

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

**PROJECTS COMMITTEE
June 9th, 2022
MEETING MINUTES**

CALL TO ORDER

The COIDA and OCCRC's joint Projects Committee meeting was called to order at 7:59am at the Otsego Now offices at 189 Main Street in Oneonta, NY. Members present included:

Cheryl Robinson
David Rowley
Jeffrey Lord
Andrew Marietta (v)

Tom Armao
James Seward
Jeffery Joyner

Also, in attendance:

STAFF

Jody Zakrevsky, **CEO**
Meaghan Marino, **Dir. of Finance and Admin.**

GUESTS

Christopher Quereau, **Vibrant Brands (v) ***
Larry Frigault, **Town of Richfield Springs Board**

(v) – virtual – because the open meeting law has expired, Andrew Marietta attended the meeting virtually, but was not counted towards a quorum and was not eligible to vote on items.

* departed before end of meeting.

CHAIR'S REMARKS

Projects Chair, C. Robinson, moved immediately into the agenda.

MARKETING CAMPAIGN DISCUSSION

Christopher Quereau, of Vibrant Brands, who works as a consultant with the agency on the on-going marketing campaign with Paperkite, joined the meeting to provide an overview of the campaign with committee members. He noted that this is the second year of the campaign is wrapping up and this campaign has continued to deliver a significant amount of traffic to the Otsego Now webpage. The

second year of the campaign was focused more heavily on targeting businesses directly who were looking for land, shovel-ready sites, vacant buildings, or IDA incentives in Otsego County. He estimated roughly 30,000-40,000 people who visited the website that otherwise wouldn't have without the campaign. Because the second year of the campaign is ending, he advised that the board now needs to decide how they'd like to proceed. The IDA could continue the marketing campaign as is, in which case Paperkite would provide a new proposal with new recommendations going forward, which could be presented at the next meeting. After a brief discussion, the committee requested that Chris work with Paperkite to bring a new proposal to the committee for continued marketing efforts.

MEETING MINUTES

C. Robinson requested a motion to approve the May 12th 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. J. Lord 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 May 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:

- **Oneonta Rail Yards** – J. Zakrevsky advised that he attended a zoom meeting with NYSERDA and Rambol Engineers to discuss the beginning stages of work on a geothermal study of the Oneonta Rail Yards. They requested certain information that J. Zakrevsky was able to provide them with. J. Zakrevsky also advised that he also attended a meeting with board member A. Marietta with a company who expressed interest in building a movie studio in the Oneonta Rail Yards. Their main motivation for moving into the Rail Yards is because of its location in an Opportunity Zone. J. Zakrevsky sent the company's general manager more information about the Rail Yards. The GM also expressed interest in coming up this summer to tour the site.
- **Richfield Springs (RS)** – J. Zakrevsky advised that EDA needs certain documents in order to get bid documents out. One of those documents is a certification from our attorneys that we have title to the property. After researching, Kurt Schulte advised he couldn't sign off, because title insurance was never obtained for the property. Kurt advised the cost would be approximately \$5,000 and then we can move forward with the process. Once completed, the bid documents will go to our engineering firm, Keystone Engineers, and then onto EDA for final approval. There was also a brief discussion, with Larry Frigault and members, regarding NYSEG's request for usage numbers from the end user/s of the park. NYSEG has advised that they will not go to the Public Service Commission until they have an end user, so they've refused to invest any time in design work for the gas-line extensions. The IDA can still go to construction extending water and sewer, but potentially may need to hold off on the gas-line until an end-user is committed to moving into the park. Andela Products has been very interested in moving into the park, but their bank isn't committed to loaning funds for the project until the site is shovel-ready. T. Armao questioned why

NYSEG wouldn't do the work and bill the IDA for it. NYSEG has advised that without the load numbers for electric and gas, it's difficult for them to say how large the gas line needs to be, so they can't design it. C. Robinson suggested looking at other business parks of similar size to understand the average utilization rate and see if NYSEG could work with that. C. Robinson asked if this slows down submission of other bid documents to EDA. J. Zakrevsky advised that they are still sending documentation on water and sewer estimates. J. Seward asked if J. Zakrevsky felt that some of the hesitation on NYSEG's part was the PSC's reluctance to invest in fossil fuel infrastructure. J. Zakrevsky advised that NYSEG raised that issue, but they agreed that this is a lateral gas connection and not an extension of a pipeline. C. Robinson asked about the progress of the water/sewer district. J. Zakrevsky advised that he is still waiting on Joe Scott to come to an agreement with the Town of Richfield Springs and Village of Richfield Springs attorneys. Larry Frigault added that the Village, even with a change of administration, is still very much in support of creating the water/sewer district. Lastly, J. Zakrevsky advised that NYS was given \$8,000,000 from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) for eligible ARC projects. Southern Tier 8 requested a list of design projects for industrial parks, where projects could get up to \$250,000 for design work or up to \$500,000 for construction. He advised that he has submitted the Richfield Springs business park for an additional \$500,000. NYS has approved the list sent and applications are now being requested and will be due in August, and if approved, contracts will be signed in September.

NEW/UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- **Innovation/Acceleration Center** – J. Zakrevsky advised that he is working on an Empire State Development consolidated funding application in the amount of \$162,500 for the purchase of 189 Main Street. C. Robinson asked if that commits the IDA to buying 189 Main Street, and he advised that it does not. Because the IDA has applied for a RISE Grant application for purchase or acquisition of a building for the Center, being awarded the CFA funding would drop the IDA's match down from 20% to 10%.
- **Systematic Power Manufacturing/IOXUS** – J. Zakrevsky advised that he submitted a grant application on behalf of them and the Town of Oneonta for \$750,000 of CDBG funding. NYS Housing and Community Renewal has recommended approval for funding and has prepared board documents to bring before their board of directors on June 23rd. J. Seward asked about the jobs associated with this project. J. Zakrevsky advised that the project would retain 22 jobs and create an additional 30 jobs.
- **Enviro Energy** – M. Marino has been in touch with the attorneys for Enviro Energy, who are still working on getting a closing date with the potential buyer.
- **Ford Block, LLC./Springbrook** – J. Zakrevsky updated the board that Springbrook, who is creating a new entity "Ford Block, LLC.", is looking to close on the building by the end of June. However, the costs of construction have gone up, so there is concern that the assessor will raise the assessment. Another issue is that Otsego County has taken over assessments, which could lead to a different assessment than what the City of Oneonta assessor originally estimated. Springbrook's consultant advised that the City assessor had indicated that the assessment would be based on an income approach or a sales approach, not construction. The County's real property director indicated that he would like in writing what the former assessor agreed to, because he prefers construction appraisals.

- **Remote Access Policy** – Hodgson Russ created a Remote Access Policy for the agency based on guidance from NYS regarding Open Meeting Laws and board members attending meetings in-person and virtually. Board members were given a copy of the policy prior to the meeting for review. J. Zakrevsky would like to bring the policy to the full board for approval, pending any recommendations from the Projects Committee. IDA’s across the state are adopting Remote Access Policies. C. Robinson asked if there was room for flexibility in the policy to allow for members to attend virtually and be able to vote on items without giving notice of their location, or if this was legislation provided by NYS that had to be followed. M. Marino advised that if members want to attend virtually, M. Marino must be able to give notice (at least 3 days prior to the meeting) of where the member will be physically attending the virtual meeting. C. Robinson argued that the public, if they’d like to attend, should be able to go to the Otsego Now offices and not have the option of going to a member’s location. J. Zakrevsky noted that he thinks the issue lies in the fact that board members attending virtually can have their microphones on mute and the public would be unable to hear what is going on outside of the members cameras, and theoretically, there could be people at that location advising members how to vote, which wouldn’t be included in the public record. After a brief discussion, M. Marino advised that she would speak with Hodgson Russ to see if there is any opportunity to be more flexible with the policy in not advertising members locations.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, D. Rowley made a motion to adjourn the Projects Committee meeting at 8:58am.

UPCOMING MEETING SCHEDULE

The next Projects Committee meeting will be held on July 14th, 2022 at 8:00am.