

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

**PROJECTS COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 7th, 2023
MEETING MINUTES**

CALL TO ORDER

The COIDA and OCCRC's joint Projects Committee meeting was called to order at 8:21am at the Otsego Now offices at 189 Main Street in Oneonta, NY. Members present included:

Patricia Kennedy
Craig Gelbsman
James Seward
Jeffrey Joyner

Tom Armao
David Rowley
Cheryl Robinson (v)
Andrew Marietta

Absent members: Jeffrey Lord

Also, in attendance:

STAFF

Jody Zakrevsky, **CEO**
Meaghan Marino, **Dir. of Finance and Admin.**
Gina Gardner, **Marketing Coordinator**
Nasim Vargha, **Administrative Assistant**
Kurt Shulte, **Agency Counsel (v)**

(v) – virtual

CHAIR'S REMARKS

Projects Chair, C. Robinson, joined the meeting virtually and asked the Projects Vice Chair, T. Armao to lead the meeting. He moved immediately into the agenda.

MEETING MINUTES

T. Armao requested a motion to approve the January 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, J. Joyner made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. D. Rowley 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 January 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 discussed that last year the board had discussed leveling and clearing some of the acreage in the site, so he would like to sit down with T. Armao and C. Robinson to work out a plan to do that in 2023.
- **Richfield Springs (RS)** – J. Zakrevsky explained that he recently spoke with the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) of Washington, who had been reviewing the IDA's RS grant application since December and reported that he was still awaiting a letter from the EDA saying that they would administer the ARC grant. J. Zakrevsky explained that he gave ARC the contact information for EDA and encouraged him to reach out to his direct contact. J. Zakrevsky noted that receiving the ARC grant would change the financial structure of the project and the IDA is preparing to go out to bid. Should the ARC grant be approved, the IDA can move forward with providing a final budget to EDA. J. Zakrevsky reported that the EDA has approved the final project design and bids package and after additional documents are submitted, they are authorizing the agency to go out to bid. C. Robinson asked what the status was with the Water and Sewer District creation and if the town had voted on accepting the maintenance of the project. J. Zakrevsky replied that draft copies of the MOA of the water/sewer district between the IDA, Town of RS, and Village of RS need to be sent to EDA for review before the individual municipalities can vote to approve it. He added that the Village has accepted all maintenance responsibilities for the district, and that a public hearing at the Town Board would take place on February 20th. Another concern that J. Zakrevsky raised was the issue of the natural gas line extension. He stated that he reached out to NYSEG and was told that they would recollect all of the documents and send them to an approving division of NYSEG for gas extensions, however that was two weeks ago and the agency still does not have an answer. D. Rowley questioned how the IDA will go out to bid if they do not know if the gas line will be put in. J. Zakrevsky replied that the gas line would be put in regardless, it is just a question of whether or not it will be connected. He added that the cost of the gas line would be approximately \$190,000 of the \$2.4 million project cost. J. Seward explained that he believed that the delays were likely due to the changes in management at NYSEG, and added that NYSEG has more rigid policies that require a definite tenant and a request for a specific amount of gas. D. Rowley expressed that it is important to just keep moving forward and that the positive aspect was that NYSEG would not be paying for the lines. J. Seward added that he brought that up when he met with NYSEG and they responded that the gas extension increases the value of their franchise in Richfield Spring which could have tax implications. J. Zakrevsky pointed out that the worst-case scenario if NYSEG denies the line extension is to have a change of order and remove the gas line from the bid. D. Rowley questioned the timeline for going out to bid for construction firms. J. Zakrevsky advised that there are nine documents he needs to get over to EDA, but he hopes to go out to bid in the next two weeks.
- **Brooks Bottling** – J. Zakrevsky explained that the Brook's Bottling grant with Empire State Development was approved for \$180,000. This grant will go towards their equipment purchases for their bottling plan. J. Zakrevsky added that he would be meeting with Brook's Bottling on February 9th to finalize the documents for the Community Development block grant application for \$210,000.

- **Innovation/Acceleration Center (IAC)**– G. Gardner explained that the press release for the Innovation Acceleration Center was published in the Daily Star last week and was received well. She said that there are currently three innovators who are interested in joining the IAC, one of which has been researching universal blood transfusion and red blood cell compatibility. G. Gardner explained that the IAC will begin using the grant money to update the space and creating cubicles. She added that she will be meeting with other innovators in the coming week including an LED engineer who will also be meeting with Custom Electronics. D. Rowley asked if the USDA Rise grant application, that was originally expected to be awarded in fall 2022, was dead. J. Zakrevsky replied that it was supposed to be announced in October, but they still have not made any award announcements. J. Seward noted that Senator Schumer was in our office to promote the IAC and offer support to our agency to be awarded the USDA Rise award. He asked if there should be conversations with their office to see if they can get more information from USDA. J. Zakrevsky advised that he spoke with the Senator’s office about three weeks ago and they hadn’t heard anything on these awards, but that they would look into it for us.
- **2022 Financial Audit** – J. Zakrevsky explained that he and M. Marino have been preparing for the 2022 financial audit with Mostert, Manzanero & Scott, LLP. M. Marino mentioned that the in-office portion of the audit would be on Monday, February 13th. J. Zakrevsky added that the IDA has made a policy decision to take over the collection and disbursement of taxes for all future PILOT projects. However, any past PILOT projects are still being billed individually by their taxing jurisdictions. He explained that while it is more work for the IDA initially to do the billings, it is much easier than gathering information from each municipality/business on what payments were made.
- **Potential Purchase of Lot in Oneonta Business Park** – J. Zakrevsky said that he had been contacted by a gentleman who is interested in purchasing one of the lots in the Oneonta Business Park for a distribution center. He added that the business would be deciding on the purchase within the next six months. T. Armao asked if the business was already established in the area and J. Zakrevsky replied that yes, they are an existing company. J. Seward asked what size building they would be interested in and J. Zakrevsky advised, that as of now, that information has not been decided. He added that should the building be 50,000-100,000 square feet, the cost would be substantial enough to discuss a PILOT application and a sales tax exemption. He mentioned that the conversation with the company was recent, and he would bring any new information to the committee.
- **MidTel** – A. Marietta asked J. Zakrevsky if anything had moved forward with the MidTel wireless system in Cooperstown. J. Zakrevsky explained that he had met with the Mayor of Cooperstown who said that she was pushing for MidTel to finish the project and install the equipment. C. Gelbsman asked if the system was for Wi-Fi and A. Marietta replied that yes, it was for Wi-Fi. A. Marietta said that MidTel had worked out a contract with pricing over two years ago, but nothing had moved forward after that. J. Zakrevsky questioned if the grant with the New York State Dormitory Authority was still available.

NEW/UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no new or unfinished business to attend to.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, D. Rowley made a motion to adjourn the Projects Committee meeting at 8:41am.

UPCOMING MEETING SCHEDULE

The next Projects Committee meeting will be held on March 9th 2023 at 8:00am.