

St. Lawrence River Valley Redevelopment Agency
Minutes of January 15, 2013 Meeting ~ Town of Louisville Municipal Offices, Massena NY

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:08 PM by Chairman McNeil.

Roll Call/Determination of Quorum: Mssrs. McNeil, Murphy, Carroll and Strait attend. Mr. Burns joins the meeting at a later time. NYPA Representative Karen White is in attendance for Michael Huvane. The quorum is recognized.

Public Notice: Public notifications were sent January 2, 2013 to, at a minimum: St. Lawrence County's newspapers designated for the publication of local laws and other matters required by law to be published. Notification also sent to other local media sources and websites.

Presentations: None

Approval of Minutes: Strait/Carroll motion to accept the December 18, 2012 regular meeting minutes. The minutes are accepted unanimously.

Financial Report: Tom Plastino, Chief Financial Officer for the St. Lawrence County Industrial Development Agency presents the November 2012 financial report. Carroll/Strait motion to accept the November 2012 financials. The report is accepted unanimously.

Mr. Burns enters the meeting at 6:10 pm.

Committee Reports: On behalf of the Nominating Committee, Mr. Carroll motions to recommend the current roles remain the same for one more term. The current Chair Mr. McNeil remains as Chairman and Mr. Strait as Vice Chair. Mr. Murphy seconds the motion. Motion passes with unanimous consent.

Old Business: At the request of Mr. Murphy, Mr. McNeil suggests the 2013 meeting dates scheduled for November and December move up by one week to accommodate for travel plans during the Thanksgiving and Christmas Holidays. The November meeting will be rescheduled from Tuesday, November 19th to Tuesday, November 12th, 2013 and the December 17th meeting will be rescheduled for Tuesday, December 10th, 2013. The revised 2013 meeting schedule is accepted unanimously.

New Business: Resolution: Authorizing Expenditures of \$80,000 for Repairs and Improvements to Lots 18 & 19. A brief discussion ensues around the requirements set forth by the North Country Regional Economic Development Committee's grant authorization. Mr. Kelly explains that although the terms of the agreement have yet to be identified, the agency should begin preparations by developing the necessary renovation plans now. Mr. Murphy inquires into potential structural problems with the roof. Mr. Carroll responds with an assurance that the structure is sound. Carroll/Burns motion to accept. Motion passes with unanimous consent.

Resolution: Annual Review of Procurement Policy. Burns/Strait motion to accept. Motion passes with unanimous consent.

Resolution: Annual Review of Investment Policy and Authorization of Depositories. Burns/Carroll motion to accept. Motion passes with unanimous consent.

Staff Report:

2013 Community Development & Environmental Improvement Fund (“CD/EI”): Mr. Kelly reports that there have been discussions recently among members of the St. Lawrence County Industrial Development Agency Local Development Corporation and the St. Lawrence River Valley Redevelopment Agency pertaining to suggestions made by RVRDA members and SLCIDA-LDC staff to incorporate into the 2013 CD/EI application.

Mr. Kelly mentions Governor Cuomo’s ‘State-of-the-State’ address last week and points out a few of the economic development issues discussed that could be relevant to the RVRDA:

- Innovation Hotspots – with 5 colleges and universities in the area, St. Lawrence County has the natural advantage for targeted investments and to be named an “innovation hotspot” in the North Country Region. At this time it is uncertain as to what this will comprise of, but the RVRDA may have an opportunity to play a role.
- Proposed Casinos (3) in Northern New York. The SLCIDA, the SLC Chamber of Commerce and others have been tasked with developing a promotional plan to bring one of the casinos to St. Lawrence County.
- Clean Tech Economy – an energy alternative.
- Charge NY Program – there could be a connection with the Economic Development Power that has been allocated to the RVRDA.

Mr. Kelly notes the process of reporting to the State for the 2012 fiscal year has begun. With this, staff will be conducting site visits to measure the performance of the financial assistance that have been administered through the St. Lawrence County Industrial Development Agency Local Development Corporation (which includes the RVRDA). There are approximately 75 different reports that need to be completed by the end of March. Mr. Murphy asks if RVRDA members will have access to reporting results. Mr. Kelly notes the Authority Budget Office issues a summary report compiling the results of all of the Industrial Development Agencies that have filed a PARIS report. Mr. McMahon mentions the report is quite lengthy and contains a summary of all the agencies combined. Mr. Kelly offers to forward the report to each of the board members.

Mr. Plastino reviews the draft application for the 2013 Community Development and Environmental Improvement Program and cites areas within the application which are included in the list of proposed changes. Discussion ensues around companies sticking to a timeline rather than granting multiple extensions for project completion. Mr. Murphy emphasizes the need to get the money out onto the street quicker in order to create jobs, rather than having the money sitting in the bank. Mr. Burns notes a concern for companies that are faced with circumstances beyond their control that require project timelines to be extended. Mr. Kelly suggests a project completion timeline be submitted as part of the application process and then leave it to each individual member to decide if that timeline is appropriate. Mr. McNeil suggests adding clarity to the application process by emphasizing the need for project readiness as a priority. Mr. Carroll states that projects should not be rewarded for speed, as he feels this has little value compared to the ability to leverage funds. Rather, Mr. Carroll suggests eliminating the point system for project readiness and dividing that 10% portion in half by offering an additional 5% to the leverage of funds category and 5% to the employment category. A motion is made by Mr. Carroll/Mr. Burns to approve the suggestions for change on the 2013 CD/EI application. All of the members agree to the recommended point restructuring system. Attorney Gustafson agrees that if a point system is developed, it should be followed as closely as possible.

While Mr. Kelly reviews the application submission timeline, he notes that an IDA April meeting date has yet to be finalized. Therefore, Mr. McNeil suggests that the application review process begin immediately following the submission deadline of March 1st in order for recommendations to be submitted to the IDA-LDC for approval by the end of April 2013.

While distributing a rate comparison chart to members of the RVRDA, Mr. McMahon reports on the utility rate research he has conducted since the last meeting, particularly in the New York, Vermont, and Massachusetts area. Mr. McMahon adds that the research will extend to the Rhode Island, Maine, and Connecticut areas as well. Mr. McMahon demonstrates that there is an overall cost benefit to power usage in the St. Lawrence County area versus the New England area. He reminds the members that this is an estimate of energy costs, not a firm cost of energy. Mr. Kelly adds that energy is one part of a company's application process. It is an asset and the number one advantage we have to entice companies to come here.

Public Comment:

Mark Dzwonczyk:

- On behalf of Nicholville Telephone, Mr. Dzwonczyk expects to sign a contract within the next 48 hours for an innovation grant with New York State, which was approved by Empire State Development back in November 2013. This is a \$2.5 million grant that will not require any other approvals from the State. Approximately 80% will be used for capital, while the other 20% will be used for operating expenses. The grant will help Nicholville Telephone pay back the loan money it borrowed from the St. Lawrence River Valley Redevelopment Agency.
- Nicholville Telephone received a grant from the North Country Economic Development Council for \$1.2 million to continue providing services to the Long Lake area.
- Nicholville Telephone hired a General Manager in December. He will be moving from the Plattsburgh area to St. Lawrence County.
- Met with Tony Collins this week, President of Clarkson University. As a newly appointed trustee with Clarkson University, Mr. Dzwonczyk was asked by Mr. Collins to be a liaison to the St. Lawrence River Valley Redevelopment Agency.

Executive Session: Strait/Carroll motion for Execution Session at 7:21 PM to discuss the financial history of a particular company.

Return to regular session at 7:55 PM, upon the motion by Carroll/Strait. The meeting is adjourned at 7:55 PM, upon the motion of Carroll/Strait.

Note: The next regularly scheduled meeting of the St. Lawrence River Valley Redevelopment Agency will be held at 6:00PM on Tuesday, February 19 th , 2013 at the Town of Louisville Municipal Offices.
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