

# **ALBERT LEA PORT AUTHORITY**

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## **MINUTES**

**Wednesday, November 6, 2019 – 7:30 a.m.**

**Regular Meeting**

**132 N Broadway Ave, Albert Lea**

### CALL TO ORDER & NOTATION OF ROLL

The Regular Meeting of the Albert Lea Port Authority was called to order on Wednesday, November 6, 2019 at 7:30 a.m. by President Nelson. Roll was noted by the Board Secretary.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: President Sarah Nelson, Vice President Nate Jansen, Treasurer Mark Heinemann, Rich Murray, Bryan Skogheim, Vern Rasmussen, Jr., Tricia Dahl

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS PRESENT: Tom Jensen, Freeborn County Representative; David Todd, City of Albert Lea Representative; Susie Peterson, Local Tourism Representative; Liz Johnson, Business Community Representative

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Phillip Johnson, Executive Director; Noelle Hagen, Assistant Executive Director;

STAFF MEMBERS ABSENT: None

GUESTS: None

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM October 2, 2019 REGULAR MEETING

The minutes from the Wednesday, October 2<sup>nd</sup> regular meeting were reviewed. Commissioner Rasmussen made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Commissioner Heinemann. President Nelson asked for any further discussion and hearing none, the motion carried 6 in favor; 0 opposed.

### RESOLUTION PA-19-16 AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF CLAIMS

The claims were presented for review. Commissioner Heinemann made a motion to accept the claims as presented in the amount of \$75,298.99, seconded by Commissioner Jansen. President Nelson asked for any further discussion and hearing none, the motion carried 6 in favor; 0 opposed.

*Commissioner Murray arrives.*

### STAFF REPORT

- Child Care Committee Update

- The child care committee met with Jeff Andrews from SMIF to discuss hosting a Child Care Provider appreciation event. SMIF would assist in the costs to host the event and Jeff would attend to present information. The committee will meet again to plan the event for Mid-December or in January.
- Jeff will also be providing the group with a sample financial model to be included with the loan application and information to help new child care providers understand what a realistic financial model would look like for a new daycare in Freeborn County.
- Make it Albert Lea Update
  - The program will wrap up with the Community Action Forum on Tuesday, November 19<sup>th</sup> at the Edgewater Bay Pavilion. The team leaders will be presenting the marketing plans that the groups created along with the ideas for community action. Attendees will vote on ideas they like most and will have the opportunity to step forward and volunteer to bring those ideas to fruition.
- Collaboration/New Location Update
  - The move went smoothly – we were able to utilize Sentence to Serve to move the larger things like furniture and file cabinets into the space. Staff is enjoying the location and has met more often with Chamber, CVB, and City Staff.
  - There are a few details that need to be completed. Scott has continued to add more things – new door handles, new front door, and plans to remodel the break area in the future.
- Strategic Planning
  - Applied for a SMIF grant and did not receive it. Staff called to see if our strategic planning process would qualify and were encouraged to apply.
  - The Core Group met for an hour and a half yesterday reviewing the 146 page interim report with Ady Advantage on a conference call. Staff has asked Ady Advantage for a summary version to share with the community. The community event will be held on November 12<sup>th</sup> at Wedgewood Cove. Staff will present the interim report and ask for feedback, attendees will be asked to break out into small groups to discuss and then will wrap up by giving an overview of the final steps in the process.

*David Todd arrives.*

- Wednesday, November 13 is the Goals and Visioning session for all five organization's staff and boards to attend. We will discuss what our goals and vision for the community is and Ady Advantage will lead us through the process.
- Key themes thus far include; improve high school/community college/local industry connections, downtown, marketing, housing, child care, public transit, culture/community perception, ease of getting into the community, welcome/integrate new residents into community so that they stay.
- Blazing Star Landing/Opportunity Zones

ALEDA MISSION STATEMENT

*"To provide and promote services and resources to retain, expand, create and attract businesses, increase tax base and quality employment opportunities in Freeborn County."*

- Unique Opportunities, LLC met with Staff and City Staff a week ago. They are interested in creating new market rate apartments – they were interested in the 300 block of Broadway Ave and the Blazing Star Landing site.
- They will be putting together a proposal for Blazing Star Landing. The initial project would be a cost of \$5 million dollars and they would be looking for tax incentives on the land.
- Commissioner Heinemann said that there may be an opportunity to create housing near the industrial parks that would create housing but also ease of transportation as that is an issue in the community as well. He gave an example of how this is being done in Austin at QPP. There is an opportunity to make this an incentive for workforce as well.
- City Manager David Todd also has a contact who will be reaching out soon who would like to do a housing project as well. He would like to see the 300 block be redeveloped with mixed use/retail on the bottom level, apartments above.
- Financing Discussion and Policy

*Commissioner Heinemann exits.*

- Staff has discussed the ZRB Project financing with US Bank several times in the last year. They feel that they did not have a fair chance at the financing when the loan was being put together in 2017. They have presented to the staff that they can get the interstate rate lower than 4% if the loan were to be refinanced with them.
- Staff would like to recommend to the board that a financing policy is created and put into use that states what we consider in our financing process. Our current loan for the ZRB project is with Farmers State Bank with participation from three other smaller banks. If we were to refinance this loan, this would take the loan from four banks making a considerable impact on the banks.
- The board discussed important criteria including; price/cost, community involvement and other intangibles. Staff will draft a policy based on this discussion and present it to the board at the December meeting.

*Commissioner Heinemann returns.*

- Conferences/Meetings to Note
  - Staff attended the Mayo Showcase meeting to look at the new editions and talked to their staff about the campuses, the Riverland Groundbreaking event for the new addition, and the Albert Lea – Freeborn County Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting.
  - Staff is working with the Chamber to do a Small Business Saturday marketing campaign to highlight shopping local. There will be a Shop Albert Lea Passport, an open house on Small Business Saturday (November 30<sup>th</sup>) to hand out the passport, and the Chamber Ambassadors will be making special Ambassador Visits and social media video and photo campaigns throughout November and December.

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## EX-OFFICIO UPDATE

- Freeborn County – Tom Jensen
  - The county has brought the levy down to at 4.6 – 4.9%. They have been discussing additional funds to be set aside for future economic development projects.
  - Freeborn Wind Project continues to move forward. They plan to request approval from the MPCA for larger blades.
  - The County Attorney, David Walker, believes that the County cannot give funds to the new Mercy Clinic for public purpose and has advised the commissioners.
  - Child Care: The City will offer CPR training for free for in-home providers. The county is working on waiving their fee but cannot waive the State's fee as well.
- City of Albert Lea – David Todd
  - The Council and staff are working through budget process and making cuts where they can. They are looking at 3% general fund levy to insurance and compensation and classification study as they want to be sure they leave enough money for the end of that process
  - City Staff and ALEDA Staff have been meeting with developers around town, trying to facilitate growth around town.
  - The annexation for the FMCS new property is in the works, they are also working on some tax abatement issues.
  - Staff is working on expanding the Broadway Ridge grant for some of the other businesses on South Broadway.
- Chamber of Commerce – Tricia Dahl
  - The Chamber board is waiting to hire someone until they see the outcome of the economic development strategic planning. The board has met with Liz and Geri and is reassessing job roles and what they need for staffing. They are also working on the Main Street Program and rebranding the Chamber.
- Convention and Visitors Bureau – Susie Peterson
  - Susie has met with Liz to get her plugged into the downtown events that the Main Street Program will be taking over and has introduced her to the core volunteers that plan and run these events.
  - The Jefferson Highway Group is coming through Albert Lea – staying in Austin though. Susie will line up tours in the downtown and such for that.
  - Susie met with Mercy about recruiting going to do the same thing they've done for Mayo for new doctor/staff community tours.
  - The State Senate Bonding Committee tour is coming down to discuss the Blazing Star Trail Bridge, a few weeks ago the House Bonding Committee visited. The Shell Rock River Watershed District board did not meet with the Senate tour yesterday because they are going to get a hearing.

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COMMISSIONER/OTHER ITEMS

Commissioner Murray suggested that the board and ex-officio consider writing “letters to the editor” about the great things going on in the community. There are many great things happening that the community doesn’t know about but should.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Murray made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Jansen. The motion carried 7 in favor, 0 opposed. The meeting adjourned at 8:25 am.

Filed and attested November 6, 2019



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President



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Secretary

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