

ALBERT LEA PORT AUTHORITY

MINUTES

Wednesday, October 2, 2024 – 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, October 2, 2024 at 8:00 a.m. by President Murray. Roll was noted by the Board Secretary.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Mark Heinemann, Rich Murray, Tricia Dahl, Sarah Nelson, Larry Baker

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Bryan Skogheim, Nate Jansen

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

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS ABSENT: Shari Sprague, Business Community Representative; Holly Babcock, Local Tourism Representative

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER 4, 2024 REGULAR MEETING

The minutes from the Wednesday, September 4, regular meeting were reviewed. Commissioner Nelson made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Commissioner Dahl. President Murray asked for any further discussion and hearing none, the motion carried 5 in favor; 0 opposed.

RESOLUTION PA-24-14 AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF CLAIMS

The claims were presented for review, staff noted that the amount is high due to a large payment for property taxes. Commissioner Baker made a motion to accept the claims as presented in the amount of \$147055.85 seconded by Commissioner Nelson. President Murray asked for any further discussion and hearing none, the motion carried 5 in favor; 0 opposed.

STAFF REPORT

- **Collaboration (Chamber/CVB/ALEDA)**
 - i. New maps have been completed and look great.
- **Childcare**
 - i. New Provider Grants: Albert Lea childcare provider has been approved; Glenville provider approval is still pending.

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.”

- ii. Childcare group meeting scheduled for tomorrow at 9 a.m. to discuss the pod model and determine cost-effective solutions for childcare.
- **Ventura Foods Lease and Building**
 - i. Ventura Foods has expressed interest in purchasing the building, though not before 2025.
 - ii. Awaiting signature on the lease, which now includes a mutually agreed early termination clause to facilitate a future purchase.
 - iii. Discussion needed on integrating dock door costs into the lease over a five-year period, with a provision to recover the balance if the lease is terminated early.
- **Design Ready Controls**
 - i. Shifting to a new approach to get the land annexed and road canceled, allowing Design Ready to attach their microgrid on one parcel.
 - ii. Installation of the project is scheduled for fall, with final adjustments underway on the parking lot.
- **Conferences/Meetings to Note**
 - i. **Brookshire Meeting:** Continued discussions on marketing strategies.
 - ii. **Watershed:** Nearing closing, with final drawings received. Expected to close by the end of October.
 - iii. **Balchem:** Decision to defer building purchase until next year.
 - iv. **Impact Edition:** Focus on childcare and housing.
 - v. **Mayo Discussions:** Considering a blight designation for the Bonnerup building area to facilitate future redevelopment.
 - vi. **Other Meetings:** Engaged with the HRA director, initiated a young professionals' group with Ian's involvement, and participated in a panel at Recharge America/MN with Design Ready Controls.

EX-OFFICIO UPDATES

- **Freeborn County (Ryan Rasmussen, John Forman)**
 - i. Ryan's last day is October 9th. One candidate, through the MN County Association, will be interviewed.
 - ii. Consultants project an April hiring timeline. Budget efforts underway to reduce to 3%.
 - iii. Working on resolving county ditch issues.
- **City of Albert Lea (Ian Rigg)**
 - i. Delays in the Marshall and Sibley projects; one section will complete this year, with the remaining next year due to labor shortages.
 - ii. CIP discussion scheduled, with two-thirds of increases from the voter-approved referendum. Albert Lea recorded the fourth-lowest tax increase among similar-sized communities.
 - iii. Awaiting several large approvals, including redevelopment district paperwork for the old high school and train depot, expected October 14th.

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- **Chamber of Commerce (Shari Sprague)**
 - i. No updates provided.
- **Convention and Visitors Bureau (Holly Babcock)**
 - i. Holly provided updates via email:
 1. Oktoberween: Request for volunteers—sign-up available at Oktoberween.com.
 2. Map: Newly printed map available for distribution and sharing.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Nelson made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Dahl. The motion carried 5 in favor, 0 opposed. The meeting was adjourned at 8:12 a.m.

Filed and attested October 2, 2024.

President

Secretary

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