

**Jefferson County Industrial Development Agency  
Board Meeting Minutes  
February 2, 2023**

The Jefferson County Industrial Development Agency held their board meeting on Thursday, February 2, 2023 in the board room at 800 Starbuck Avenue, Watertown, NY.

**Present:** Robert E. Aliasso, Jr., Paul Warneck, Lisa L’Huillier, David Converse, W. Edward Walldroff, John Condino, William Johnson

**Excused:** None

**Absent:** None

**Also Present:** Christine Powers, Rob Aiken, Hari Achuthan, Justin Miller, Esq. (Zoom), Kent Burto (Zoom), Anthony Fiorentino (Zoom), Sandy Torres from Channel 7 News

**Staff Present:** David Zembiec, Marshall Weir, Lyle Eaton, Peggy Sampson, Joy Nuffer, Robin Stephenson, Jay Matteson

- I. Call to Order:** Chairman Aliasso called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m.
- II. Pledge of Allegiance**
- III. Privilege of the Floor:** Chairman Aliasso invited guests to speak. No one spoke.
- IV. Minutes:** Minutes of the annual meeting held January 5, 2023 were presented. A motion to approve the minutes as presented was made by Mr. Converse, seconded by Mr. Condino. All in favor. Carried.
- V. Treasurer’s Report:** Mr. Warneck reviewed the financials for the period ending January 31, 2023. He said that we have approximately \$600,000 in outstanding PILOT revenue for projects that have been approved, but not closed. He asked how long after approval these projects should have before they need to close. Attorney Miller said that we could adopt a policy to put a timeline on the authorizing resolutions. Mr. Warneck said that he is mostly concerned about solar projects because many times they are sold, which would prompt us to require new information.  
  
Mr. Warneck said that the liabilities/capital is up due mostly to PILOTs that were recently billed. Mr. Warneck reported that Sarah’s Barbershop still shows a demand letter and Standard Machine is with legal at this point. Chairman Aliasso asked how RBM shows delinquent for two months when they showed ‘current’ last month. Ms. Nuffer said it was misreported last month. Chairman Aliasso asked about Taste of Design since they are four months behind. Ms. Nuffer said that they historically get behind but noted that they are having conversations with/working with them. After discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Johnson to accept the financial statement as presented, seconded by Mr. Johnson. All in favor. Carried.
- VI. Committee Reports:**
  - a. Alternative Energy Ad Hoc Committee** – Mr. Warneck said the committee met to discuss the process for large utility scale solar projects and what steps should be taken when we are approached by these applicants. He pointed out that certain steps have to occur before construction after permit approval by ORES. He said that the state still has

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not finalized their valuation procedure. He said that we could use the current model if we have to move forward.

Mr. Warneck said that the committee agreed to set up meetings with the affected taxing jurisdictions (ATJs) on how to proceed. Mr. Zembiec said that he will schedule a meeting with the ATJs for the Tracy Solar project.

Mr. Warneck said we recently learned of proposed wind projects in the Town of Rutland. He said that he made an inquiry with the company, but did not receive detailed information, only that there will be two turbines.

**VII. Unfinished Business:**

- 1. 146 Arsenal Street update** – Mr. Zembiec said that a tour of the building is scheduled for later today. He said that they are planning to open in November.

**Convalt Energy Update** – Mr. Achuthan said they have been clearing land out at the airport park, but noted that they are running behind a few months. He said that he will be finalizing final terms with the Bank in the near future. Mr. Zembiec said the agreement in place allows continued construction on site. Mr. Achuthan said it will be approximately two months until they are ready to close and will need to request an extension of the Land Development Agreement.

Mr. Achuthan said that there is a good response from customers who will be using 60-70% of all capacity, which will bring in significant revenue. He said that getting equipment from China (wafer cells) could have an impact. He said that they will focus on the first factory to get that up and running then will focus on the second factory. He said that they plan to ramp up personnel during April/May to start training them. He said they will balance out personnel by hiring locals and veterans.

Mr. Achuthan said that one issue he is having is building relationships with the local banks because the project is too large for them.

Mr. Walldroff said that Mr. Achuthan's consortium will be produced in the U.S. versus foreign companies wanting to come into the U.S.

Mr. Achuthan said that they are overseeing some work themselves without a general contractor. Mr. Converse asked about permits with the Town. Mr. Achuthan said that they have hired Aubertine & Currier to help with that process, and that they only have a couple more items to complete.

Chairman Aliasso thanked Mr. Achuthan for choosing Jefferson County and working with the Agency. Mr. Achuthan said the JCIDA has a great staff. He said that some of his suppliers may want to locate closer which could open up opportunities.

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**VIII. New Business:**

1. **PILOTs for Spec Buildings** – Mr. Zembiec said that we are required to do a cost benefit analysis which could be difficult on a spec building. He acknowledged there is a concern as to the speculative nature for the occupied use. However, he said that he doesn't want to discourage developers to apply for assistance if the board is willing to consider them. Mr. Converse said that the board could decide case by case. He noted that if built in the Corporate Park, the park has covenants. Mr. Walldroff said it matters where a spec building would be built, the use and the developer. He also agreed that it could be considered case by case. Attorney Miller said that it is not uncommon for an IDA to participate for a spec building and does not go against GML. He said the only question that could be raised is for the end use. He did say that there could be an abandonment issue and/or retail analysis that would have to be taken into account. Chairman Aliasso the issue could be the allowed use and whether it would be compatible with the location. Attorney Miller said that provisions could be built into a PILOT, and it would involve a little more monitoring.
2. **Deferiet Project** – Mr. Zembiec said that the public was recently informed at a Deferiet village board meeting about the plan to redevelop the site. He said that the Phase II environmental assessment was completed.

**IX. Counsel:**

1. **Executive Session** – At 9:22 a.m. a motion was made by Mr. Warneck to enter into executive session to received legal advice and discuss the financial history of a particular company, seconded by Mr. Johnson. Board Members, LDC Board Members, Staff and Counsel remained.

At 9:43 a.m. a motion was made by Mr. Warneck to leave executive session, seconded by Ms. L'Huillier. No action was taken.

- X. **Adjournment:** With no further business before the board, a motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Converse, seconded by Mr. Walldroff. All in favor. The meeting adjourned at 9:44 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Peggy Sampson*