

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**

September 11, 2025
10:05 a.m.

PRESENT:

Gary Henry	Chairman
Dan Heitzenrater	Vice Chairman
Sagan Sheffield-Smith	Treasurer
Amy Harding	Secretary
John Healy	Member
Daniel DeMarte	Member (Arrived at 10:07 a.m.)

Also in attendance:

Mark Geise	Administrative Director/CEO
Shelby Bilskie	Chief Financial Officer
Milan K. Tyler, Esq.	Counsel
Gregory L. Peterson, Esq.	Counsel
Matthew J. Fitzgerald, Esq.	Counsel
Gregory L. Peterson, Esq.	Counsel
Lisa Cole	Counsel
Kristine Morabito	IDA Staff
Rosie Strandburg	IDA Staff
Jeanette Lo Bello	IDA Staff
Kayla Strandburg	IDA Staff
Nate Aldrich	IDA Staff
Jason Sample	IDA Staff
Paul Wendel	County Executive
Keith Rogers	Maplevale Farms, Inc.
Greg Bacon	Post Journal/Observer
Julia Ciesla-Hanley	WRFA 107.9

Absent Board Member(s):

Tom Harmon	Member
Ted Wightman	Member
Kevin Muldowney	Member

Meeting was called to order by Gary Henry, Chairman, at 10:35 a.m.

Gary Henry

Good Morning. I would like to welcome everybody to the Board of Directors meeting of the Chautauqua County Industrial Development Agency. We're at the BWB Building, 201 West 3rd Street, Jamestown, New York. We're also streaming live on YouTube. It's September the 11, 2025 at 10:05 a.m. We'll go ahead and start with Roll Call.

Board

Aye – Unanimous. (5 Board Members Present)
(Daniel DeMarte arrived at 10:37 a.m. which then made 6 Members Present)

Gary Henry

Is Dan DeMarte here?

Mark Geise

No.

Gary Henry

We'll move right into New Business A – Maplevale Farms Inc. presented by Rosie Strandburg, Milan Tyler who's with us in Zoom. I'd also like to recognize Matt Fitzgerald is here with us, and he's the SEQRA expert, so we appreciate you being here and, and participating with us.

Matt Fitzgerald

Good to be here.

Rosie Strandburg

Mark, did you want to go first and explain why we're holding this Special Meeting?

Mark Geise

So, the Town Board, can only act on whether to approve this or not after the SEQRA has been approved by the IDA, And the SEQRA review period, which is 30 days - expired yesterday - so, it expired today, if you will. So, we're having the Special Meeting today, because otherwise, if we waited till the 23rd, then the Town Board couldn't act until next month. So, it would put the project behind 30 days, and they want to get going as soon as possible here. So, thank you, everybody, for coming for this Special Meeting. We appreciate it.

Rosie Strandburg

Thank you, Mark. So, I'm just going to provide, an overview. I know this is going to look very familiar to everyone. We did Due Diligence for Maplevale in June. So, Maplevale Farms has been in business since 1951 as a family-owned, independent company. It's working on operations out of their Falconer Plant, but are looking to relocate to the town of Mina, as they've outgrown their current facility.

Maplevale is looking to construct an approximately 150,000 square foot refrigerated food warehouse and distribution facility on approximately 194 acres located at 3196 Route 426, Findlay Lake, New York. With this location adjacent to I-86 and close to the I-90, this will allow Maplevale to upgrade and expand its food distribution operations and provide

critical access to the customer base, which extends east towards Rochester, west towards Cleveland and south towards Erie and Pittsburgh. Total project cost is just over \$41 million.

The Town is in support of this project. Maplevale is requesting a 10-year PILOT, which would include sales tax exemption, mortgage recording tax abatement, and property tax abatement. The PILOT will produce payments to the affected taxing jurisdictions over the life of the project in the amount of, I'm sorry, \$1,190,226, with property tax exemptions totaling approximately \$2,777,193 and sales tax savings, approximately \$2 million, with mortgage reporting tax savings at \$465,340.

A total of 23 new jobs will be created, and 213 jobs will be retained. As Mark mentioned, the Town requested that the IDA be Lead agency. Milan will review the SEQRA resolution, but it is a TYPE 1 action, I'm sorry, TYPE 1 with a Negative Declaration. Again, in June, we did the Due Diligence. In August, I did a public hearing. There was no comment, but the Transcript is included in your packet, and then today, Milan will review any SEQRA and Final Approving Resolutions.

Before I pass it on to you Milan, can I go ahead and pass it on to Keith to talk about the project?

Mark Geise

Yeah.

Keith Rogers

Great. Well, first of all, I want to thank everyone here. I know this was a Special Session that was called, and I'm very humbled, quite frankly, to see you all here, and to Mark's point, this is literally, you know, under the wire, to get this accomplished. I know Rebecca Brumagin is thrilled that you guys were able to do this so that tonight's meeting at the board can go through.

Just why... why... what even brought us here in the first place? About 15 years ago, Maplevale Farms, which is a family-owned, legacy company, fourth... fourth generation, there's actually fifth generation working in the company now. There was, as we were growing and expanding in, Clymer, New York, where our roots are, we had built an expansion, and as Western New York winters often can be, there was a major snow event and collapsed the roof of our warehouse expansion, and, we were in - and it was right around Christmas, and we were - it just so providentially happened that, Sysco, a rival, a corporate rival of ours, had abandoned, Jamestown in Falconer, and with the County's help as well, we were able to seamlessly, in two weeks, move and have continuous operation.

So, we went there based on an emergency, and we were very grateful for that facility. However, Sysco was actually the third party in there. Originally, it was owned by a company, and then Sysco acquired that company. Over the years of growth the building itself had become kind of what I call frankensteined. Added on here, added on here, added on here - our business is one of logistics and efficiency. We move boxes, they just happen to have food in them, and they're refrigerated or frozen, or, so, the warehouse was, quite inefficient, especially as we grew. So, even though we're grateful to be there, we're always kind of looking for that future, where is - where are we going to call home? And we had, found, and located and identified some property on the other side of the border in Pennsylvania, and gone as far as even had architectural plans drawn up and were ready to go, and then this little thing called COVID happened. And, so everything was put on pause.

On a personal note, that's actually when I - I grew up here, but like many of us, after college, moved and worked all over the country. Actually, I was in London for a while and it was around that COVID time when I knew it was time to get back to the community that I loved, and we moved back here. Maplevale Farms had this project that was on hold. We picked it back up and started looking and really, because of the IDA and the help of Chautauqua County, we were able to stay here in Chautauqua County, and, which is personally to me, I'm just very grateful. Part of why I moved back to this area was to be - reverse that story. I know a lot of people have left, and I wanted to be a part of the story to help here, and I think our company and our partnership with the County, and the State, as well, is a great testament to what can happen and the future of growth and restoration of the community that we love. So, we found this property that's even better. One exit up on 86, it's logistically perfect. Right off of 90, even though we're moving further south, we're closer to Buffalo, where we distribute a lot of products to and we were able to find this property, partner with you guys, and we did

a lot of due diligence with SEQRA in mind before we even acquired it, and just really grateful, not only to the County and the State, but with this SEQRA process, we're excited to move it forward, and Lord willing, after the meeting tonight at the Town of Mina, we'll be moving forward and hopefully breaking ground in October. That's the plan, so I just want to say thank you.

Rosie Strandburg

Thank you Keith. Milan, before I pass it on to you – is there any questions in regards to the project or for Keith? Milan, if you wouldn't mind reviewing the Resolutions being presented.

Milan Tyler

Sure, I'll let Matt actually review the content of the SEQRA Resolution. I guess I would just, like to make one comment on the timing. After the July meeting, where we passed a Preliminary Resolution, the Town indicated they wanted the IDA to serve as Lead agency. So, shortly thereafter, on August 8th, I believe it is we issued the 30-day notice for all the other involved agencies, to see whether or not they would object to our being Lead agency. At the time, it was just, fortuitous that was exactly 30 days before the next Planning Board Meeting. So that's, as Mark mentioned, why we are here today. It just turned out that, you know, we sent the letter on exactly the right day, so that we could help Maplevale accelerate their process and not have to put off the Planning Board by one month.

One other note, which is that because this does involve a relocation from, quote, one part of the state to another part of the state the General Municipal Law requires that notice be given to the jurisdiction that is losing, if you will, a planter facility, and in fact, that letter was sent, last week to the town of Ellicott, and my understanding is that Mark has reached out to the, I guess, Town Supervisor just to let them know that this is happening and why it is, and that Maplevale was unable to expand in their current location, and why they sort of had to move, and why, coming to the current location is better for the state as a whole, rather than losing them to another possible location.

So, Matt, do you want to talk very briefly about the SEQRA, and why we're Lead Agency, and what we looked at, etc, and then I'll come back for the Approving Resolution?

Matt Fitzgerald

I could go not very briefly, but I'll try and keep it as everyone who knows me knows. Right, so Mark and Milan have summarized the SEQRA side of things very well. This is what's known as a TYPE 1 Action. A TYPE 1 Action means it exceeds certain size thresholds. For example, here, you're dealing with a facility that's over 100,000 square feet in size. What that means is that every agency who wants to undertake, fund, or approve any component of the project has to coordinate to SEQRA review.

There has to be one Lead Agency. As Milan said, after discussions with the Town, the Town said, hey, can you be the Lead Agency? And that's what we've done here. We've reached out to every other agency, including the DOT, the Department of Environmental Conservation, and said the IDA wants to be Lead Agency for this project. Please let us know if you have any objection, any concerns. DOT, DEC, the Town, all consented, no issues there. They sent in written comments to the extent they had any, and we worked closely with Clark Patterson Lee, the architects, and engineers for the project, to walk through and create the long resolution that's in front of you on the SEQRA front. It covers every relevant area of environmental concern, from land to water to groundwater, threatened endangered species, all of those topics are covered in some detail, and all of the backup for the conclusions in here are cited within the Resolution.

Happy to answer any questions, but based upon the representations of Clark Patterson Lee and the other consultants who worked on the project the Resolution concludes that the project will not have any significant adverse environmental impacts, and so is a negative declaration that will allow the Town to act on the application later today.

Milan Tyler

And the Approving Resolution is the same one that you've done time and time again. It references the Public Hearing, it references the relocation issue that I spoke about. We've conducted other Due Diligence with the company in terms of

their formation, approvals, etc. and, this is the final approval. Rosie mentioned what the amounts of the financial assistance are, which are set forth in Section 4 of the resolution, and I think that's it.

Gary Henry

Thank you. Any questions from the Board? I would like to mention that Dan DeMarte arrived right after roll call, and has been here for the presentation, so he'll be voting on this as well. Sagan, would you move a New Business for us 2?

Sagan Sheffield-Smith

Sure. Resolution 09-11-25-01 SEQRA and Resolution 09-11-25-02 Approving Resolution - Maplevale Farms Inc.

Gary Henry

Thank you. Do we have a second?

Dan Heitzenrater

I'll second, and Gary if I could just say, through this presentation and Keith's remarks, I was thinking one of the common questions we hear in economic development, and especially to the IDA - what are you doing to keep business here? bring new business here, and this is the exact kind of thing that your team is doing. You know, a company that had property and plans for a facility in a different state got to work and were able to keep that company here, and of course, another thank you to Maplevale, a great Chautauqua County story for staying here, so, I just wanted to add that.

Gary Henry

Good point. We'll go ahead and vote.

Board

Aye – Unanimous.

Gary Henry

The Resolution is unanimously approved. I would also like to thank Maplevale. You know, we don't always realize it, but we all get Maplevale products sooner or later at some point in our lives, so it affects

Keith Rogers

Restaurant here you have.

Gary Henry

Right, it affects all of us. It's important to our community, but especially having a homegrown business like this that's been here as long as they have, and we were that close to losing them, it's just a little extra special that we're able to retain all those jobs and stay in our community, and so we just thank you for staying here.

Keith Rogers

Thank you.

Gary Henry

I'd also like to commend the IDA as well, just, you know, the hard work that goes into this, and, you know, it

may seem simple when we vote on it in one of these meetings, but there's just hours and hours of work that have gone on for a long period of time, to get this over the hump. Anything else to come before the Board

County Executive Wendel

Yes, if I could, I guess I'll be repeating what's been said, but I think it's important - to know what the success story was with this project.

You know, it's interesting, you hear all the time about population loss, but I've known Keith now many, many years, and you're hearing these stories of individuals coming back to this area because of what it offers. Not only, you know, Keith coming back to set his roots where he was, you know, he's been before, but Maplevale standing here, just as Danny said. I remember being in the IDA, or excuse me, in the Legislature when I thought the temporary fix at Sysco would be perfect for utilizing a building that was really suited for this and fifteen years later, that temporary was a pretty significant investment, and now they're looking to expand into keeping the jobs. So, thanks to Mark and the team of the IDA, and all the work, and repeating what Dan said - there's so much that goes on, and this is really keeping jobs here, and they had property, they were out the door. We stopped them before they left, and I think that's huge, and it's critical to keep that workforce here in Chautauqua County, and we've all said we don't realize how far Maplevale goes. I'm sure you travel in the tri-state area. You've all had Maplevale products, so hats off to Keith and coming back and resurrecting this project and keeping it going, and to the family at Maplevale for their continued effort of supporting the County, but really excited. This is a very huge success story, and although the jobs may not be in the hundreds that some people would like it's still keeping jobs here that otherwise would have walked across the border and settled somewhere else. So, hats off to Mark and everybody at the IDA for everything they've done.

Mark Geise

If I can add, so we will work tirelessly with Maplevale on marketing their existing facility to find another tenant that's going to create lots of jobs, hopefully, right? And, you know, we've got a great team, Rose, and we've got... we work with Invest Buffalo Niagara, and we've got some - we've got a really good connection with site selectors and realtors, and we will work proactively to make sure that that building gets a good tenant.

Keith Rogers

I know we've already experienced lots of interest, so I'm excited for that phase of it. You don't count your chickens till they're hatched, but I think that's also going to be - we're not - the County's only going to be growing.

Mark Geise

Yeah. Right.

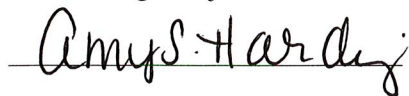
Gary Henry

I just want to thank everybody again for taking time out of their busy schedule to meet today. I really appreciate it. We'll consider the meeting adjourned, and our next regularly scheduled IDA Board Meeting will be September 23, 2025 at 10:30 a.m. and that one will be in Dunkirk at the Center for Innovation and Economic Development. So just a reminder to everybody, it's in Dunkirk. Thank you.

Mark Geise

Thank you.

The meeting is adjourned at 10:21 a.m.



(Assistant) Secretary



(Vice) Chairman