ALBERT LEA PORT AUTHORITY

MINUTES

Wednesday, August 5, 2026 – 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, August 5, 2026 at 7:30 a.m. by President Murray. Roll was noted by the Board Secretary.

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

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Jim Krueger

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS PRESENT: Ian Rigg, City of Albert Lea Representative; Janelle Koepke, Riverland Community College Representative; Val Lockhart, Business Community Representative

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS ABSENT: Melanie Aeschliman, Freeborn County Representative; Brad Edwin, Freeborn County Representative; Konrad Hawkinson, Tourism Representative

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Phillip Johnson, Director of Strategic Initiatives and Projects; Noelle Viktora, Operations and Finance Director

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JULY 1, 2026 REGULAR MEETING

The minutes from Wednesday, July 1st, regular meeting were reviewed. Commissioner Baker made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Commissioner Nelson. President Murray asked for any further discussion and hearing none, the motion carried 6 in favor; 0 opposed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JULY 13, 2026 SPECIAL MEETING

The minutes from Wednesday, July 13th, special meeting were reviewed. Commissioner Heinemann made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Commissioner Nelson. President Murray asked for any further discussion and hearing none, the motion carried 6 in favor; 0 opposed.

RESOLUTION PA-26-15 AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF CLAIMS

Commissioner Heinemann made a motion to accept the claims as presented in the amount of $70,270.79 seconded by Commissioner Baker. President Murray asked for any further discussion and hearing none, the motion carried 6 in favor; 0 opposed.

STAFF REPORT

Child Care

- Staff is gathering input from local employers and childcare providers to better assess workforce impacts, childcare capacity, demand, and service barriers. Staff has received some responses, will continue to reach out.
- Information collected will be used to identify strategies to support and sustain existing childcare capacity, with additional updates to be provided as the work progresses.

Project Cascade

- Closed on the property.
- Extension approved from August 14 to August 24.
- Following the project closing, work will begin on decertifying the two parcels that will comprise the new TIF district for Project Cascade.

Conferences/Meetings to Note

- Phillip and Noelle are preparing for Kendall to start.
- Applied for an Opportunity Zone designation and are eligible to reapply. The previous Opportunity Zone cannot be reapplied for because it is no longer part of the eligible census tract area.
- Reached out to Mayo regarding renegotiation of the Annex parking lot.
- Levy discussion with Staff and Board President and Treasurer.

EX-OFFICIO UPDATES

Freeborn County – Brad Edwin

No updated provided.

City of Albert Lea – Ian Rigg:

- Ian provided an update on the City's budget and discussed the possibility of presenting the EDA levy as an option for funding items that are currently funded through the City levy.
- Ian reported that the final TIF payment has been made to Vortex. Going forward, the TIF revenue generated will be used for the land buy-down, which is expected to provide approximately $2.1 million to $2.2 million to the Port. The first payment to the Port is anticipated in February 2027.
- The houses are nearly finished, with final work being completed. The driveway on Clark Street does not currently match the curb cut, but this will be corrected when Clark Street is milled.
- The property at 915 Autumn Street is also nearly complete, and the City is looking forward to having the project finished soon.

Albert Lea-Freeborn County Chamber of Commerce – Val Lockhart

- Val reported that the organization is receiving a grant from the Freeborn County Community Grant program to support workforce and entrepreneurship efforts.

- Val also reported that work is underway to establish an SBDC satellite office in Albert Lea.
- The leadership program is kicking off later this month, with the program beginning on the 14th.

Albert Lea Convention and Visitors Bureau – Konrad Hawkinson
No update provided.

Riverland Community College – Janelle Koepke

- Janelle provided an update as the college transitions from the summer into the fall semester.
- Over the past four years, enrollment has grown approximately 6% to 7% annually. Enrollment growth of approximately 2% is anticipated this year. The Construction Electrician program in Albert Lea is full, and most first-year programs are also at capacity. The college is also looking at the possibility of adding a plumbing program at the Albert Lea campus in the future.
- EDF Renewables provided a grant to update the cafeteria and student commons area.

COMMISSIONER/OTHER ITEMS

Commissioner Baker provided an update on the HRA house project. The decision was made to use a concrete foundation, which will be slightly more expensive but is expected to provide a better long-term option. The basement will include two egress windows, with one bedroom framed in and a bathroom stubbed in so that a future owner can finish the basement if desired. The garage was originally planned as a 12' x 20' single-car garage but will be increased to 12' x 24'. Digging is expected to begin around the middle of August.

The Board was informed that there will be a transition in Board membership. Commissioner Nelson is expected to attend her final meeting in September if a new Board member can be successfully recruited. Sarah recently sold her home and is moving to the Cities full-time as she begins the next chapter of her career in design. The Board expressed appreciation for Sarah's time and contributions, noting that she has enjoyed being part of the Board and seeing the organization's growth and positive work. Her connections and relationships have been valued, and the Board thanked her for her service.

PRESENTATION AND APPROVAL OF 2027 DRAFT BUDGET

Staff presented the draft budget to the board. After review, Commissioner Jansen moved to approve the budget as presented, seconded by Commissioner Nelson. President Murray asked for further discussion, and hearing none, the motion carried 6 in favor; 0 opposed.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Dahl made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Jansen. The motion carried 6 in favor, 0 opposed. The meeting adjourned at 8:05 a.m.

Filed and attested August 5, 2026.

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President Secretary

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."