

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

County of Chautauqua Industrial Development Agency

BWB Building
201 West Third Street, Jamestown, NY
2nd Floor Board Room
&
Electronically via Live Stream on YouTube & Zoom

July 25, 2023
10:10 a.m.

PRESENT:

Gary Henry	Chairman
Bradley Walters	Vice Chairman
Sagan Sheffield-Smith	Treasurer
Dan Heitzenrater	Secretary
Steven Thorpe	Member
Kevin Muldowney	Member
Rhonda Johnson	Member
Daniel DeMarte	Member

Also in attendance:

Mark Geise	Administrative Director/CEO
Richard E. Dixon	Chief Financial Officer
Milan K. Tyler, Esq.	Counsel
Greg Peterson	Counsel
Paul Wendel	County Executive
Nate Aldrich	IDA Staff
Jeanette Lo Bello	IDA Staff
Crystal Erhard	IDA Staff
Rahsann Graham	Jade Empire LLC
Greg Bacon	Post Journal
Julia Ciesla-Hanley	WRFA 107.9

Absent Board Member(s):

Meeting was called to order by Gary Henry, Chairman, at 10:10 a.m.

Please Note: Due to technical difficulties the first section of this meeting was not transcribed. The previous month's meeting minutes were approved and minutes were taken as soon as the technology was working appropriately.

Rahsann Graham

So, for individuals who again whether it's through code or whether you're a small business you can no longer work at the kitchen table at the end of the bed. You need to separate work from home and so small 6 x 10, 6 x 15 offices where we create a business community of young and new entrepreneurs – the top floor of that space is going to be short-term

rentals-someone is coming in for business and needs to be here for a little while. So, it's a multiuse space. I acquired the property already, have a contractor and an architect on the project already so happy to have this conversation with you and answer any questions you may have.

Rosie Strandburg

Just so the Board is aware, Jade Empire is applying for a fifteen year Adaptive Reuse PILOT for the consideration of sales tax abatement and property tax abatement. No Mortgage Recording Tax is being considered for this application.

Mark Geise

How long has that building been vacant or basically underused?

Rahsann Graham

The Resource Center sat on it for a very long time and they were planning on tearing it down for parking. So, I don't know how long it was vacant until I acquired it. I will say as an aside it took a long time for me to get it from The Resource Center. From the time I went under contract until the time it actually finished it was about an eighteen month headache. I have owned the building since November of 2020.

County Executive Wendel

I'd say at least five years if not maybe longer.

Mark Geise

Yeah. That's what I thought too.

Greg Peterson

What are you going to do with the Coca-Cola sign?

Rahsann Graham

There was a billboard on the side of the building and when they took that billboard off there was this really cool Coca-Cola sign. I love the sign. I like that vintage look. I've talked to my contractors and because we have to redo the building and power wash the building it's not going to stay. I'm not going to be able to keep it. We are going to power wash the building, it will come off, says my contractor. To be perfectly honest the whole building is going to look different and I don't know that that would look as cool in the new version of the building.

Mark Geise

It would look great in our conference room.

Greg Peterson

Drive by and take a picture while you can.

Rahsann Graham

There are actually several layers-it's not just one Coke ad-it's a couple others in there as well.

Rich Dixon

It's interesting because in New York as you know most of the billboards are painted on the building. Very talented people probably did that. I looked at it and said it would be nice if it could be save but I knew there was no way. I would like to

add that we have been working very closely with Crystal and the City on this and they are very excited about this project as well.

Rahsann Graham

I do have ESD funding that come in through the JRC and that's already there waiting to be spent. Crystal and working with JURA and components of here office there is already a commitment on the city on this as well.

Mark Geise

If I can also say that the corner right there with the new skate park, with the McCrea Point and all the stuff that is going on down at Lawson, the Tabone Building – we've been working trying to get a good outcome there. I think that that area is really going to start to thrive based primarily on the tourism, the young people wanting to be around where the action is-so I think it's a really great project and I want to thank you Rahsann for coming back and investing in our community.

Rahsann Graham

We've actually talked about – I wanted to make sure that it integrated with what the City is doing in that area. So, I've read the 2.0 Plan from the very beginning and I'm hopeful that one of the anchor tenants – one booth that is a little larger- I would love for that anchor tenant to be someone who is really catering to the skate park, the bike path and those type of things. Examples given. I've already talked to some local business owners about having a second location in there to have an anchor tenant there that really helps to cater. I mentioned the restaurant will be there. There is no place to get a cup of coffee. So, not only is there a restaurant but there is actually going to be a Wegmans type barista in there as well. Whether your kids skating across the street or whether you just came in on your kayak and need to grab a bite to eat, we just really wanted to bring and attract more people there. The plan will be, and I've thought about this – the desire is that the vendors that are in there aren't there for long because the building would get stale fairly quickly. I've been down to Prendergast Landing, I've seen all the local artists – so if we can get people in and wrap some soft business skills around them (business development skills) and then get them downtown so that space is vacant for another business that wants to incubate – it keeps it fresh so people can see that there are new things coming through and doesn't get stale.

County Executive Wendel

Are you using the same contractor you originally started with?

Rahsann Graham

Yeah, I'm working with Empire. Mica's crew has been in there. They did a lot of work. We've paused it for conversations like this, loans and those type of things just to make sure that we have the right capital stack. I wanted to make sure that we weren't getting too far ahead of that.

County Executive Wendel

I think it's good to get another local business. My son worked there and found a lot of memorabilia in the walls when they used to use newspaper as insulation. It's good to use another local developer.

Rahsann Graham

Yes. My contractor is local, my architect is Chris Cook Architecture. His office is in Little Valley Cassadaga area there. As far as my demo crews – everything has been local.

Gary Henry

Dan, did you have something you wanted to ask?

Dan Heitzenrater

Yes. I just wanted to mention that I've been able to participate in a couple meetings with Rahsann and get a deeper dive into the project. Obviously, you are hitting the community in multiple ways with the project especially from the business community – the incubator space is exciting being that the target is sort of that middle time frame as you said when somebody outgrows this shelf or two they may want to rent from another local business but they are not able to fill a whole store. That's a great opportunity as well as that work model of office space that people can rent or go park for a couple of hours. It's an exciting project. I'm excited that you are back here today.

Rahsann Graham

Thank you. I live and work in New York City and as a small business owner I had to get off the kitchen table which was four people in a two bedroom one bathroom apartment – just need another space to work –just being able to provide that for folks on a month to month basis. You can give me thirty days and you can move on without locking into that lease. I think that's a big thing-especially like when covid happened. So, that's the plan-just to really be supportive of the new business community.

Rosie Strandburg

Are there any other questions for the Board before I have Milan explain the Resolution being presented today? Milan, if you don't mind.

Milan Tyler

Sure. This is your pretty standard Preliminary Due Diligence Resolution. It authorizes the staff and council to start conducting the due diligence before we bring it back to the Board for final approval. That due diligence would include conducting a public hearing. Financial assistance would presumably be over \$100,000.00. It would involve doing the SEQRA – the Environmental Analysis to make sure it does not have substantial adverse effect on the environment to the extent that retail sales more than 1/3 of the project cost – we would make sure that there is an exception to the retail sales prohibition and this may be a tourism destination, it may be a distressed area but we would investigate that before bringing it back, As Rosie mentioned, this looks like it's going to not be a deviation from your UTEP. It would be the Adaptive Reuse PILOT so we would investigate that and come to that conclusion before we come back to you and start doing the legal due diligence-start drafting documents etc. just to make sure that there are no other issues that need to be flushed out before we bring it back to you. It may be back in August or September just depending on the time frame. That's what this resolution would do. It doesn't commit the Agency it only authorizes and instructs us to start doing the due diligence before bringing it back to you for final approval.

Gary Henry

Thank you. Brad would you move New Business A2 for us?

Brad Walters

Resolution 07-25-23-01 Due Diligence Resolution & Preliminary Agreement-Jade Empire LLC

Gary Henry

Thank you. Do we have a second?

Steven Thorpe

Second.

Gary Henry

Thank you Steve. Roll call vote.

Board

Aye – Unanimous.

Gary Henry

It's unanimously approved. Rahsann, reading through your business plan was very impressive. Even more impressive to have you here in person and hear all the things you're looking to do. We thank you for coming back to our community and thank you for allowing the IDA to be a part of it.

Rahsann Graham

Thank you. It was important for me try and be here today, get to meet you all and thank you in-person. I'm looking forward to my first development project. If you're going to do it do it. I appreciate how supportive you all have been as an agency and I look forward to further conversation. Thank you. I appreciate you.

Gary Henry

We will continue with New Business B. Nate, would you like to explain this for us?

Nate Aldrich

Absolutely. This is a perfect segway Mr. Chairman. This resolution, and you'll see a similar one on the CREDC agenda – this is required for a Department of State Brownfield Opportunity Area Grant Application we plan on submitting before this Friday with CREDC as the applicant, however, the IDA and the City of Jamestown are co-applicants. So, the IDA Board is also asked to pass this Authorizing Resolution. Really, when you hear Rahsann and his enthusiasm what we want to try and do is replicate that several times over in this area-from the outlet of Chautauqua Lake to really the basin right behind us. We've been working now for the better part of three or four years with the City, the BPU and others to get about over two million dollars in public investment to activate the basin to allow recreation-kayaking, small boat craft from Chautauqua Lake, get more people to get down to the city to recreate and to enjoy that area back there to go to the Comedy Center, utilize area businesses and patronize them. Really, what this does is it allows us to have access to some funds for predevelopment activities on five key sites and buildings. We are looking at things like building conditions, studies, infrastructure analysis, site concepts and renderings, planning for higher and better uses of some of these underutilized sites and buildings-general planning and outreach, site marketing, phase I environmental site assessments and related activities. What this does is it saves people like Rahsann time in that development process and provides more predictability and hopefully catalyze some private investment which builds on that public investment we've been so successful in raising funds over the last couple of years. The application-we are looking at a total project cost of just shy of \$250,000.00. Our grant request would be just shy of \$225,000.00 –it's a 10% required match and we have those funds already secured through our Ralph Wilson Grant and our County ARPA funds. Again, you will see a very similar resolution on the CREDC agenda. That's a really high level overview. I would be happy to answer any questions.

Gary Henry

If we don't have any other questions, we will go ahead and present that resolution. Sagan would you move that resolution for us?

Sagan Sheffield-Smith

Sure. Resolution 07-25-23-02 Authorizing CCIDA to be a joint applicant in partnership with the Chautauqua Region Economic Development Corporation in submittal of consolidated funding application (CFA) through the NYS Department of State (DOS) Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) program for Chadakoin River priority site predevelopment activities

Gary Henry

Thank you. Do we have a second?

Dan Heitzenrater

I'll second.

Gary Henry

Thank you. Roll call vote.

Board

Aye – Unanimous.

Gary Henry

It's unanimously approved. Thank you. Next, we will look at the Training and Reference Materials relating to the Chautauqua County IDA. Rich or Mark?

Mark Geise

I'll jump on that really quick. We had Hodgson Russ prepare this for us in early 2022. It's a really good read for everyone-training and reference materials. It speaks to the history of IDA's in general, the history of the CCIDA, it talks about the Public Authorities Accountability Act, restrictions on IDA's, restrictions on members, indemnifications and I think it would be good for all of us to revisit it. I am going to revisit it as well. Especially in light of what we just went through with the ABO-I think it's a good thing for all the IDA board members to look at it and refer back to it. That's all I have on that.

Gary Henry

Thank you. Did you have any Executive Report or any CEO updates you wanted to give?

Mark Geise

Yeah. Just two things really quick. I think PJ, you covered it really well, thank you so much. Thank you for everything you've done and your support. We vow to really work hard at this. I'm really grateful to everyone that stepped up, and it was everyone-Harris Beach-Bob and Julie, Milan, Greg, and really Rich and Rich and Kayla during the process-it was grueling and of course Gary-I can't say enough about your leadership. You always said the right thing and your intuition and everything- it went as well as it could go. Over the next three months here we are going to be implementing about half a dozen new policies, we are going to be revising some policies and we are doing a lot of things different that are already in place. I just wanted to say that about the ABO stuff. The last thing-I just wanted to say how grateful I was. My father passed away on July 11th and last weekend was the viewing and the funeral and a large number of IDA staff attended my Dad's viewing which was all the way up in Newfane- an hour and a half away and I am just really grateful that you all did that. My brothers came up to me and said I can't believe all those people that came and I think that speaks to the culture that we've created or are creating everyday where we all feel like we are part of a family. I think that is so important in any company in any work environment. Again, thank you everyone that came I really appreciate it. That is all I have Mr. Chairman.

Gary Henry

Thank you. Sorry to hear about your loss. We do appreciate all that you do and all that you have done through this ABO audit and the way that you lead this entire team. I do know that we all work together and it does a lot of good for the County having everybody pulling in the same direction. Rich, did you want to do the Treasurer's Report.

Rich Dixon

Yes. As we discussed last week during the phone call we are still revising the budget through the end of June. So, the good news is that I won't bore you with the report today. Other good news is Kayla comes back next week so we wanted

her to be a little more part of the budget process going forward. We will be working closely with her, Crystal, Mark and Nate to refine that budget and we will bring that back to the Board in August.

Mark Geise

Rich, before you continue we should shout out to Crystal right. The way Crystal has stepped in has been incredible.

Rich Dixon

She filled in for Kayla and she had a lot to learn and a lot to do. She's done a good job. That's all I have on the Treasurer's Report.

Gary Henry

Thank you Rich. We look forward to seeing that refined report next month as we move into the second half of the year.

Gary Henry

At this point I would entertain a Motion to go into Executive Session, for the purposes of discussing the financial or credit history of a particular person or corporation. In particular I would like to discuss the status of our loan portfolio and the financial and credit status of some of our borrowers as well as some CCIDA personnel. I believe that discussing this in open session would substantially affect the value. Do I hear such a motion?

Sagan Sheffield-Smith

I'll move.

Gary Henry

Thank you. Do I have a second?

Brad Walters

Second.

Gary Henry

All in favor say Aye.

Board

Aye – Unanimous.

Gary Henry

Opposed? We will move into Executive Session.

Executive Session
Start Time: 10:30 a.m.


Executive Session
End Time: 10:35 a.m.


Gary Henry

We are back in open session and I would like to say that no votes were taken or no actions done during the Executive Session. Do we have any Old Business to come before the Board? Hearing none we will close the meeting of the Board of Directors of the County of Chautauqua Industrial Development Agency. I would like to remind everyone that our next meeting will be August 22, 2023 here at the BWB building and we will be via livestream and zoom as well. Thank you.

The meeting is adjourned. This meeting is adjourned at 10:40 a.m.

(Assistant) Secretary





(Vice) Chairman