

ALBERT LEA PORT AUTHORITY

MINUTES

Wednesday, November 3, 2021 – 7:30 a.m.

Regular Meeting
132 N Broadway Ave

CALL TO ORDER & NOTATION OF ROLL

The Regular Meeting of the Albert Lea Port Authority was called to order on Wednesday, November 3, 2021 at 7:30 a.m. by President Nelson. Roll was noted by the Board Secretary.

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

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Nate Jansen, Vice President;

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS PRESENT: Ian Rigg, City of Albert Lea Representative; Holly Karsjens, Local Tourism Representative; Ted Herman, Freeborn County Representative

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS ABSENT: Shari Jenson, Business Community Representative; Tom Jensen, Freeborn County Representative

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 6, 2021 REGULAR MEETING

The minutes from the Wednesday, October 6th 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 7 in favor; 0 opposed.

RESOLUTION PA-21-16 AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF CLAIMS

The claims were presented for review. Commissioner Rasmussen made a motion to accept the claims as presented in the amount of \$148,057.31, seconded by Commissioner Skogheim. President Nelson asked for any further discussion and hearing none, the motion carried 7 in favor; 0 opposed.

STAFF REPORT

Design Ready Controls Proposal

- Representatives from Albert Lea visited the current manufacturing site and met with the ownership and management.
- Design Ready Controls (DRC) has submitted a proposal outlining the investment they would be making in the leasehold improvements, investment in local college partnership for training, and proposed lease terms to rent the ALEDA #1 Spec Building for 6 years.
- Staff reviewed the details with the board and discussed the comfortability of leasing the building at the price proposed.

- Staff explained the breakdown of the costs to currently run and maintain the building and whether or not the proposed rental rate would allow the Port Authority to break even.
- Staff also explained that while the first two 3-year terms represent a discounted rate, it is an incentive to attract the company and the new jobs to Albert Lea. After the initial 6-year term the lease will either be renewed at the current market rate or there will be an offer to purchase the building at the current market value.
- Further discussion was had about how to negotiate the best option for all parties. The Port Authority currently pays property taxes at about \$60,000 per year. If this amount could be reduced through incentives that would be positive for both the company and the Port Authority's bottom line. Staff will discuss options with our partners and determine the best situation.
- The board stated that they think the project is a good fit for the community and the spec building and directed staff to continue negotiation with the terms discussed.

Collaboration Chamber/CVB/ALEDA

- Will begin posting the identity campaign series in November. This is a partnership between all four organizations that will help educate the community on who we are and what we do.
- Still working together on the Visitors Guide.
- Small Business Saturday campaign will be the bingo card done together with our partners. Also working on additional information to share with businesses to help them get ready for Small Business Saturday. Staff will help with any social media requests, creating specials, and updating their google page.
- Commissioner Rasmussen noted that there will be a proclamation by the Mayor for Small Business Saturday at the next council meeting.

Tree Range Accelerator Launch

- The Conference being planned for March 10th and 11th will be called the Regenerative Poultry Convergence. Staff will share more information once received.
- Staff thanked Tom Jensen, County Administrator for connecting them with Tom and Andy Belshan of Albert Lea Elevator. They determined they would now be a good fit for the oats project but got in touch with the ownership of another elevator and gathered information about it. The other elevator is available for sale. Staff will work to get the groups connected and allow them to explore negotiations.

Equity Fund

- Rebound Partners is the name of an investment group that would help Albert Lea create an equity fund. Staff discussed the fund with Laurie from Rebound Partners and felt that it may be a good fit for the community's project needs as well as a good fit for individuals in the community who have expressed interest in contributing to a fund.
- Staff will be organizing a meeting between the Rebound Partners group and the City and County. After the initial meeting with community partners, staff will organize a time for Rebound to visit the community and meet with potential contributors to the fund.

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."

- Rebound Partners facilitates all of the administrative details for managing the fund and contributions as well as managing the administrative portions of disbursing funds for selected projects.

Conferences/Meetings to Note

- Continued attendance at regular meetings.
- Participated in two discussions with outside communities on Blue Zones Project.
- Discussion with Val Kvale from Careerforce about unemployment and jobs available. Discussed how its going trying to place people in Albert Lea’s long list of open positions.
- Discussion with Continental Property Group who is the owner of the former Universal building.
- Discussion with Northbridge Mall – new businesses for the ShopKo space and they are also interested in providing space for a childcare center.

EX-OFFICIO UPDATE

Freeborn County – Ted Herman

- Joint City and County meeting was held.
- Strong interest to do more for economic development (county).
- Hosted the AMC Regional Meeting, 9 counties attended.
- Working on reducing the levy, hope to get it down to 3%.

City of Albert Lea – Ian Rigg

- Working on the budget, in final negotiations with union and healthcare contracts. Plan to still cut spending by \$253,000. Also working on cutting more from the budget before the final numbers are sent.
- Director of Community Engagement has been selected - Kathy Maleskowski, formerly worked for the Shell Rock Watershed District and currently works for the MPCA.
- We are reviewing some economic development policies to make them more inclusive and easier to process where we can. Also focusing on having incentives expanded to meet the different challenges in Albert Lea like work force housing needs.
- Draft RFP done, working with Flaherty & Hood, don’t have a policy to depose of property for economic development, this process will help us form that.
- Wrapping up agreements for Main Street Corridor, need new grant forms.

Chamber of Commerce – Shari Jenson

- No update.

Convention and Visitors Bureau – Holly Karsjens

Holly Karsjens submitted updates by email to Port Authority staff, they were;

- Public Art – working on getting more metal sculptures for the summer months, snowflakes up soon. Utility box project still going forward. Academy Mural complete but needs to be sealed. Art Walk sculpture bases are approved, just need to work on getting them.
- Visitors Guide – working on them this month.

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- Shop Small Bingo trickled with our campaign. The identity campaign shows that the overlap is business support.
- New swag coming in to be sold at the office.
- Working with Bob on a few Parks & Rec things – inclusive summer picnic, working together with the library.
- Swag bags – idea for new resident, new employees. A bag of things and information that can be given, coffee coupons, lunch vouchers, etc.
- Shop Sip Stoll – went extremely well first official Main Street fundraiser, very successful fundraiser. Feedback was incredible. Star Tribune came down and did an article later.
- Spooktacular was this weekend, very busy, ideas for next year.
- Deer Widow Shopping event takes place this weekend.
- Going to try to do a decorating competition for the medium pots.
- Shop Small Bingo
- Holiday Bazaar – live reindeer, horses and trolley, Santa Cruise.

COMMISSIONER/OTHER ITEMS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Murray made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Skogheim. The motion carried 6 in favor, 0 opposed. The meeting adjourned at 8:33 am.

Filed and attested November 3, 2021.



President



Secretary

ALEDA MISSION STATEMENT

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