

**COUNTY OF OTSEGO INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
OTSEGO COUNTY CAPITAL RESOURCE CORPORATION**

**PROJECTS COMMITTEE
JANUARY 14TH, 2021
MEETING MINUTES**

Due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19), Federal and State emergency bans on large meetings or gatherings, and pursuant to Governor Cuomo's Executive Order 220.1, issued on March 12, 2020 suspending the Open Meetings Law, this COIDA/OCCRC Projects Committee meeting was held via video conferencing, instead of an open meeting for the public to attend. Members of the public were given instructions on how to join the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

The COIDA's and OCCRC's joint Projects Committee meeting was called to order at 8:14am via video conferencing app, GoToMeeting. Committee members present were:

Cheryl Robinson	Tom Armao
Patricia Kennedy**	Andrew Marietta
Jeffery Joyner*	David Rowley
Jeffrey Lord	Joshua Edmonds
Craig Gelbsman	

Also, in attendance:

STAFF

Jody Zakrevsky, **CEO**
Meaghan Marino, **Dir. of Finance and Admin.**
Kurt Schulte, **Agency Counsel**

GUESTS

Former NYS Senator, James Seward

*Arrived after start of meeting

**Departed before end of meeting

CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

Projects Chair, Cheryl Robinson, welcomed committee members and staff, and moved immediately into the agenda.

MEETING MINUTES

C. Robinson requested a motion to approve the December 3rd Project Committee meeting minutes. Committee members were given a draft copy of the minutes prior to the meeting for review. There being no corrections to be made, D. Rowley made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. T. Armao seconded the motion, and the motion was approved by remaining board members.

CEO REPORT OF PROJECTS

J. Zakrevsky recapped some of his activities since the December Projects Committee meeting until now. He also provided members with a detailed update of some of the IDA's priority projects. The following topics were discussed in greater detail:

- **Rail Yards** – At a previous board meeting, it was suggested that J. Zakrevsky speak with Bennett Sandler about community geo-thermal throughout the Rail Yards Industrial Park. Since then, J. Zakrevsky has had several discussions with him and others including, Bramble, who is a preapproved NYSERDA company to do feasibility studies. Bramble is currently reaching out to neighboring businesses of the park, such as Corning and Lutz Feed, and getting their input and explaining the benefits to both them and the park. Bramble would write the feasibility study and do the work, and 100% of the costs would go to NYSERDA through their grant program. They would like this study done within the next six months. Although NYSERDA announced the program, they have not opened applications, so the study is pending that process. J. Zakrevsky also had a meeting with Scott Harrington, 6th ward City of Oneonta Council Member. Scott expressed interest in being part of the development project for the Rail Yards, and forming a team of other engaged community members. J. Zakrevsky also noted a meeting with Corning about the possibility of having them look at the Rail Yards as a future site for expansion. Because the property is in an Opportunity Zone, so the investments they make would be advantageous to them.
- **Custom Electronics** – J. Zakrevsky noted that there was no project charter sent to board members, because the final public hearing was held and we are closing that project out. He did note that when he compiled a list of priority projects for 2021, he included one as a cluster development of electronic companies and continued focus on that.
- **Andela Products** – C. Robinson noted that this was a project where the committee and board are looking for a firm commitment from the owners of Andela Products on whether they intend to build in the business park. She asked if there were any updates on that further than the information the project charter provides. J. Zakrevsky noted that he continues to press Andela on getting her financials and determining whether they have the backing to actually build her businesses in the Richfield Springs Business Park. Our agency did receive bond numbers from Joe Scott that was forwarded to Andela to see if those payments are feasible. If commitment is received by March from Andela, the board and the agency will have to decide whether to move forward with water/sewer improvements to the park, or to scrap the project altogether. He noted that there will likely be a special meeting of the IDA board on this project in March. C. Robinson if asked if that decision will need to be made by the board or if it's something the Projects Committee can resolve. J. Zakrevsky advised that it could be resolved in both the Audit & Finance

Committee, due to the financial implications to our agency, and the Projects Committee. D. Rowley asked if we wait until March, is there still enough time to get everything accomplished for the projects EDA timeline. J. Zakrevsky confirmed that there is, and that Andela is aware of the timeline she has to stick to. Currently, he needs her to come up with estimates for the building and determine if she can get bank financing for those numbers, which can be done in 10 weeks (March).

NEW/UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- **Cooperstown Distillery** – We are also closing out the Cooperstown Distillery project, as we completed the final Annual Performance Report for the project and submitted it to HCR. J. Zakrevsky is completing the final drawdown for the agency’s costs and the village’s costs, but the company has been fully reimbursed.
- **139 Commerce Road**– J. Zakrevsky noted that he had a lengthy discussion with Joe Scott, who is still reviewing the zoning ordinance for the Oneonta Business Park, who will issue a recommendation by the end of the week on the implications of issues a variance request for Burr Trucking. Currently, they plan to go in front of the Zoning Board of Appeals on January 25th, but Mike Burr advised they could postpone it another month if they must. C. Gelbsman asked to clarify that the Town of Oneonta is asking for a Change-of-Use permit and asked if we have asked why they are requesting this when it has always been a garage. J. Zakrevsky advised that the reason is because, you can have a garage, but you cannot service to the general public. When the building was used by Hale Transportation, they serviced their vehicles but didn’t have the public coming in. It was the Town Code Enforcement who advised that Burr Trucking could seek a variance for their use. T. Armao noted that we currently have tenants in the park who might not want Burr Trucking in the park because of the aesthetic of non-working vehicles outside the building and how it would look. He noted that the quality-control of the site moving forward should be our concern for finding other tenants in the park. C. Robinson also noted being mindful of the IDAs purpose in the parks and if it’s about revenue-creation or job-creation, and it is our understanding that Burr Trucking would not be creating any jobs.
- **NYS Comptroller** – J. Zakrevsky reminded the board of the ongoing audit being by the Comptroller’s office. He advised that they have resolved any questions/issues they had previously, but they are still focusing their attention on the Oneonta Rail Yards and the amount of money spent on that project. D. Rowley asked when the Comptroller’s Audit first began. M. Marino noted that we got the initial correspondence from their office in February of 2019 and it began a few months after that.
- **Marketing Campaign** – C. Robinson asked if we have seen any additional leads from the marketing campaign. M. Marino noted that she does get inquiries through the messaging system, which she responds to, to find out what type of information they are looking for, but no substantial lead has come through. C. Robinson asked how many emails we are receiving on average. M. Marino advised that she receives 10-12/wk. C. Robinson asked if Paperkite is providing us with a monthly/quarterly report detailing numbers and advising of any changes that have been made to the campaign. M. Marino advised that we are not receiving monthly reports from them, but we can ask for them at our next monthly meeting with them. J. Lord questioned what type of inquires M. Marino is getting and what they’re asking about. M. Marino advised that there is no message box when people respond to these inquiries. They simply put their name,

email, and click whether they are interested in “business”, “leisure”, or both, and that information is sent to Otsego Now. The suggestion from Chris Quereau, of Vibrant Brands, and Paperkite was to create a monthly/quarterly/bi-annual newsletter and to use those email addresses as the recipients. There is money in the budget for marketing in 2021, so this has been suggested as one of the possible uses.

- **Board Evaluations** – J. Zakrevsky reminded committee members that he has yet to receive several board evaluations, and needs them back ASAP as they are a requirement from the NYS Comptroller’s office.
- **2020 Draft Annual Report** – Committee members were sent a draft copy of the 2020 Annual Report for feedback. J. Zakrevsky noted that our agency has worked with more businesses this year than we have in previous years. He requested additional changes and feedback for the report before it is posted to the agency’s website.
- **Updated IDA PILOT Application** – This update came at the request of Corning, who is currently working on applications. They asked if there was anyway to get a fillable PDF format for the applications. J. Zakrevsky created one and sent it to bond counsel, Joe Scott, for review, who has made some comments and corrections to the document. Once changes have been completed, the new version will go online, so that potential applicants no longer have to hand-write their applications and can fill it out directly online. He hopes to have it up by the end of the month. C. Robinson asked if there were any material changes to the documents. J. Zakrevsky confirmed there were not.
- **Review of 2021 Priority Projects** – C. Robinson noted that the list of potential priority projects send to the committee were rather long, and she asked to walk through each project to give the committee an opportunity to weigh-in, as we choose the top three.
 - **Oneonta Rail Yards Business Park** – The Agency did budget money to clean-up one of the smaller lots on the east side of the park that isn’t connected to the larger parcel of land. He’s had discussions with a potential company who might like to build there, but is also looking at other sites in Upstate NY, but the obvious benefit to the Rail Yards would be the Opportunity Zone. The agency is continuing to work with Southern Tier 8 to market the opportunity zones in our eight counties, including the Rail Yards. Southern Tier 8 has hired a firm to put the Opportunity Zones on-line and market them to potential investors throughout the United States. There have also been ongoing conversations with NYSEG, who advised that this would be an eligible project for their funds to assist with marketing the Rail Yards site, so our agency is putting together an application to NYSEG for that. J. Zakrevsky also noted that none of our IDA-owned Business Parks are listed as “shovel-ready” designated by NYS. J. Zakrevsky has had conversations with ESD to try and get all three business parks designated, so the state can put them on their website for marketing purposes. C. Gelbsman noted that prior to J. Zakrevsky being CEO of the agency, he remembers have numerous meetings about being listed on NYS’s shovel-ready site lists. J. Zakrevsky noted that approximately ten years ago, NYS did have a “Build New York” website, where our business parks were listed. But when NYS came out with their shovel-ready site list, all three of our business parks were dropped off the list about four years ago. J. Zakrevsky advised that there was no formal application from the IDA to get them put on the list and noted that all our sites would qualify, so he will get those applications in. C. Gelbsman recommended going back to the engineering firm that originally put the work together and have them get the information needed for the application. J. Zakrevsky

recommended that this project be the number one priority for the agency in 2021 and is hopeful we'll have movement on this site this year.

- **Richfield Springs Business Park** – J. Zakrevsky noted that this project is still number two for the agency, especially with the \$1.2million grant award received from EDA to run water/sewer to the site.
- **Corning** – J. Zakrevsky noted that Corning has consistently been making investments in their company over the last few years, especially in their Oneonta plant. In 2021, they are planning a \$14-\$16million improvements to their Oneonta facility for new equipment. There have also been discussions about another very large project in the near future, as early as 2021.
- **Marketing Campaign** – Because we've started the momentum on our digital marketing campaign, we want to keep this moving as much as possible. With the Opportunity Zone campaign through ST8, the state designating our business parks "shovel-ready" and marketing them on their sites, and looking for additional funding to market specific sites within the Oneonta Rail Yards through NYSEG, marketing will be a priority in 2021.
- **Brooks Bottling** – The agency is still waiting to receive a PILOT application from Brooks, which will be a three-phase project over the next couple years. Phase one would be a PILOT agreement for the land acquisition, phase two would be construction of a new building, and phase three would be the purchase of equipment and installation.
- **Electronic Cluster Development** – With Astrocom Electronics, IOXUS, Custom Electronics moving Greenwich Networks (from Massachusetts) and BeTerrific (from New Jersey) into their building, electronic cluster development has huge room to grow in our area and should be considered a priority if new projects present themselves.
- **Ommegang Brewery** – This project is on the list because there is still a concern that Ommegang could decide to close, so anything the agency can do to help prevent that from happening, should be a priority to work on.
- **Business Incubation/Entrepreneurialism** – With the pandemic, and small businesses suffering, we want to do what we can to see our local businesses grow. J. Zakrevsky has had discussions at the County-level and with the NYS Office of Community Renewal about the potential of having another Microenterprise program, specifically focused on small businesses and digital marketing/e-commerce.

Both J. Zakrevsky and C. Robinson encouraged the committee to present J. Zakrevsky with feedback on the priority projects, and whether there were projects on there that they wouldn't deem a priority or projects that they would take off the list. C. Robinson also noted capacity of the agency and that eight projects, and the day-to-day activities, may be too much for the agency to handle. D. Rowley questioned where we currently stand with IOXUS/Systematic Power Manufacturing. J. Zakrevsky noted that he spoke with them on Friday, and they advised that due to COVID-19, they are approximately six months behind in their timeline. They hope to be more profitable by June/July of 2021 and will be in a better position to move forward with their project. J. Lord noted that the agency should be prepared to be nimble with the priority projects, because if depending on COVID-19 and how long it could go, our dialogue with all the priority project businesses could change dramatically.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, D. Rowley made a motion to adjourn the Projects committee meeting at 8:48am. T. Armao seconded the motion, and it was approved by remaining members.

UPCOMING MEETING SCHEDULE

The next Projects Committee meeting will be held on February 2nd, 2021 at 8:00am.