

ALBERT LEA PORT AUTHORITY

MINUTES

Wednesday, November 4, 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, November 4, 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; Tom Jensen, Freeborn County Representative

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

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

GUESTS: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 7, 2020 REGULAR MEETING

The minutes from the Wednesday, October 7th regular meeting were reviewed. Commissioner Rasmussen made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Commissioner Murray. President Nelson asked for any further discussion and hearing none, the motion carried 6 in favor; 0 opposed.

RESOLUTION PA-20-17 AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF CLAIMS

The claims were presented for review. Executive Director Johnson noted the following items of significance; the payment to Overhead Door for the four dock doors at the Ring Can building. Commissioner Skogheim made a motion to accept the claims as presented in the amount of \$165,982.49, seconded by Commissioner Heinemann. President Nelson asked for any further discussion and hearing none, the motion carried 6 in favor; 0 opposed.

Commissioner Dahl joined the meeting.

STAFF REPORT

- COVID-19 Grant Programs
 - Staff and partner Staff and leadership discussed the upcoming holidays and concern around the spread of COVID19. Staff has decided that the office will be closed for 14 days after Thanksgiving as well as after Christmas/New Years.

- Staff will work from home and keep the office closed to the public during those times.
- Unique Opportunities, LLC.
 - City Staff has submitted the app for brown field cleanup assistance to DEED.
 - The clean up will have to be done no matter what kind of project is on the land, any kind of development would need that level of remediation. Next step will be to see if DEED approves the application and then move forward from there.
- Cold Storage Expansion Project
 - Staff has continued communication with owners and site selector. Staff met with the developer and city staff as well as Bryan Skogheim from FMCS. There are a few more things that need to be completed on their state applications and their application to the rural economic development loan through USDA and FMCS.
 - Albert Lea is a finalist for the expansion.
- Board Commissioner Discussion
 - Staff recommends we table this discussion for now. There is some ambiguity between the Port Authority by-laws and Greater Jobs by-laws. If we are going to make a change it should be made to both by-laws. This would also require approval by the City Council to make the change to the Port by-laws.
 - Staff will continue to look into the question and do further research.
- Potential Albert Lea Technology Initiative
 - Staff has continued to help organize meeting between Lync Krueger and other area partners who may support the initiative, staff has participated in a call with Lync and Riverland Community College.
 - Current challenge is finding a location suitable and coming up with a way to fund it. Riverland seems interested in assisting with raising the funds and gathering funds.
- Collaboration (Chamber/CVB/ALEDA)
 - Staff met to discuss COVID and closing the office to the public.
 - We're also working together on a big sign for above the lower level windows as well as a projection sign to hang out over the door to be read on the sidewalk level.
 - Staff from the organizations are also working together to support projects such as; Small Business Saturday, Main Street activities, Billboards, and the Halloween event.
- Conferences/Meetings to Note
 - Executive Director Johnson will be organizing bi-weekly meetings with City Manager, Ian Rigg and County Administrator, Tom Jensen to discuss various projects and relevant topics.
 - Executive Director Johnson recently created a list of things staff is working on as well as businesses that have open or expanded in 2020 and shared it during a

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."

presentation to the Noon Kiwanis Club. Staff will use this list in a guest column and other marketing features at the end of the year to communicate the positive and economic development ‘wins’ that happened in 2020.

EX-OFFICIO UPDATE

- **Freeborn County – Tom Jensen**
 - Voting was very busy and counting will wrap up today.
 - John Forman, Brad Edwin, and Ted Herman were newly elected to the board.
 - The joint powers agreement was approved yesterday between Freeborn County and St. Paul Port Authority for the PACE program for the Marketplace Foods projects.
 - Paving will start on Bridge Ave tomorrow, street should be open Friday or Monday.
 - Final levy will be at about 3%.
- **City of Albert Lea – Vern Rasmussen**
 - Vern – Ian Riggs will start on Monday. We are excited about him starting and looking forward to having him here in the City of Albert Lea.
 - Working on trimming the budget – was looking at a near 8% increase. Looking for areas to save money, wrapping up infrastructure projects and hoping they all get done before Winter.
 - Councilman Murray and Councilman Howland are scheduled to meet with Finance Director Kristi to work on the budget.
- **Chamber of Commerce – Shari Jensen**
 - Chamber hosted candidate forums.
 - Were able to benefit from the Freeborn County COVID Non-Profit Grant.
 - Still look for funding for First Aid, CPR, and AED program. Also working on mental health related project.
 - Did their first blood drive, goal was 29 pints and collected 40. Have scheduled another one for New Years Eve.
 - Met with Chamber ambassadors, visits have been on hold for some time. They decided they are ready to get out and start visiting members again. There are 121 visits to complete and that number continues to grow.
 - Four new members September, four new members October.
- **Convention and Visitors Bureau – Holly Karsjens**
 - Spooktacular event went well – Holly expressed thanks to the ALPD for coming down to help direct traffic. Lots of bags of candy were given – all bags were given away halfway into the event.
 - 21 questions videos are going really well – will release another one after Deer Widows event.

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- Have delivered about 90% of the downtown maps to businesses in the downtown area. Businesses were very receptive and appreciated the map and the idea behind it.
- Deer Widows Big Buck Hunt is this weekend – prizes are baskets filled with gifts from the participating stores. Hoping for a big turnout to the shopping event.
- Small Business Saturday – instead of the passport doing a bingo card that can be done shopping in a store/curbside as well as things that can be done from home.
- Wreath group buy-in for all businesses – wreaths coming from The Evergreens.
- Working on a plan for the large pots downtown instead of greens and decorations. Working with Lou-Rich to get something laser cut or welded like trees or ornaments that can be reused year after year.
- Lots of new Albert Lea Swag – totes, hats, and mugs as well as some new sweatshirts and apparel.
- Working on a local subscription box – similar to Fit. Fab. Fun box. Would be seasonal – 4 boxes a year. Working with retailers to put together themes and boxes, boxes would be sold by Main Street and by participating businesses.

COMMISSIONER/OTHER ITEMS

Commissioner Murray mentioned letters to the editor that recently claimed that the City of Albert Lea didn't try to help several businesses. Executive Director Johnson plans to write an end of the year article that will share all of the successes of 2020.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Murray made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Heinemann. The motion carried 7 in favor, 0 opposed. The meeting adjourned at 8:04 am.

Filed and attested November 4, 2020.



President



Secretary

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