

SCHOHARIE COUNTY INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

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Fonda Chronis
Executive Director

Chester Burton
Chairperson

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

JANUARY 22, 2024

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting called to order by Chair at 9:09 am

1. Roll Call

Burton	Present
Trapani	Arrived at 9:15am
Johnson	Present
Oevering	Present
McAllister	Present

OTHERS PRESENT: Fonda Chronis (IDA CEO/Executive Director), William Federice, Werner Hampel, Patsy Nicosia, Michael N'dolo (MRB Group).

2. Reading & Approval of Minutes

MOTION TO APPROVE MINUTES FROM DECEMBER 18, 2023 IDA MEETING made by Johnson, seconded by McAllister (Approved).

3. Bills & Communications -- None

4. Report of the Treasurer – Financial Statement Review Below

5. Reports of Committees

- a. Governance Committee -- NONE
- b. Audit Committee -- NONE
- c. Finance Committee – Q2 Financial Statements and Investment Statement were presented and reviewed in committee.

MOTION TO ACCEPT THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AS PRESENTED AT THE FINANCE COMMITTEE made by Oevering, seconded by McAllister (Approved).

6. Unfinished Business

a. Sharon property update

i. RESOLUTION: Sharon Property Disposition

ROLL CALL VOTE (Approved):

Burton	YES
Trapani	EXCUSED
Johnson	YES
Oevering	YES
McAllister	YES

ii. Additional repair work needed

Executive Director received a call from property owner directly contiguous to Sharon property. Property owner claims water now pools in his driveway and turns to ice when temperatures freeze. Executive Director is working on a solution. Mr. Oevering suggests that this issue be disclosed to buyer since property is for sale.

b. Shad Point

i. MRB Proposal (Michael N’dolo from MRB Group)

Mr. N’dolo of MRB Group briefed the IDA Board on a proposal for MRB to perform certain professional services for Shad Point related to General Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS), site design, and utilities engineering. Performing these pre-development activities is an essential precursor for making the site shovel ready and to apply for development funds under the “FAST NY” grant program.

Mr. N’dolo made the point that the state lacks large shovel ready sites for semi-conductors, logistics, and manufacturing. The governor’s proposed budget specifically noted the lack of these sites and dedicated \$100 million in “FAST NY” funding for this purpose.

Mr. N’dolo described the positives of the Shad Point site and noted that the “name of the game” in economic development currently is time to market. His proposal will work towards getting the site as ready as possible to mitigate most of the risk to developers. Developers can go straight to planning board for permitting – taking the permit process from 18 months to 3 months.

Task A: Goal is to get the project ready to undergo a General Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS), which is a special SEQRA resolution that looks at the site generically for a range of projects. Once GEIS is done, SEQRA is done as well.

Consultation with agencies will tell the IDA what needs to be done for the GEIS.

Task B: We need to know more about the site than we know today: upgraded surveys, easements, site topographical issues, soils, stormwater, more developed site plan, and more construction detail.

Task C: Engineering analysis for bringing utilities to the site, along with cost estimate for the work and a timetable for work to be completed.

What comes after this? GEIS process is next after this work gets completed. This process identifies what studies and/or work is needed for GEIS.

Board members asked several questions regarding the proposal.

Mr. Oevering asked how this proposal came about. Mr. Chronis answered that MRB proposal represents the next step in the process to gather the needed information for GEIS. Mr. Oevering stated whole reason for having an RFQ is so that the developer will handle the entire pre-GEIS process. Mr. N'dolo pointed out that Mr. Oevering's approach would be proper if there was a developer for a specific project, but since the IDA is the site control entity, it should pursue pre-development activities with a "max build" concept. Mr. Oevering believes the developer should be able to use their own professionals for the task.

Mr. N'dolo sought to clarify the role of the IDA as the entity responsible and the process for getting the site shovel ready. Mr. Oevering contends the RFQ asks the developer to take the lead in preparing for GEIS and that one of the two RFQ responses proposes the ARPA funding to be allocated to infrastructure build-out.

Mr. Oevering read a section of the proposal that says, "MRB will develop advanced conceptual site design plans for a proposed development area." Mr. N'dolo described that wording as a "maximum build" plan, where the design seeks to build the largest structure possible on the site. Developer proposals at that maximum or less would not need to go through SEQRA again – SEQRA is already completed. With this approach there is no need for the IDA to know a developer's specifications for the property. The maximum build approach anticipates the maximum environmental impacts, study it, and get it approved.

Mr. Trapani asked what is needed if a developer were to propose a smaller build. Mr. N'dolo answered that all the tasks in the MRB proposal would still need to be done. Mr. Oevering reiterated his position that the IDA/County would invest \$1 million if the developer "puts in the sweat

equity” to get these pre-engineering tasks completed. He asked why the IDA would pay \$180,000 now when the developer might do these tasks for less money and do them to their own specifications. In his view, the RFQ was developed so that the developer would do this due diligence work rather than IDA staff. Mr. N’dolo commented on Mr. Oevering’s approach, stating that developer selection, the ensuing contract negotiation with said developer, and the developer’s “spec-out” of the site would put the pre-engineering works out several months.

If the IDA looks to “pivot” from his understanding of the role of the developer in the pre-engineering process, Mr. Oevering feels there would be value in seeking other bids for these services. Mr. Chronis reminded the board that this service falls under professional services in the IDA procurement policy and does not need to go out to bid.

Mr. McAllister saw value in selecting a developer quickly. Mr. Burton points to the need to contact each submitter to clarify their plans for due diligence.

Mr. Chronis will gather all questions from board members and pose them to each RFQ submitter.

ii. RFQ Submission Update

1. IDA received two submissions from the RFQ process.
2. In previous meetings the board discussed setting up two groups to evaluate the submissions. Given that there are only two submissions, does the board wish to continue that evaluation structure?

Mr. Chronis recommended a change to the previously agreed to evaluation process since only two submissions were received.

MOTION TO CONVENE ONE WORKING GROUP OF ALL FIVE IDA BOARD MEMBERS PLUS THE COBLESKILL TOWN SUPERVISOR AND CHAIR OF THE SCHOHARIE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS TO EVALUATE RFQ PROPOSALS made by McAllister, seconded by Oevering (Approved).

7. New Business

Mr. Chronis reported two parties with potential interest in partnering for IDA benefits. Mr. Johnson asked if any interest was generated by the updated UTEP. Mr. Chronis believes one of those developers referenced the UTEP, and the other contact came from internal marketing efforts by the executive director.

8. Other

- a. Werner Hampel was named the new chair of the County's Economic Development Committee.
- b. Executive Director reported that Sarah Nickle will re-join the IDA on a part-time basis. Ms. Nickle will work as a 1099 contractor for now.
- c. Economic development groups – IDA, SUNY, SEEC, Destination Marketing, and the County – have met and look to form a collaboration or loose partnership to work together on economic development efforts.
- d. IDA's website has been updated. Mr. Trapani suggests looking into a service that would optimize the site.
- e. ACH Option for health insurance premiums and other recurring costs. Mr. Oevering asked about a policy to oversee this. Mr. Chronis would use the "debit card" checking account for ACH transactions, and that would limit the IDA's fiscal liability. There is a policy and a system for the debit card account. Mr. Oevering shared an audit concern about reconciliation of the account.

MOTION TO ALLOW THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO UTILIZE AUTOMATIC CLEARING HOUSE (ACH) TRANSACTIONS TO PAY SOME RECURRING EXPENSES made by McAllister, seconded by Johnson (Approved).

- f. Next IDA meeting should be the IDA's annual meeting to elect officers and cover some necessary administrative matters. We will do the same for the CRC.

Mr. McAllister left the meeting at 10:31am.

NEXT MEETING: February 22, 2024 at 9am (Location Prentice Hall Room 104).

WORKING GROUP MEETING FOR RFQ: February 5th or 7th at 9am (Location Prentice Hall Room 104).

Mr. Oevering believes it is worth getting started on water and sewer engineering sooner rather than later.

Mr. Trapani was concerned over the part of the MRB Group proposal that delineates other tasks not included in that proposal.

Mr. Johnson pointed to potential wetlands and archeological concerns.

Mr. Burton pointed to the two proposals and how they are significantly different from each other.

MOTION TO ADJOURN MEETING AT 10:37am made by Johnson, seconded by Trapani (Approved).