

ALBERT LEA PORT AUTHORITY

MINUTES

Wednesday, May 5, 2021 – 7:30 a.m.

Regular Meeting

Virtual Meeting through Zoom.us

CALL TO ORDER & NOTATION OF ROLL

The Regular Meeting of the Albert Lea Port Authority was called to order on Wednesday, May 5, 2021 at 7:30 a.m. by President Nelson. Roll was noted by the Board Secretary.

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

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Mark Heinemann, Treasurer

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS PRESENT: Ted Herman, Freeborn County Representative; Tom Jensen, Freeborn County Representative; Ian Rigg, City of Albert Lea Representative; Holly Karsjens, Local Tourism Representative; Shari Jenson, Business Community Representative

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS ABSENT: None

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

GUESTS: Ellen Kehr

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM APRIL 7, 2021 REGULAR MEETING

The minutes from the Wednesday, April 7th regular meeting were reviewed. Commissioner Skogheim 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-21-10 AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF CLAIMS

The claims were presented for review. Commissioner Skogheim made a motion to accept the claims as presented in the amount of \$177,764.94, seconded by Commissioner Jansen. President Nelson asked for any further discussion and hearing none, the motion carried 6 in favor; 0 opposed.

BLUE ZONES PRESENTATION – Ellen Kehr

Ellen Kehr presented an update on the Blue Zones Project. The staff and board are currently involved in different projects relating to blue zones including community gardens, bike stands, worksite wellness projects, etc. Blue Zones is a great marketing tool for the community and Albert Lea continues to get asked to share how we achieved Blue Zones certification.

STAFF REPORT

- Unique Opportunities LLC
 - Bids for the clean up project and the DEED cleanup agreement are moving forward.
- Cold Storage Expansion Project
 - The ground breaking was successful, very positive comments were made by WDS Construction and the Vortex Cold Storage Team.
 - The USDA incentive and TIF development agreements should be done soon.
- Lake Front Development Meetings
 - ALEDA and City Staff met with the two partners interested in developing and operating a marina on Fountain Lake. They are looking at offering gas on the lake as well as an eatery and convenience items.
 - RV Park – secondary priority project, looking into locations and possible costs.
- Collaboration (Chamber/CVB/ALEDA)
 - Staff continues to collaborate on various projects with the partner agencies.
 - New signage should be put soon by Tic Toc Digital.
 - We are working on a joint marketing project focusing on brand awareness. The campaign will focus on relaying to the community what our different roles are/what we do and how we work together. We are working with an outside marketing group to develop the campaign.
- Audit Update
 - Auditors have completed the Port draft statements; staff is waiting to receive the Greater Jobs statements. The audit is on schedule to be presented to the board in June.
- Conferences/Meetings to Note
 - Entrepreneurial Bridge Event – have begun planning sessions with SMIF to plan for the event. The plan is to have the event in person at Wedgewood Cove. After the event a happy hour with live music will be held in downtown weather permitting.
 - Blue Zones Update – Ellen Kehr is looking to retire and has started the discussion on what should happen with the position – hire a successor or transition the project into another organization.
 - Albert Lea Greater Education Group – John Double is working on a program for more specialized career curriculum for students. This would include a specific class schedule for a career focus to a specific trade.

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.”

2. EX-OFFICIO UPDATE

- Freeborn County – Tom Jensen, Ted Herman
 - The county board took action to allow events at the fairgrounds on a case by case basis.
 - In the next two weeks the admin team will be gathering to determine how to use the ARC Money the county will be receiving.
 - Tom met with Senator Klobuchar and Commissioner Schoff.
 - County board will be giving ten scholarships to local high school graduates in the county.
 - Bent Tree Trail Committee – Tom, Phil Walcholz, and Bob Furland are working on the plan and how to move that forward. Considering a joint powers agreement with City and County to allow the City of have access from the Old Depot to the St. John’s Campus.
 - Resolution for PACE dollars for Vortex has been pushed to June 1st, waiting on the St. Paul Port Authority.
 - Mid to Late June is the expected opening of the new hazardous waste collection site.
 - Clarks Grove Golf Course will be closing and will be reopening as a saw mill, similar to Root River Hardwood.
- City of Albert Lea – Ian Rigg
 - Met with a developer about housing, they specialize in low to moderate income. Their projects range from new construction to historic building retrofitting.
 - Looking into housing rehab program with HRA.
 - Trails – Blazing Star will have some repaving done over the next few years.
- Chamber of Commerce – Shari Jenson
 - Found a new firework vendor and have gotten the approval from the City to go for it.
 - Ag committee recently announced the farm family of the year. Had a small event at their farm. Now focusing on what to do with the 4-H this summer.
 - Ambassadors had a ribbon cutting at Man Between the Lakes.
 - Governmental Affairs committee will meet to discuss clean cars initiative and the Hwy 65 project.
 - Wellness committee continues to meet, a lot of businesses have taken advantage of grants to put wellness rooms into their buildings.
 - Ambassador Golf outing is scheduled for July 19th, rain date is July 26th. Has added new sponsorship levels.
 - Chamber Foundation is trying to come up with a better fee system to help the community groups that use the foundation.
 - Blood drive on last Friday in June.

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- Working with members on job posting and promoting their open positions.
- Convention and Visitors Bureau – Holly Karsjens
 - Upcoming Events
 - Shopping Opener – fishing opener weekend
 - Farmers Market opening soon – May 19th
 - Relay for Life
 - Eddie Cochran – split between normal June event and some events in October
 - City Wide Garage sales will be in June
 - Downtown flowers will be planted on Saturday
 - Rock N Roll the Lakes will be happening as well as the evening glow ride.
 - Crazy Days will be happening again this Summer in July.
 - Marion Ross will be here during 4th of July Weekend. Unveiling of statue will happen.
 - This week the street renaming to Marion Ross Street (formerly Water Street).
 - Community Calendar has been kicked off and organizations have already started adding events.
 - Water tower design call for concepts has been closed. There will be a meeting with officials soon to narrow down some concepts before presenting to the council.
 - Follow the Food Truck Albert Lea Facebook page has been created to help food trucks share what days they are out and where.
 - Just submitted fund request to Main Street/Rethos. Requesting art installation platforms and funds for more metal sculptures for the flower pots.

COMMISSIONER/OTHER ITEMS

Commissioner Murray said he'd like to encourage the county board and fair board to consider allowing the 4-H to still have their exhibits and shows as well as some food trucks if possible. Commissioner Murray also asked in Wind Down Wednesdays would be happening this Summer. Holly Karsjens explained that the current restrictions and expectations from the state would make the event less of what it is known for. Another factor is that the event takes several months to plan for and there is not enough time to prepare now that the State has started to ease restrictions.

Commissioner Rasmussen thanked all the staff on the call for their hard work and complemented the energy and the dedication to the long list of ongoing projects and events for the community.

ADJOURNMENT

ALEDA MISSION STATEMENT

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Commissioner Murray made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Rasmussen. The motion carried 6 in favor, 0 opposed. The meeting adjourned at 8:35 am.

Filed and attested May 5, 2021.



President



Secretary

ALEDA MISSION STATEMENT

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