

ALBERT LEA PORT AUTHORITY

MINUTES

Wednesday, October 7, 2020 – 7:30 a.m.

Regular Meeting

Zoom Meeting

CALL TO ORDER & NOTATION OF ROLL

The Regular Meeting of the Albert Lea Port Authority was called to order on Wednesday, October 7, 2020 at 7:30 a.m. by President Nelson. Roll was noted by the Board Secretary.

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

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS PRESENT: Holly Karsjens, Local Tourism Representative; Shari Jensen, Business Community Representative

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS ABSENT: Tom Jensen, Freeborn County Representative; Mike Lee, Freeborn County Representative

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

GUESTS: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER 2, 2020 REGULAR MEETING

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

RESOLUTION PA-20-16 AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF CLAIMS

The claims were presented for review. Executive Director Johnson noted the following items of significance; the expense to Larson Contracting for the Ring Can concrete repairs – this is the final balance payment for the repairs to the parking lot. Commissioner Dahl made a motion to accept the claims as presented in the amount of \$86,370.82, seconded by Commissioner Jansen. President Nelson asked for any further discussion and hearing none, the motion carried 6 in favor; 0 opposed.

Commissioner Rasmussen joined the meeting.

REVIEW 2021 DRAFT BUDGET

Staff met with Treasurer Heinemann to discuss the 2021 Budget Draft. A few things to note were increased rental revenue on income side due to the ALEDA Spec Building tenants occupying almost all of the space. Also to note on the income/expense for rentals – due to accounting

purposes the Port must budget for all of the downtown office space rent at the full cost. All subleases including partners and ALBDC and Greater Jobs will go to rental income instead of reducing the rental expense. Personnel expenses have also increased from 2020 to 2021 with the increase for the Assistant Director position and the addition of the shared receptionist. However, personnel expenses are still less than they were prior to 2018 with three full-time staff.

Commissioner Heinemann made a motion to adopt the 2021 Budget as presented, seconded by Commissioner Jansen. President Nelson asked for any further discussion and hearing none, the motion carried 7 in favor; 0 opposed.

STAFF REPORT

- COVID-19 Grant Programs
 - Staff assisted the county non-profit grant committee with sorting applications and reviewing them for accuracy and qualifications. Of the applications received, 13 will be granted.
 - To determine how much to fund, the applications were labeled either direct or indirect services. Direct services being organization that provide a direct benefit or assistance to individuals and indirect services being organization that provide a general benefit to the community as a whole or something an individual may choose to participate in such as art and culture. Direct service organizations were awarded \$15,000 and indirect service organizations were awarded \$10,000.
 - There is potential for a second round of funding for for-profit businesses. However, the current plan is to wait and see how the next few months go, potentially offer help near the end of the year. The funds will not be available for businesses who have already received a grant from our local fund in accordance with the rules on CARES Act dollars.
- Unique Opportunities, LLC.
 - Soil remediation is being discussed and city staff is trying to determine the timeline for remediation. The developer would still like to get in the ground in April. City Engineer Steve Jahnke thinks they won't be able to start remediation until June or July. The application to DEED for grant funding is being completed, if that goes through it will be a 75/25 split, but the cost to the city will still be fairly high.
 - The board discussed the areas that likely need remediation and asked why the property was being marketed as ready if that is not the case. The board also asked how we can avoid this situation in the future by knowing what the property needs before it is marketed as an opportunity for development.
- Childcare Forgivable Loan
 - A new childcare provider has applied for the forgivable loan and was granted a loan in the amount of \$2,000. The money will be used to reimburse expenses incurred for starting up the business including training, household items, cribs,

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- and toys (all regulated by the state). Staff will follow-up with the provider to see how many children she plans to open up for and how soon her spots will be filled.
- There is \$8,000 left of the grant funds given by SMIF for this purpose. At least 4 more forgivable loans can be given.
 - Cold Storage Facility Expansion
 - Staff has continued communication with owners and site selector. Albert Lea is a finalist for the expansion. They are currently considering a few state incentives and new market tax incentives. They have stated that at the end of the month they will be ready to make their final decision.
 - Staff hopes to have them visit Albert Lea this month and finalize the deal.
 - Ring Can Dock Door #20
 - Staff shared proposals from Larson Contracting and Joseph Company. There is an issue with the concrete in front of Dock Door #20. Because the project amount is low enough, we are not required to have a full advertised bid or accept the lowest bid. Staff recommends that we take the Larson Contracting bid since they have done the rest of the concrete work at the building over the last few months.
 - Staff asked the board to review the two quotes and recommend which they would like to move forward with.
 - The board reviewed the quotes and discussed the differences. The Joseph Company bid was a marginally lower and ultimately the board felt it was best to be consistent and accept the lowest bid. Staff will move forward with the Joseph Company bid.
 - Board Commissioner Discussion
 - A board member has asked staff about living outside of the city limits and if there was a rule against it. Currently all board members live within the city limits of Albert Lea.
 - Staff researched the question a bit and while there is a document that has historically been included in the board book that is given to each member, that states that commissioners must be residents of the City of Albert Lea there is no document that backs that up. Staff reviewed the by-laws of the Port Authority as well as the City municipal code establishing the Port Authority and the City code referring to board commissions in general.
 - The board discussed the necessity of keeping this custom and whether or not someone outside of the City of Albert Lea should be able to vote and make decisions effecting city of Albert Lea residents who are subject to city taxes.
 - The board discussed possible scenarios that could be added to the by-laws that would allow one or two members to live outside of the City of Albert Lea.
 - Ultimately, the board asked staff to do further research and come up with a few different scenarios as a proposal for next meeting.

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- Potential Albert Lea Technology Initiative
 - Staff has continued to help organize meeting between Lync Krueger and other area partners who may support the initiative, last week Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation joined us in a call. Staff will be organizing a call with Riverland Community College soon as well.
 - Current challenge is finding a location suitable. Lync would prefer a downtown location and most buildings along Broadway are either occupied or completely unavailable.
 - Commissioner Heinemann suggested exploring the option of having it be multi-level so that the main space was in one of the available upstairs of a building and a meeting room and small space downstairs so that it is still ADA compliant. Staff will take a look at the spaces available again with this in mind.
- Conferences/Meetings to Note
 - United Way is using additional space in the ALBDC for a coat drive.
 - Entrepreneurial Bridge Event went well, over 150 people were registered to attend. Holly Karsjens of the CVB and Assistant Director Hagen created a video tour of downtown Albert Lea that was shown at the end of the event.
 - Executive Director Johnson participated in the city manager interviews.
 - The Jack Frost coat drive had also reached out to us about space, they will be using Grace Lutheran instead.

EX-OFFICIO UPDATE

- **Freeborn County – Tom Jensen**
 - No update.
- **City of Albert Lea – Vern Rasmussen**
 - Vern – Iann Riggs will start in the beginning of November. He visited the community yesterday and looked at houses. We are excited about him starting and looking forward to having him here in the City of Albert Lea.
- **Chamber of Commerce – Shari Jensen**
 - Still offering 20% discount to any members who are past due over 120 days on their membership dues.
 - Shop Local campaign in September to Shop Local Chamber retail and restaurants with a drawing.
 - Chamber is also offering complementary QR codes to members, as well as notary services.
 - Chamber has applied for grant funding for CPR and mental health training at no cost to Chamber members.
 - Upcoming events include; candidate forums, fundraiser at Painted Horse, and Red Cross Blood Drive.
- **Convention and Visitors Bureau – Holly Karsjens**

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- Holly shared her update via the Zoom chat window as she had to leave the meeting. Upcoming events include the Halloween Spooktacular. The new banners have been hung in downtown as well.

COMMISSIONER/OTHER ITEMS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Murray made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Rasmussen. The motion carried 7 in favor, 0 opposed. The meeting adjourned at 8:42 am.

Filed and attested October 7, 2020.



President



Secretary

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