

ALBERT LEA PORT AUTHORITY

MINUTES

Wednesday, September 2, 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, September 2, 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:; Tom Jensen, Freeborn County Representative; Shari Jensen, Business Community Representative

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS ABSENT: ; Holly Karsjens, Local Tourism Representative; Mike Lee, Freeborn County Representative

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

GUESTS: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM AUGUST 5, 2020 REGULAR MEETING

The minutes from the Wednesday, August 5th 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-20-15 AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF CLAIMS

The claims were presented for review. Executive Director Johnson noted the following items of significance; the laptop upgrades came in \$400 less than thought and the Chamber billed for the shared receptionist position dating back to November 2019. Commissioner Heinemann made a motion to accept the claims as presented in the amount of \$44,328.39, seconded by Commissioner Skogheim. President Nelson asked for any further discussion and hearing none, the motion carried 6 in favor; 0 opposed.

Commissioner Murray joined the meeting.

STAFF REPORT

- COVID-19 Response and Resources

- Approved applicants have received their funds and signed their grant agreements. We have also received our reimbursement from the City of Albert Lea along with the admin fee. We have received many inquiries about the program after the deadline and have let people know that if there is an additional round, we will notify them.
- Non-profit grant program is underway, they will be modeling the program after the for-profit business program and application.
- Strategic Planning
 - Still discussing the co-branding and joint marketing.
 - Sydney the intern updated the shovel-ready app and staff will continue work on it and submit it.
- 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.

Ex-officio Tom Jensen joins meeting.

- Cold Storage Facility Expansion
 - Staff has had many phone calls with the site selector on the project in the last two weeks. Also met via phone with the owners and site selector yesterday. They are working on the applications for state incentives
 - Staff will continue to work with the site selector to answer questions and assist in incentive applications/process. Staff has also ordered an archeological study and endangered species study.
- Big Island Rendezvous Request
 - Big Island Rendezvous (BIR) has had to cancel all 2020 events. Perry has asked us to consider a rent reduction. Executive Director Johnson proposes that we reduce rent from \$230 to \$150 for 6 months and then reevaluate at the end of the time period.
 - Commissioner Dahl moves to reduce rent to \$150 per month for 6 months beginning in October, seconded by Commissioner Skogheim. President Nelson asked for any further discussion and hearing none, the motion carried 7 in favor; 0 opposed.
- Potential Albert Lea Technology Initiative
 - Staff recently met with Linc Kruger, from the nonprofit KnightMoves, he presented a concept involving remote work initiative and jobs in tech. KnightMoves establishes tech hubs in a rural community and links them with a metro area that has tech companies. They work with high school and midcareer

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."

individuals to get the education needed to learn the jobs and then aligns them with available jobs they are able to do remotely while living in Albert Lea.

- They recently did this in Jefferson, IA and it has been successful.
- Staff is trying to get SMIF involved. There is another call with Linc this week with partners to learn more. They like to come into a downtown space and remodel it. Should be able to find them a location. Hopefully have 5 to 10 people graduate from the program each year and continue to live and work remotely here.
- **Telecommuter Forward! Certification**
 - This is an initiative put together by MN DEED to allow cities and counties to show that they are ready for telecommuters to live and work remotely in their community. Staff will work with City and County to pass the required resolutions to get Albert Lea and Freeborn County added to the list.

Ex-officio Shari Jenson joined the meeting.

- **Collaboration (Chamber/CVB/ALEDA)**
 - CVB is moved in and settled. Had to stop the art display partnership with the Freeborn County Arts Initiative because there was no room with the new CVB merch and added displays.
- **Conferences/Meetings to Note**
 - Executive Director Johnson met the interim director, Mark Sievert.
 - Entrepreneurial Bridge Meeting/Webinar – Assistant Director Hagen is finalizing a video with the help of Holly Karsjens from the CVB to highlight Albert Lea. Hopefully next year we can host the event in person.
 - Lou-Rich Strategic Planning – Executive Director Johnson will participate on Zoom.

EX-OFFICIO UPDATE

- **Freeborn County – Tom Jensen**
 - There have been 3 applications so far to the non-profit grant.
 - All of the open offices at the government center and county offices are now partitioned with safety glass.
 - County is supporting St. Theodore's Catholic School and Hollandale Christian School for Friday busing since Albert Lea Public Schools will not be having school on Fridays.
 - Budget workshop is next Tuesday.
- **City of Albert Lea – Vern Rasmussen**
 - Vern – Sept 17th is when we will be interviewing candidates – there are 5 who will be interviewed. The city will be asking community partners to participate in interviewing. There won't be a public opportunity because of COVID.

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."

- Assistant City Manager Jerry Gabrielatos last day is today.
- Mark Sievert is starting as interim, he helped during the HRA vacancy.
- **Chamber of Commerce – Shari Jensen**
 - Still offering 20% discount to any members who are past due on their dues.
 - Shari Jensen, Chamber Director, was recently certified to teach mental health emergency training, currently working on certificate to teach CPR.
 - Chamber is also working on offering QR codes to members. .
 - Mayo Clinic is hosting a free webinar with Stacy Rizza, infectious disease specialist, will promote to chamber members.
 - Shari is going to the MN Chamber director fall conference (virtually).
- **Convention and Visitors Bureau – Holly Karsjens**
 - Not in attendance, Executive Director Johnson read her update shared via email:
 - Broadway banners are ordered should be here in a couple weeks in time for the senior banners to come down. They’re a mix of attractions and events in AL to really showcase the variety of things we have to offer.
 - Working on the feasibility of fall/winter events: getting buy in for how the Spooktacular, to trick-or-treat safely downtown.
 - Will be launching some “Albert Lea” apparel & swag campaigns
 - Still working on solidifying a shared billboard campaign plan (temporary & permanent)

COMMISSIONER/OTHER ITEMS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Skogheim made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Murray. The motion carried 7 in favor, 0 opposed. The meeting adjourned at 8:15 am.

Filed and attested September 2, 2020.



President



Secretary

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.”