around noting a reason for abstentions during roll-call votes. Mr. Marsh motioned to approve the minutes, Mr. Salisbury seconded, and the motion passed.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The board reviewed February's statements. Mr. Lord described the month as "fairly static". Mr. Marsh observed that, on the two months' income statement, Expenses are tracked against budget but Revenues are not. Ms. Horvath will investigate and correct. Mr. Marsh moved to accept the Treasurer's report, Mr. Bernier seconded, and the motion passed.

BILLS TO BE PAID

Ms. Horvath presented bills to be paid, including voluntary PILOT payments on COIDA-owned properties (paid) and a donation to the CORE program (paid). The board decided to institute the practice of having Mr. Mathes sign the expense forms he submits, having the Chair review and sign the expense forms, then submitting the expenses to the full board for approval. Mr. Bernier moved to approve Bills to be Paid, Mr. Salisbury seconded, and with a roll-call vote (7 Aye, 0 No, 0 Abstentions), the motion passed. Mr. Hanft moved to accept the Payroll Report, Ms. Schwerd seconded, the motion passed unanimously.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Ms. Oberriter kept her report brief, filling the board in on a recent meeting between herself, Mr. Mathes and the Otsego County Chamber.

CEO'S REPORT

Mr. Mathes began by recognizing Mike Long, his excellent service to the City and his help to the IDA, especially concerning the rail yards. Mr. Mathes further thanked Ms. Horvath for her work thus far.

The lease for 189 Main Street is almost finalized, pending a final walk-through. COIDA personnel will be able to move from 242 Main Street as soon as computers, furniture, internet and phones are organized.

The three-way agreement between the Oneonta Youth Soccer Association (OYSA), OCDC and COIDA is almost finalized: it will be a one-year (one-season) use agreement in which the OYSA will take over the facility, its maintenance and the cost thereof. COIDA will continue to contribute \$25,000 for maintenance. There is an agreement in place between OCDC and Northern Eagle in which Northern Eagle will contribute \$10,000 per year for three years for field maintenance. The board discussed insurance on the fields; Ms. Horvath will investigate whether COIDA maintains any insurance on the property, as opposed to OCDC. Mr. Schulte is awaiting word from the State Supreme Court as to transferring WNSC from OCDC to COIDA; he expects that by early June the property could be ready for transfer. Mr. Schulte presented a resolution authorizing COIDA to enter into agreement with OCDC and OYSA for the maintenance and use of the fields at the former Soccer Hall of Fame property. Mr. Bernier moved to approve the resolution, Mr. Marsh seconded, and with a roll-call vote (7 Aye, 0 No, 0 Abstentions), the motion passed.

The issue of committee work came up again; Mr. Mathes reiterated his position that most of the "work" of the board should take place in committee. There was a general consensus that committee structure, function, staffing and meeting times should be reviewed with a goal of adopting best practices.

Mr. Mathes presented Tim Albright's contract for services. Mr. Bernier moved to approve it, Mr. Lord seconded, and with a roll-call vote (7 Aye, 0 No, 0 Abstentions), the motion passed. Mr. Bernier suggested having Mr. Albright work on Pony Farm signage.

Mr. Mathes related a conversation he had had with Joe Scott concerning administrative fees charged by IDAs for tax-exempt bond issuances; Mr. Scott will work up suggestions on this, some combination of an initial fee and yearly fees. Further, Mr. Scott is investigating public/private partnership structures that COIDA might be able to avail itself of in the future. Lastly, Mr. Scott is working up an option agreement for land purchases that the COIDA board will review once it is prepared.

Mr. Mathes updated the board on his recent meeting with Siemens and their rental of the COIDA Pony Farm building.

Lastly, Mr. Mathes brought up the issue of the deliverables outlined in his original contract, many of which he has already jumped several steps ahead of. He indicated a desire to meet with the Chair and Vice Chair about addressing and possibly modifying the schedule of deliverables. Mr. Hanft indicated that now – the beginning of the second quarter – is the perfect point to pull

up and review the deliverables. Mr. Bernier indicated that he is “not concerned” about the deliverables themselves and is pleased with Mr. Mathes’ progress.

CADE

Rebecca Morgan from CADE presented an update concerning use of a \$20,000 grant from COIDA to assess food hub options in the County. The initial proposal was to (1) conduct an opportunity assessment, (2) analyze the capacity of the region along several lines (marketing, distribution, production, etc), and (3) look at food brokering, which, as it turns out, is not appropriate for CADE. Ms. Morgan discussed the trend in consumers being willing to pay higher prices for organic produce, grass-fed meat, pastured poultry, and the increasing consumer awareness of sustainable farming practices. Ms. Morgan talked the board through the research CADE has done, the asset mapping, and its early recommendations. CADE believes a food hub should be a regional play, involving Delaware and/or Schoharie counties. Ms. Morgan remarked on a couple of trends that will further spur potential growth of farming in Otsego County: (1) agritourism (“it’s going gangbusters”) and (2) in the next 5-10 years, a massive shift in land ownership due to the ageing population.

COO’s REPORT

Ms. Horvath updated the board on PAAA reporting (COIDA and OCCRC done and ready to be submitted; waiting on final Certified Financial Audit from MMS, without which PARIS reporting cannot be submitted).

Ms. Horvath proposed to the board a three-pronged approach to getting COIDA’s house in order:

- hire Harry Sicherman to do an initial analysis of COIDA, County and OCDC grants and loans, especially those involving HUD money
- have Jim Lozano of CFO For Hire work collaboratively with Mr. Sicherman to assess the entities on the banking side, “forensic accounting”, and
- have Joe Scott and his firm perform a compliance audit for COIDA.

Mr. Bernier commented that we should choose well, because we would want to have a long-term relationship with whomever we choose. Mr. Bernier moved to approve the hiring of Mr. Sicherman for an initial assessment at the proposed cost of approximately \$7000; Mr. Salisbury seconded, and with a roll-call vote (7 Aye, 0 No, 0 Abstentions), the motion passed.

Ms. Horvath asked the board to approve releasing budgeted funds for NYSEDC annual meeting attendance for herself and Mr. Mathes, and for economic development training for herself through NYSEDC in June. Mr. Bernier moved to approve, Mr. Salisbury seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Horvath provided an update on the broadband project: awaiting scenario analysis from Mike Spagnola of CompDirectUSA before moving forward.

Ms. Horvath requested the board's approval to hire a temporary clerical worker to fill the gap between Amy Lieberman's last day (4/11/2014) and the start date of the posted executive assistant/office manager position. Mr. Bernier so moved, Mr. Lord seconded, and with a roll-call vote (7 Aye, 0 No, 0 Abstentions), the motion passed. Ms. Horvath indicated that the first resumes have begun to arrive for the executive assistant position.

Ms. Horvath presented the funding request from GoSTEM for \$2500, the amount that COIDA has provided to this training for the past 3 years. Mr. Bernier moved to approve, Mr. Salisbury seconded, and with a roll-call vote (7 Aye, 0 No, 0 Abstentions), the motion passed. Mr. Bernier observed that COIDA should review its philosophy and strategy vis a vis funding requests and donations: given that COIDA needs to focus on job creation, our budget for giving, and focus for giving, should revolve around that mission. Board members concurred; committee work to be done.

Lastly Ms. Horvath requested the board's approval to hire office movers for the transition to 189 Main Street later in the month. Mr. Salisbury moved to approve the hiring of movers according to COIDA's procurement policy, Mr. Bernier seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

There being no further business, Mr. Salisbury moved to adjourn the meeting, Mr. Bernier seconded, and the meeting adjourned at 9:41 a.m.