

# **ALBERT LEA PORT AUTHORITY**

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## **MINUTES**

**February 3, 2016**

**Regular Meeting**

**Albert Lea Business Development Center**

1. CALL TO ORDER & NOTATION OF ROLL

The Regular Meeting of the Albert Lea Port Authority was called to order on Wednesday, February 3, 2016 at 7:30 a.m. by President Heinemann. Roll was noted by the Board Secretary.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Vern Rasmussen, Jr., Mike Moore, Al Brooks, Nate Jansen, Mark Heinemann, and Ginny Larson

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS PRESENT: Chad Adams, City of Albert Lea representative; Randy Kehr, business community representative; Mike Lee, Freeborn County representative

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Ryan Nolander, Executive Director and Julie Dandrea, Board Secretary

STAFF MEMBERS ABSENT: None

GUESTS: Sarah Hensley

Incoming board member, Sarah Hensley, was acknowledged and introductions made.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JANUARY 6, 2016 MEETING

The minutes from the January 6, 2016 meeting were reviewed. Commissioner Rasmussen made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Commissioner Jansen. President Heinemann asked for any discussion and hearing none, the motion carried 6 in favor; 0 opposed.

3. RESOLUTION PA-16-06 AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF CLAIMS

The claims were presented for review. Two items noted were payments for property insurance and for legal work in reviewing employee policies. Commissioner Moore made a motion to accept the claims as presented in the amount of \$22,818.52, seconded by Commissioner Rasmussen. President Heinemann asked for any discussion and hearing none, the motion carried 6 in favor, 0 opposed.

4. STREATER LEASE APPROVAL

Streater contacted us and wanted the South Building #1 space immediately through April and may stay longer. A small increase was made in the rent over last year's lease and this will bring in additional revenue. Commissioner Jansen moved to approve the lease and

Commissioner Brooks seconded. Motion passed 6 in favor, 0 opposed.

5. MOVE MARCH 2, 2016 MEETING

Due to a scheduling conflict, Executive Director Nolander is requesting to move the March 2016 meeting date. After board discussion, it was agreed March 9<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00 a.m. was the best date to reschedule the meeting. Commissioner Brooks made a motion to approve the date change from March 2<sup>nd</sup> to March 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 a.m. Commissioner Jansen seconded the motion carried 6 in favor, 0 opposed.

6. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

**RFI Iowa Site Selector** – There is nothing new to report since we sent our response other than they thanked us for our submittal and will review it. Hopefully, we will hear from them. They moved the project to 2017.

**SE MN Together Strategies for Action Conversation** – This is the workforce strategy group for the region. A strategy session is planned for February 25<sup>th</sup> in Stewartville. A local planning meeting will be held here on Friday.

**J2G Industry Cluster Round Table** – Journey to Growth is doing an industry cluster in Oronoco on March 1<sup>st</sup> for food and dairy. Representatives from Zumbro River Brand and Albert Lea Select Foods will be attending. As of now, the idea is to keep the group small and discuss what we do and not do well and how to promote ourselves. Food and dairy is the first industry meeting and the next one might be on manufacturing.

**Project Updates** – We are working with ABG regarding financing options. Banks are willing to finance their project, but they approached us for a lower rate. We explained to them we usually step in when there is a gap or their bank won't finance them. It's not our intent to compete with banks.

**Local Company Strategic Planning Sessions** – On March 8<sup>th</sup>, The Marketing Plant will facilitate a strategic planning session to explore what a local company can do to be more successful and expand their businesses. Executive Director Nolander is looking to attend more of these in the future to show support in assisting our local companies.

**Local Aquaculture** – A person met with Ryan last week who is interested in starting this business. He has gathered a lot of statistics and has a mentor who is already doing it. He's been looking at locations and getting connected with banks. In his favor, there are provisions in food safety that if the product is sold live the business does not need to be inspected.

**Bank meeting** – Recently, the local and regional manager from a local bank met with Executive Director Nolander to say they want to be involved with our programs and asked what they could do. They have training seminars they could offer which could run through ALEDA and the Chamber. It was a positive meeting.

**EOS training** (Entrepreneurial Operating System) – The chamber is sponsoring a seminar at the historical society based off the book, *Traction*. Executive Director Nolander and Sarah Hensley are both planning to attend. It's recommended for any size business.

**John Bradley Development & Construction** – This business contacted us looking for a small piece of land for a small distribution project.

7. EX-OFFICIO UPDATE

Freeborn County – Mike Lee, Freeborn County representative

- The county is looking to hire two additional nurse/social workers to perform assessments which will allow low-income seniors to stay in their own homes. It will be a net positive

per position, as the county will be reimbursed by South Country Health Alliance at a higher rate than the salary expense.

- The county engineer's position has been reclassified to include the added duties of Public Works Director and Noxious Weed Inspector.
- The county finance manager recently received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for fiscal year 2014.
- The sheriff's department has switched from Motorola to Northland Business Systems for dispatch services, which is anticipated to save over \$63K over the three-year contact.

#### City of Albert Lea – Chad Adams, City of Albert Lea representative

- The RFQ on the bank building will go out this week. The developer who has went through the process previously is still very interested. It will be decided in March on which developer to work with for the year.
- The Blazing Star Landing didn't get on the bonding bill; however, the city is still working on letters of support for the project.
- The Stables area did make it on bonding bill to extend water and sewer there. The city is working with the county on tax abatement to get it done.
- Schrom Construction is in the running for possible grants for more housing at Wedgewood and the city is working on a small cities grant for commercial and single-family dwellings downtown.
- The city council's focus in February will be hearing public comments regarding the tax renewal for the watershed district and then deliberate in March and April on which direction to go.
- The former law office that was purchased is getting a lot of interest from both non-profits and private sector groups.
- The Idea Splash was a good success. The grant will be split with \$10K each going to two projects: The dog park, location TBD at either Brookside or Frank Hall Park; and "Cellfie Tours" to promote tourism downtown by using QR codes which can be scanned by cell phones to provide information on historic buildings.

#### Chamber of Commerce – Randy Kehr, business community representative

- The Idea Splash and the EOS seminar were already commented on.
- The chamber received a call from the MN Chamber's communication director who will be here to discuss business property tax relief, which is their primary focus this year. The general idea is that businesses own 12% of tax base but pay 32% of property tax statewide. The chamber's business members on their board were invited to join the meeting tomorrow a.m. They are hoping for relief for businesses' property tax bills.
- On February 24<sup>th</sup>, there will be an "Energy Revolution." Solar companies, Freeborn Mower Cooperative Services, and others will be discussing the pros and cons of green energy.
- Albert Lea continues to be the focal point in the country on the Blue Zones project. Ellen was asked to go back to Climate Falls, Oregon assisting with their organizational summit.
- The annual Ag Luncheon will be March 15<sup>th</sup>.
- The Big Freeze and Polar Plunge will be this weekend.
- The former Walmart building is a done deal and a lease has been signed. Bomgaars, a farm supply store will be locating there.

8. COMMISSIONER/OTHER ITEMS

- Executive Director Nolander commented that MN Energy Resources is taking a gas rate increase to the MN Public Utilities Commission which appears to be a significant increase in MN. Public meetings will be coming up.
- Mike Lee congratulated Executive Director Nolander and Chad Adams on the EDAM award.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Brooks made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Larson. The motion carried 6 in favor, 0 opposed. The meeting adjourned at 8:20 a.m.

Filed and attested February 3, 2016.



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President

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Board Secretary