

Allegany County Industrial Development Agency

February 9, 2023

Crossroads Conference Center, Belmont, New York 14813

ACIDA.org

OPENING REMARKS

Vice Chairwoman, Judith Hopkins called the Board meeting to order at 10:00 am. She introduced the Board and guest, Mike Zimmerman.

- Present: Judith Hopkins, John Ricci and Randy Shayler.
- By Telephone: Richard Ewell.
- Absent: Douglas Frank.
- Guests: Mike Zimmerman of H. Sicherman/Harrison Studios, David Drury, Stilly Enterprises.
- Others present: Dr. Craig Clark, IDA Executive Director & Pam Common, recording secretary.

Live streaming on YouTube at: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCXJ1KZ_F90Z77-JQxeHzDXQ

PRESENTATION

Mike Zimmerman, of H. Sicherman Administrators/Harrison Studios, introduced himself to the Board and passed out information sheets to all members. He began his presentation with the Microenterprise Grant Program, as the County has been awarded another round of funding for this grant, from the Office of Community Renewal. We are ready to roll out the new program and have received clearance for the environmental review process. The Microenterprise program funds businesses, with five or fewer employees and start-up businesses, with grants up to \$35,000.00, for operating costs, working capital, machinery and equipment., anything not related to construction costs. Businesses have to complete a training course before they can be funded. They go through the application and approval process, before receiving any of the monies. They have to complete an entrepreneurial course, through Incubator Works and Accord. There is a strong pipeline of businesses that have been completing those programs, to be eligible. There should not be any challenge in getting the money spent.

J. Ricci asked, how involved is the course?

C. Clark states the program will take two to three months, attending once or twice a week. Incubator Works has a way to do this remotely. Their program is a hybrid. You can do it remotely or in person. Accord is in person. There are people, in both cases, with Accord and Incubator Works that did the training, individually, to expedite it.

M. Zimmerman states, applicants in the program, complete the course and have to complete the full, business plan process, including financial predictions, which gets submitted to us. The step, moving forward, is a draft of the program, guidelines and application, very similar to the previous round, that we will share with you, for your review and approval. At that point, we would be ready to publicly announce the program and accept applications.

C. Clark states, in the past, there was not an application deadline but, at this point, we may want to have a deadline, as he already has enough inquiries, for more than the money we have.

R. Shayler states, you have indicated there is a lot in the pipeline, that have already completed the Incubator Works and Accord program. Should anyone else bother to apply, if they haven't started the process?

M. Zimmerman answered, it does have to be public so, I wouldn't want to dissuade anyone from applying. We do have to come up with a review and scoring criteria, so, I think they should apply, so they are in that process to review and score them. Even if they are not funded, in this round, it strengthens your case, a year from now, when you go back to the State and say we need another \$300,000.00 because we had so many businesses that we couldn't fund.

J. Hopkins asked Mr. Zimmerman if he is confident this program will be extended and go on for a number of years.

M. Zimmerman replied, as far as we can tell, it is a very successful program. We have a lot of clients who utilize this program. It is a two-year grant but, if you spend all the money, this year, you don't have to wait. You can go in again, as soon as you have committed all your funds.

C. Clark states, then you have to do all the close out paperwork.

M. Zimmerman replies, yes. It is a lot of paperwork. I wanted to prep the table for what is coming. We will be getting those documents to you, shortly and we will have a conversation, with Craig about when we want to set an application deadline and how to do the roll out. Then, we will go from there, by this spring.

P. Common asked if Greg Merriam is doing the Microenterprise Grant and he is doing the larger, CBDG Grant.

M. Zimmerman replied, yes. Greg and I will work together on them. Greg will be the point of contact, mostly, on the Microenterprise Grant.

Shifting gears to the Small Business Support Fund, which is what we titled it. We call it the Cares Grant because the Cares program is where the money came from and, also, through New York State OCR, CBDG funding. This is a specific Covid relief program. This is a larger grant, a million-dollar award, we have been working through, with Craig being the initial, grant contracting and the environmental review process and upfront bureaucracy. The program has been launched and we have an application deadline of next week, Friday, February 17, 2023. I have seven or eight businesses that have submitted applications. There are another fifteen or so, that have inquired and we are working on them. I am confident, at the first crack, that we are going to have enough applications to fund the full program grant. This program can fund small businesses, of up to 25 employees. It has a little bit of a wider net. It is only for head count, not full-time equivalents. This is funding to support businesses that were negatively impacted by Covid. Although everybody was, they have to demonstrate that to us and how they plan to use the grant funds, to recover from Covid and/or make their business more resilient, to future endemic disruptions.

Applications are coming in and they can be for, up to, \$75,000.00. With CBDG funding, as well as the Microenterprise grant, there are job creation requirements tied to the grant. There are a couple of ways businesses can create that, for example, new job creation. There is a path, if they are retaining employment and, in the case of very small businesses, similar to the Microenterprise program, if the owner meets the lower to moderate income guideline threshold, they can qualify for the grant funding, without needing to create additional employment. There are a couple of different tracks but, that is a big requirement of the program, meeting the employment requirement. What we should discuss today, with the application deadline being next Friday, hopefully we will have enough applications for the full program and what the process is from there. We will be doing reviews on each application and we will come up with review memos that summarize them and have recommendations. We will, then, bring it to your next Board meeting. Do we want to set a target date for that, separately from your next Board meeting, to get these approvals in place? The important thing, timing wise, is the businesses cannot start incurring costs and hiring until we get that approval. We only have until July.

C. Clark states, it is a one-year program but, it took six months to get the approval to start the program. M/ Zimmerman states, we are very close to completing the program and if we are not done by July, we can always get an extension.

J. Ricci asked, if someone applies, can they get training afterwards? And, are there any matches on this?

M. Zimmerman states, with this one, there is no training requirement. It is only for the Microenterprise. But, yes, they can apply, with the Micro program, even if they have not done the training yet. They will have to do the training before they have grant approval. There is a ten percent match on the Micro program and twenty percent for the Cares program.

There were discussions with the Board regarding the application reviews, approval process, as well as other questions regarding the grants, from the Board that Mr. Zimmerman and C. Clark addressed. The decision was made to review and approve on the next Board meeting of March 9th.

MINUTES

➤ **Approval of Minutes-January 12, 2023**

A motion was made by J. Ricci, seconded by R. Shayler, to approve the January 12, 2023 minutes, by a vote of 3-0. There were no questions, comments or further discussion.

TREASURER'S REPORT

- **Abstract Report-** February 2023 expenses-A motion was made by J. Ricci, seconded by R. Shayler, to approve the January abstract report, by a vote of 3-0, with no further discussion. C. Clark explained to the Board that the QuickBooks reports are all inclusive. When QuickBooks was put into QuickBooks, it shows all the entities, such as ACUC, IDA & CRC, together in one report. This is to be fixed after the audit. The auditors wanted this information left, while they are doing the audit. Once it is finished, they will be separate. They may be able to present it in March.

Richard Ewell was welcomed to the Board meeting, by telephone.

- **Banking & Financial Summary (Balance Sheet)-**February 2023-A motion was made by J. Ricci, seconded by R. Shayler, to approve the banking & financial summary, for January, 2023, by a vote of 4-0. C. Clark states, there are small amounts that will be adjusted, on the balance sheet, from accounts that are no longer active, since 2015. These will be adjusted after the audit.

BUILDING MAINTENANCE REPORT-None

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 10:28 am, a motion was made by R. Shayler, seconded by R. Ewell, to enter into Executive session, for contractual issues.

At 10:35 am, a motion was made by J. Hopkins, seconded by R. Ricci, to end the Executive session and resume the regular IDA meeting.

ACTION ITEMS

- **Resolution regarding ROW for county road 51-A** motion was made by J. Ricci, seconded by R. Ewell, to approve the resolution, by a vote to 4-0. C. Clark states they have a temporary easement and this assures they have the right of way for the county road. There was no further discussion or questions.
Voice vote, as follows:

R. Ewell-Aye	J. Hopkins-Aye	R. Shayler-Aye
J. Ricci-Aye	D. Frank-Absent	
- **Resolution for amendment to NY Alfred 1 LLC solar project**-Per C. Clark, the project has become quite a bit bigger and they are going to want the mortgage tax exemption. So, we will do that because we have already approved it. It is to revise the PILOT information and they will be paying on that larger amount. It was the 5 MW Alfred project that we have already approved once. It is a much bigger project, dollar wise. It is just changing the value of the project. They are getting ready to close and their host agreement is almost finalized. We will not process the paperwork until the host agreement is finished. A motion was made by J. Ricci, seconded by R. Shayler, to approve the resolution. There was no further discussion or questions. All members were in favor, by a vote of 4-0.
- **Voice vote, as follows:**

R. Ewell-Aye	J. Hopkins-Aye	R. Shayler-Aye
J. Ricci-Aye	D. Frank-Absent	

OLD BUSINESS

- **Microenterprise Grant updates**- Please see the presentation by M. Zimmerman.
- **Small Business grant-CBDG CARES Act Program**-Please see presentation by M. Zimmerman.
- **Crossroads development update**-C. Clark states, he has talked with Tim Boyd and Tom Windus regarding the finalizing of the Hunt Engineers contract, for this project. I continue to work with National Fuel and RG&E, getting us the information on the utilities. Unfortunately, RG&E did not get back to us, as soon as they said they would. They did ask their engineers, on Tuesday, but I did not get a reply. As soon as I get anything, I will send it to the Board. I will not wait until the next Board meeting. They are reviewing it and it is taking longer than we hoped. National Fuel is supposed to get back to me this week. They are also looking at the loads. As soon as I get the information, I will forward it to the Board. We have worked with National Fuel before so, it shouldn't be a problem this time. I can't guarantee the electric will not be a problem but, I don't think so because we have talked with them and the hotel developers before. They are finalizing that. The contact has replied to me but, the engineers have not replied.
- **Clean energy updates**-C. Clark states, the larger, two, solar projects are in the north of the County and Alfred. Northland, who has a history of going slow, may have been delayed until next year, or late this year, for Alfred. My guess is they will not come back to us for what the PILOT was until sometime, later in the year. They want a different PILOT number. They have not

finalized anything with the host agreement, either. It is a fairly big project, up to 100 MW. It is like 20 of the 5 MW projects.

The big one, up in Burns, the company that is doing the EDF has not finalized their project, either because they are starting a project in Mt. Morris. I am trying to find out what they negotiated so, we can get a similar deal. I don't think they will start until next year, either.

I spoke with Dan, on the wind project and they are still proposing to start sometime this year. There may be a delay. They have already spoken to the County about a road use, but I don't know if they have signed it yet. They are negotiating that. If you have seen, in the paper, they are changing the wind turbines, to bigger wind turbines and less of them. I don't know what that does to the approval process because the approval process is based on the six-hundred-foot height and a certain MW generation. I don't know how that works with the State. It is the State that approves the 94C project. It was already approved once.

J. Hopkins asked, if this was, possibly, from the ban in Catt County? For the ones they will be losing in Catt County, they would be trying to make up for it?

C. Clark states, he thinks they have figured out how to move forward with Catt County, even though there was a big objection. I think the host agreements are moving forward. If they don't do the host agreements then, it is up to the State. Dan has not gotten back to me regarding the effects of the new turbines because, obviously, they have already approved a certain size. There were no further questions or discussions.

OLD BUSINESS-None

NEW BUSINESS

- **Officers-Tabled until the next meeting, March 9, 2023.** C. Clark will work with J. Hopkins to prepare for next month.

GOOD OF THE ORDER-None

CALENDAR

Next Meeting: March 9, 2023 @ 10:00 A.M.
The Crossroads Commerce Center, Belmont, NY

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, at 10:40 am, a motion to adjourn was made by J. Ricci, seconded by R. Shayler, to close the meeting. All members were in favor, by a vote of 4-0 and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Pamela Common, Recording Secretary