

**Schuyler County Industrial Development Agency  
216 N. Franklin Street - Watkins Glen, NY 14891  
Meeting Minutes – March 12, 2025**

The meeting of the Schuyler County Industrial Development Agency was called to order at 5:01 pm by John Terry, Board Chair.

<b>Roll Call:</b>	John Terry	Chair
	Chad Hendrickson	Vice Chair
	Margaret Lawrence	Treasurer
	Laury Ward	Secretary
	Mark Taylor	Member
	Hon. Carl Blowers	Schuyler County Legislature
<b>Staff:</b>	Judy McKinney Cherry	CFO/CEO
	Michell Krossber	Office Manager
<b>Absent/Excused:</b>	Kevin Murphy	Board Emeritus
<b>Guests:</b>	Evan Cleveland	Insero & Co CPAs
	Rita King	Insero & Co. CPAs
	Carl Taber	Community Member
	Jim Seafuse	Community Member

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**Roll Call – Confirmation of Quorum**

**Conflict of Interest:** No conflicts were reported.

**Public Comment:** Congratulations to Carl Taber on his upcoming wedding!

**Meeting Minutes – January 2024**

Carl Blowers made a motion to accept the January 2025 minutes, as written. The motion was seconded by Laury Ward. The motion carried unanimously.

**Financials**

**Margaret Lawrence reviewed the December 2024 financial statements.** The annual lease payment was received from FLX Gateway Enterprises, bringing net income for December 2024 to \$18,277.76.

Carl Blowers made a motion to accept the December 2024 financials. The motion was seconded by Mark Taylor. The motion carried, unanimously.

**Margaret Lawrence reviewed the January 2025 financial statements.** The net income for January 2025 was (-\$63,025.55), primarily due to the annual SCOPED Administrative expense for 2025 services.

Discussion was held regarding the CCTC CD that matured yesterday (3/11/25). Originally, the board had approved to cash out the full CD value to cover operating expenses. However, in looking at current and projected expenses over the next couple of months (when the other large CD matures in May), the financials show we have sufficient cash to operate without cashing in the full amount. Margaret suggested that we could roll over \$100,000 to continue earning interest and cash in the remaining +/- \$27,000 to use towards operating expenses. Upcoming expenses will include legal expenses and the Camp Monterey Water Study expenses.

CCTC offered this renewal for 6 months at 4.2% or 3.5% for 15 months.

A motion was made by Carl Blowers to approve the January 2025 financials, to roll \$100,000 of the matured CD balance for 6 months at 4.2%, and to cash out the remaining balance (+/- \$27,000) for operating expenses. The motion was seconded by Mark Taylor. The motion carried unanimously.

John Terry asked to move the funds from the VISIONS savings account into the Money Market account, which has a higher interest rate. Michell will confirm the rates and will request the transfer.

## **New Business**

### **2024 Audit Review – Insero & Co. Presentation**

Evan Cleveland and Rita King reviewed the 2024 Audit Report. A thorough, finer detailed report was provided to the \*Audit Committee directly before this meeting.

*\*In the meeting recording, Mr. Cleveland stated they gave a full report to the "Financial Committee;" the actual committee that was presented to was the Audit Committee.*

### **2024 Financial Report - Insero & Co.\***

The Financial Audit Report, Government Standards Report, and Investment Report were all provided with an unmodified/clean report. They presented an overview of the final/committee-approved report.

No comments or concerns were noted: all processes and procedures appear to be good. Evan and Rita thanked Michell for having everything organized and well-prepared for their visit. Nothing of concern is noted.

A new report is now required, which looks at investment practices and future operations. The IDA is following safe investing practices (secured CDs, etc.); however, the primary form of revenue is fee income and, as that is not a guaranteed revenue stream, should be considered for the future.

A motion was made by Mark Taylor to approve the 2024 Financial Report. The motion was seconded by Margaret Lawrence. The motion carried, unanimously.

### **2024 Internal Control over Financial Reporting\***

This information is included in the 2024 Audit Report.

A motion was made by Mark Taylor to approve the 2024 Internal Control over Financial Reporting. The motion was seconded by Chad Hendrickson. The motion carried, unanimously.

### **2024 Annual Accomplishments and Operations Report\***

We did a lot in 2024! This information is provided/reported to PAAA and is listed on our website each year.

A motion was made by Chad Hendrickson to approve the 2024 Annual Accomplishments and Operations Report. The motion was seconded by Mark Taylor. The motion carried, unanimously.

### **2024 Mission Statement and Measurement Report\***

No changes this year. This report does need to be signed by the Chair of the Board before posting.

A motion was made by Carl Blowers to approve the 2024 Mission Statement and Measurement Report. The motion was seconded by Chad Hendrickson. The motion carried, unanimously.

### **2024 Investment Report\***

This report matches our practices and uses the numbers directly from the audit.

A motion was made by Margaret Lawrence to approve the 2024 Investment Report. The motion was seconded by Laury Ward. The motion carried, unanimously.

### **2024 Property Disposition Guidelines\***

There are no property dispositions but we do have to reaffirm annually. No changes from last year. (If we were in the practice of purchasing property, we would have to report.)

A motion was made by Laury Ward to approve the 2024 Property Disposition Guidelines. The motion was seconded by Mark Taylor. The motion carried unanimously.

### **Board Vacancy – Update**

The legislature did not approve the IDA's previous recommendation and asked the IDA to readvertise our one vacancy, which was done. For this round of recommendations, the two from the last round resubmitted interest (Anderson & Bartow), plus the IDA received two additional submissions (Seafuse & Sharkey). *\*A packet that*

*included everyone's responses was distributed.* Within that packet is the information each applicant submitted – some are just the answers to the questions, some included their resumes, and some submitted a letter too. The board reviewed the items in the packet. The goal is to provide the Schuylar County Legislature with the IDA recommendation for the best candidate to fill the vacant seat. A letter will be written from the SCIDA with the recommendation and all information in the packet will be provided to the legislature.

The board reaffirmed the desired skills for a board member:

- Financial Acumen – With our current Treasurer and Board Chair (our current finance committee) terming out at the end of 2025, we need someone who understands government accounting processes and financial reporting.
- Housing Development – With the entire state's focus on housing and the three potential housing developments slated for Watkins Glen, Montour Falls, and Dix, we need someone with an understanding of housing and real estate.

The IDA board expressed excitement in having so many interested candidates. Demonstrating that what we do is important work! Today we can only select one – but we will have two additional openings in January 2026.

The board asked for the reason(s) provided on why the last candidate we recommended was not selected. Carl Blowers noted that, as he understood, there was previous history with some of the candidates, which was why they weren't selected. He felt disappointed in the decision because it didn't have anything to do with the IDA.

As an aside, concern was shared that the IDA does a lot of work on behalf of the County, receives very little compensation, and has a large amount of exposure; but holds very little power and has no protections. The board feels the candidate they selected last time was a very qualified candidate, which was determined from a thorough discussion of the future needs of our organization. Concern was shared on what may occur if we renominated the same individual, would we be in the same situation? We can only recommend – the County has the final say and could select someone of their choosing, even someone outside of the applications received.

Discussion between Board members was held regarding the IDA members attending the legislative session to share their first-person perspectives on why they selected this candidate. Carl Blowers noted that the meeting is public and anyone can attend. He feels that the IDA Board needs to take care of the IDA Board and is hopeful that the legislature can move past their prejudice and that the IDA can convince the Legislators. He will plan to abstain from the vote, due to this conflict.

Margaret Lawrence made a motion to renominate Johanna Anderson to fill our one, current vacant board seat. The motion was seconded by Laury Ward. The motion carried, 5-0-1, with Carl Blowers abstaining.

## **ONGOING BUSINESS**

### **Finger Lakes Railway PILOT Application – Update**

The Finger Lakes Railway PILOT application is back on track. They agreed to "support crossings." Our attorney has confirmed that if they even say they don't like it, that would be considered a breach of contract. We will be holding the Public Hearings on April 9<sup>th</sup>, before our next IDA Board meeting (Town of Reading at 1:00 pm & Town of Dix at 3:00 pm). The Town of Reading shared a concern with us about a concern they have on the Norfolk Southern line but that is not ours. All ATJ's will be made whole under the new PILOT terms.

### **Nelson Development PILOT Properties - Developer from Elmira – Update**

Our attorney has received the request from Nelson Development to do a straight transfer of the existing PILOTs on the Water Works Center and Montour House properties to the new owners. The Flats on Broadway property is not under an active PILOT but the new owners did have a plan for some possible new housing on that site. The attorney is drawing up the documents now.

## **Camp Monterey Facilities Assessment – Update**

The water study is complete. Discussion was held on if we should move forward with the wastewater portion of the study. We know the wells can produce 130,000-150,000 gallons per day. We do not know if the wastewater system can even handle that amount. To determine that, it would require turning the water on, testing the current system, and estimating what it would take to bring the system up to current standards (which have changed since it was originally installed). Completing the Phase 2 portion of the study and having those final reports will help to make the site more attractive and marketable. Time is money and, if they have to wait for those testing results, a potential deal could be lost.

Discussion was held regarding the ROI on the cost. Phase 1 has been paid for but Phase 2 will cost considerably more. There is still \$5M in grant funds available from NYS but it may take some time to receive a reimbursement. The county did provide SCOPED with special funding for the attraction of a large manufacturer. These reports would be helpful to advertise in that arena, as the normal expectation is that this information would already be available to a prospective client. No company wants to assume risk.

Carl Blowers confirmed that, when he was working for Corning, they only selected sites that were pre-permitted. Additional discussion was held if we should consider pre-permitting the site. We may be required to demolish the condemned buildings. There is no zoning in Orange, we would need a building permit, and there are likely some requirements from the state for operating next to a state forest. We do know that it cannot be residential housing or heavy manufacturing. Would the state consider taking on the cost of any required demolition? A reminder was shared that this study is only looking at the viability and functionality of the water system only – it does not include any permits.

Discussion was held regarding the interest in the site. The aquafarm is no longer interested in the site – they needed more water than what the wells could provide, even with upgrades. At the urging of the Town of Orange Supervisor and the County Administrator, the site was submitted for consideration to a dog food manufacturing company. Discussions have also been held about potentially partnering with Cornell and using Camp Monterey as a Deep Earth Source Energy site. This would allow further discussions for a potential microgrid and/or other power purchasing agreements.

Michell confirmed that the county has provided \$50,000 towards the cost of this study. Carl Blowers asked staff to confirm the intent of the approved resolution (was it half of the total cost – or half of just the well study)? The total cost of the well study was \$36,000 and that is paid in full. At this time, if the IDA wishes to continue with the wastewater portion of the study, it appears it will cost them \$50,000 (half of the cost of the well study and half of the cost of the waste study). Michell will confirm the wording of the resolution and will report back.

The board will readdress this discussion and make a final decision at the April 9<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting, after it's determined if:

- The cost of the wastewater study is still valid. Has this cost increased or will LaBella honor the quote?
- Confirmation of the exact intent of the funds sent from the county (\$50,000).

## **A.B.O./PAAA-**

Judy thanked the Board for approving our six reports earlier today. These can now be submitted to the ABO, by the March 31<sup>st</sup> deadline. Just as an FYI: We did reach out and confirmed that our Zoom sessions (with the easily accessible link posted on our website) does meet the ABO's live stream requirements.

## **Committee Reports**

**Finance Committee:** Did not meet. No report.

**Governance Committee:** Did not meet. No report.

**Audit Committee:** The Audit Committee met with our auditors before this meeting, to review the draft 2024 audit report. *\*Margaret Lawrence asked Michell to be sure we correct the minutes for the auditor's mention of the "Finance" Committee, which is accurately the "Audit" Committee.*

## **BROADBAND**

Discussion was held regarding the IDA hosting a Broadband Event with the Southern Tier Network and our local government officials. Mark Taylor has received confirmation from the Director of the Southern Tier Network that they would be willing to offer an informational session, with our local leaders, to provide them with the details of the grant and the internet installation process (what it covers, how to apply, how the installers work with local providers, who connects to the house and maintains, etc.). Projects are already underway in Beaver Dams and Tyrone. The Board thinks this a great idea but wants to confirm there's an interest first. Mark Taylor will reach out to local leadership and gauge the interest. If we decide to offer the session, we could offer it at FLX WORKS before our May 9<sup>th</sup> Board meeting.

**Executive Session:**

Margaret Lawrence made a motion to enter into Executive Session for a (#4 OML) discussion regarding proposed, pending, or current litigation. The motion was seconded by Laury Ward. The motion carried, unanimously. The Board entered into Executive Session at 6:42 pm.

Chad Hendrickson made a motion to leave the Executive Session. The motion was seconded by Laury Ward. The motion carried, unanimously. The Board came out of Executive Session at 7:10 pm.

**Adjournment:** A motion was made by Laury Ward to adjourn the March 12, 2025 meeting. The motion was seconded by Mark Taylor. The motion carried, unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:11 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Laury Ward", is written over a horizontal line. Below the line, the text "Laury Ward, Secretary" is printed, followed by the date "mar 03/17/25" on the next line.

Laury Ward, Secretary

mar 03/17/25