

# **ALBERT LEA PORT AUTHORITY**

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## **MINUTES**

**Wednesday, April 13, 2022 – 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, April 13, 2022 at 7:30 a.m. by President Skogheim. Roll was noted by the Board Secretary.

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

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

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

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

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

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MARCH 2, 2022 REGULAR MEETING

The minutes from the Wednesday, March 2 regular meeting were reviewed. Commissioner Nelson made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Commissioner Murray. President Skogheim asked for any further discussion and hearing none, the motion carried 7 in favor; 0 opposed.

### RESOLUTION PA-22-08 AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF CLAIMS

The claims were presented for review. Commissioner Heinemann made a motion to accept the claims as presented in the amount of \$57,095.08 seconded by Commissioner Jansen. President Skogheim asked for any further discussion and hearing none, the motion carried 7 in favor; 0 opposed.

### STAFF REPORT

#### **Design Ready Controls Update**

- Design Ready Controls (DRC) has begun construction work in the space. They estimate the work to take 3 to 4 months – mainly due to supply chain issues.
- There is still 1,000 sq ft of Interstate Packaging's items in the space, will be out very soon.

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- Staff is still waiting to hear back on the Option to Buy from DRC. They have the draft in hand, will be trying to get that finalized over the next few months.
- The training program is still moving through the approval process within Riverland, all going well.

### **Collaboration Chamber/CVB/ALEDA**

- Still working together on the Visitors & Community Guide. Information about the featured spots (ads) went out to businesses last week. Once those are complete, we will work with businesses on their content and begin to fill out the rest of the article content.
- Also still working on joint marketing and identity campaign together.
- Staff will attend the Buildings on Main Street Conference Thursday, April 21 in Faribault, MN. The conference will focus on revitalizing aging downtown buildings.

### **Scholarship Program**

- Staff created the outline which summarizes what the program will be and a FAQ section.
- The group (ALEDA, Chamber, Riverland) will get together next week to review and keep things moving forward.
- The program will still be focused on high school students, but will be open to all residents in Freeborn County wanting to attend Riverland.

### **Warehousing Opportunity**

- Staff had a great conversation with The Brookshire Company on the potential for a new warehouse. The concept is 125,000 sq ft. The initial estimated on the cost to bid came back at \$12 million and \$6.50 rent rate which would be “all-in.”
- Staff has reached out to local businesses who have noted that they need space. A few have reached out and are very interested. There is some concern that \$6.50 is too high.

### **ALEDA Intern**

- Staff applied for and was granted the Minnesota Economic Development Foundation Scholarship. The scholarship will match up to \$1,000 dollars spent on intern wages. Last year we spent just over \$2,000 for the intern wages.
- Staff has posted the scholarship online, through school job boards, faculty, etc. Staff is hoping to hire a marketing focused student who can help move forward several marketing projects and updating materials.

### **Data Tracking Services Partnership**

- Staff in partnership with the City and the CVB is looking into the prospect of cost sharing a data tracking service that would provide a wealth of information about who comes and goes from our different events in town.
- From a business perspective we could show real time numbers to businesses about how many in town and out of town visitors frequent the different areas of town, which staff believes will help potentially convince businesses that the mall areas in town are viable due to traffic.
- This is just one of the many ways this product can be used. How it works is by pinging cell phones in the area and tracking not only where they have been but where they come from, i.e., home residence.

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- Staff would be looking to share this service on a yearly basis with the CVB and the City, which would cost the Port Authority \$5,000 a year.
- The board agreed to participate in the contract.

### **Ventura Foods / Ring Can Building**

- Appraisal came back at 1.75 million dollars.
- Staff feels that it is wise to sell the building as it is our oldest building owned by age and Ventura Foods has been a great tenant.
- Board discussed the approach to the offer of selling the building and directed staff to negotiate on their behalf using the appraisal to show the current value of the building.

### **Conferences/Meetings to Note**

- Staff attended the Hayward Solar PUC meeting on March 29<sup>th</sup>. All good comments, no one attended in opposition.
- Staff has had discussions with the Freeborn County Humane Society on their current financial situation and has offered to help share the word with the community.

### EX-OFFICIO UPDATE

#### **Freeborn County – Ted Herman**

- Currently working through the redistricting plan.
- Looking into bonding for the repair of the courthouse and a few other buildings. About 12 million may be bonded, in reality 26 million in repairs are needed.
- Took in some bids for the trail on the old rail. Moving forward with cleaning up the trails and looking into quotes to replace the bridges. Will be applying for funding from Rails to Trails.

#### **City of Albert Lea – Ian Rigg**

- Joint Powers Agreement for the city portion of the rail trail - should be signed in about 2 weeks.
- Also looking into maintenance for City Hall are rearranging some offices and departments.
- Took 4 buildings on tax forfeiture, looking to save three of them and get them back into private ownership after stabilizing.
- Currently looking at where to apply excess general funds reserve.
- Moving forward with projects to use up Small Cities Development Grant funds.
- Schoolhouse Apartments – moving forward again, hoping the developer can finish by June, be ready for occupants in July.

#### **Chamber of Commerce – Shari Jenson**

The following update was provided via email prior to the meeting and read aloud to the board;

- Ag Luncheon was held March 22nd and went really well. The Chad Johnson family was selected and recognized as the 2022 Farm Family of the Year. Guest speaker was Mike Kutzke and he did a fabulous job.

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- On March 30th, I joined folks from Shell Rock River Watershed District for their lobby day, at the Capitol. All meetings went really well.
- In response to the severe blood shortage, we're still hosting bi-monthly blood drives. The next one is April 29th.
- We're pleased to announce that we're bringing the LEADERSHIP program back, this year. Day Leaders are in place and we've already received some applications. Program will kick off in August.
- Monthly Ca\$h Mobs are still going great. Being held the last Thursday of every month. The last one we did was at Tiger City Sports.
- Chamber Foundation revisited the fee structure. A brochure has been created and we will begin marketing the foundation in the days and weeks to come.
- Most exciting update...The Chamber is thrilled to announce that we have J.R. Martinez coming to Albert Lea, for a short visit, May 10-12, 2022. J.R. Martinez is an Army veteran, burn survivor, actor, motivational speaker, New York Times best-selling author, and Dancing with the Stars season 13 winner. J.R. travels the world spreading his message of resilience and optimism and does it all with a smile. We have developed an itinerary of 11 events, to leverage his time to be of most benefit to the community.

### **Convention and Visitors Bureau – Holly Karsjens**

The following update was provided via email prior to the meeting and staff read aloud to the board;

- distributed the Main Street thrive grant last week (\$10k to downtown businesses)
- the art sculpture walk bases arrived last week- shooting for them to be placed in their downtown/lake walk locations this Spring
- community guide spotlight ads request was sent out (filled a few spots already)
- gathered some Mexican community members, couple planning sessions, and are moving forward with a Cinco de Mayo event downtown
- Bob & I finalized the Thursday on Fountain roster, will release in the next week
- WDW planning is coming together, hoping to release info this week
- brought all food vendors and food trucks together last night to go over the season and ideas they had
- Upcoming Events:
  - Egg hunt event this Saturday
  - Cinco de Mayo (May 5)
  - Chalk the lake walk/screen free week (first week in may)
  - Shopping Opener may 14
  - Thursdays on Fountain starts with Food on Fountain May 26

### **COMMISSIONER/OTHER ITEMS**

Executive Director Johnson made the board aware that next month's meeting will run long with the addition of the Comp Plan presentation and Audit presentations.

Commissioner Rasmussen asked those in attendance if they felt it would be good to bring back the Blandin Foundation Community Leadership program. Everyone agreed that it was still impactful for

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leaders in the community. Commissioner Rasmussen will reach out and let the organization know that Albert Lea is interested in sending leaders from our community through the program again.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Murray made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Nelson. The motion carried 8 in favor, 0 opposed. The meeting adjourned at 8:25 a.m.

Filed and attested April 13, 2022.



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President



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Secretary

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