

ALBERT LEA PORT AUTHORITY

MINUTES

Wednesday, December 1, 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, December 1, 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; Mark Heinemann, Treasurer; Rich Murray, Bryan Skogheim, Tricia Dahl, Vern Rasmussen, Jr

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS PRESENT: Holly Karsjens, Local Tourism Representative; Tom Jensen, Freeborn County Representative; Ted Herman, Freeborn County Representative

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS ABSENT: Shari Jenson, Business Community Representative; Ian Rigg, City of Albert Lea Representative

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 3, 2021 REGULAR MEETING

The minutes from the Wednesday, November 3rd regular meeting were reviewed. Commissioner Rasmussen made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Commissioner Skogheim. President Nelson asked for any further discussion and hearing none, the motion carried 7 in favor; 0 opposed.

RESOLUTION PA-21-17 AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF CLAIMS

The claims were presented for review. Commissioner Jansen made a motion to accept the claims as presented in the amount of \$52,043.10, seconded by Commissioner Heinemann. President Nelson asked for any further discussion and hearing none, the motion carried 7 in favor; 0 opposed.

STAFF REPORT

Design Ready Controls Proposal

- Design Ready Controls (DRC) has received the draft lease document and has requested some changes. The main change of concern for Port Authority is the parking lot language. DRC added in language to the lease that states that as they grow, Port Authority would provide free parking on the lots North and/or West of the spec building property. This would include the Port Authority paying for the development and maintenance of a new parking lot (the existing lots are undeveloped).

- Staff recommends that this language is removed from the lease. Staff will let DRC know that if the need should arise, the Port Authority is willing to turn those lots to excess parking but not fully cover the cost. The development of the lots can be discussed further when the need should arise.
- Other important items include the Option to Buy. This will be made a separate agreement, referenced in the lease, to allow for more time to negotiate and finalize the terms as they are wanting to get the signed lease done soon so they can begin their construction work inside the building.
- The lease terms will be for 3 years with the option to renew for 3 more years.
- Interstate Packaging is still in the building renting a portion of the square footage near the loading docks. Staff is working on a termination of lease that will be effective in February. The half that Interstate Packaging is using will continue to be warehousing so they can continue to operate there while DRC is working on their construction on the other side of the building.

Collaboration Chamber/CVB/ALEDA

- Still working together on the Visitors & Community Guide.
- Small Business Saturday campaign has launched with the bingo card and information on Small Business Saturday promotion best practices delivered to retail and restaurant locations across town. Staff will help with any social media requests, creating specials, and updating their google page.

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 will be meeting with Diane Beck at Wedgewood Cove to discuss the conference and to view the space.
- Staff is working on getting Reggie down to visit the elevator and discuss with the owners (oats project).
- The Regenerative Poultry Convergence conference is the next step toward getting the brand here in Albert Lea.

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.
- Rebound Partners will be coming to town to tour the community and then will meet with a group of interested people from the community to present how the fund works and what projects have been done in other communities.
- There would be 3 to 4 projects done with the first fund and it would hopefully be a catalyst toward a second fund and more projects following the first round.

Conferences/Meetings to Note

- Continued attendance at regular meetings.

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."

- Participated in two discussions with outside communities on Blue Zones Project. The new city position that will be taking on Blue Zones Project has been selected. The new hire will start in late December.
- Met with Andy Peterson, Heartman Insurance, to renew insurance policies.
- Met with Ryan Langemeir from Riverland to discuss the mechatronics program for DRC. Will look to model it after the Hennepin Community College program that DRC collaborated on. This will help to create a pipeline of skilled labor to DRC and other businesses who need this type of skill set.
- Gave updates at the Chamber of Commerce Governmental Affairs Committee meeting.
- Working with the Northbridge Mall and Albert Lea Gymnastics club to try to get the Gymnastics group into space there.
- Attended the comp plan meeting with the city.
- United Way is looking to start a new food shelf. This one would be located in the ALBDC in an underutilized office space. They will be working with the County for support and funding. The food shelf will have non-traditional hours and will allow users to shop for what they need vs. getting a box of food that doesn't meet their dietary needs or contains food they won't use.

EX-OFFICIO UPDATE

Freeborn County – Ted Herman

- Working on action plan for if/when OSHA Covid Testing/Rules comes through. At least a third of the County Employees are not vaccinated. This will be an issue especially for the jail as there are only 12 of 36 jail staff who are vaccinated. There is a federal contract in the jail so all will have to be vaccinated or let go. County leadership is working on plans for how to handle this if the OSHA rules go into effect.
- Working on completing union contracts.
- ARP Funds – met with Winnebago Cooperative Telecom Association (WCTA). The county board has committed to about \$1 million for broadband extension in the county. The money the county commits will serve as a match to receive any federal or state dollars. Should be able to get the whole county on fiber in 1.5 years.
- Solar Farm – in PUC permitting right now.
- Bent Tree Wind Farm – going into Phase II, adding another 50 turbines. Going through the process of getting leases right now.
- Environmental Services Building – just waiting on getting the fan needed for the flammable storage area to come in and be installed before the building is ready to be open and begin accepting waste. They will take e-waste, flammable chemicals, etc.

City of Albert Lea – Vern Rasmussen

- Council is still working through the budget; it is down to 3.5% down from 9%.

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- Working on an abatement policy for housing. There have been four new houses submitted recently and four before that. Also working on another program for abatement that would be for rehab of existing homes.
- Met with bonding committee from House and Senate in the last few weeks. Good conversations were had; it doesn't sound like Albert Lea will get our full request we might have to break it down into steps to be more successful.
- Initiating comp plan project, have had the first meeting and hopefully will be able to get more people involved in the future meetings.
- Coalition of greater Minnesota cities conference was attended, the welcome wagon idea was presented. Albert Lea needs to work on the welcome wagon concept and ways to set Albert Lea apart. Recently Bemidji announced their 218 relocate project, they are paying people to move there and it will be interesting to see how that works for them.

Chamber of Commerce – Shari Jenson

- No update.

Convention and Visitors Bureau – Holly Karsjens

- Tina has a drive for the Humane Society going on right now. The shelter has a lot of needs, items can be dropped off at our office and it will end with a grand event at Edgewater Bay pavilion to wrap it all up.
- December 9th-is the holiday Bazaar event downtown. Working on ways to make sure the Santa Cruz is safe for those attending as well as those driving in it. Continuing to discuss COVID and safety, city police will be assisting in the planning to make the parade safe.
- December 12th- is the light up the lake event. Community will be putting out lanterns for a walk around the lake.
- The Big Freeze- will be February 12, planning has begun on what parts of the event will be coming back for 2022.
- Staff is meeting today to talk about the community guide will be selling ads but instead of looking like ads they will be featured articles. The end result will be a guide that looks like a nice magazine.
- Shop Small Bingo – canvassed more than ever with the poster. Noelle put together business help sheet, bingo cards went out, poster went up.
- Pots on Broadway is done and up.
- Trying to get lights on the gazebo this year, there are funds from the holiday light fundraiser to still use but the idea will be white lights that can be left up all year round.
- Stephanie from the historical museum is working on putting together a group of young professionals similar to the Gather group.
- Bonding tour-scheduled to talk to the governor's committee on behalf of the Shell Rock River Watershed District.

COMMISSIONER/OTHER ITEMS

None.

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ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Rasmussen made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Jansen. The motion carried 7 in favor, 0 opposed. The meeting adjourned at 8:31 am.

Filed and attested December 1, 2021.



President



Secretary

ALEDA MISSION STATEMENT

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