

**TOWN OF UNION
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2019**

SYNOPSIS OF MEETING

The Town of Union Local Development Corporation met for a regular meeting on Thursday, February 21, 2019 at the Town of Union Office Building, located at 3111 East Main Street, Endwell, New York.

I. THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 8:00 A.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Stephen Trichka, Gary Leighton, James Peduto, Jeffrey L'Amoreaux, Timothy Strong, Robert Corwin

MEMBERS ABSENT: Diane Julian, Mary O'Malley-Trumble

OTHERS PRESENT: Richard Materese (Town Supervisor, 9:07 a.m.), Heather Staley (Town Councilwoman), David Goguen (Exec. Asst. to Town Supervisor), Rosemarie Pope (LDC Board Attorney)

STAFF PRESENT: Joseph Moody (LDC Director), Robin Shimer (Admin. Asst.)

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The Minutes of the Annual and Regular LDC Board Meetings of December 20, 2018 and the Special LDC Board Meeting of January 3, 2019 were reviewed and approved. The Minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 20, 2018 and the Special Meeting of January 3, 2019 were amended to replace in all instances the address of 635 Dickson Street with 625 Dickson Street.

Motion: Tim Strong

Motion 2nd: Jim Peduto

Motion: To approve the Minutes of the Annual and the Regular LDC Board Meetings of December 20, 2018. The Minutes of the Regular LDC Board Meeting of December 20, 2018 were amended to replace the address of 635 Dickson Street with 625 Dickson Street.

Vote: Motion approved [5 – Yes, 0 – No, 2 – Absent]

Motion: Jeff L'Amoreaux

Motion 2nd: Jim Peduto

Motion: To approve and amend the Special LDC Board Meeting Minutes of January 3, 2019 by replacing the address of 635 Dickson Street with 625 Dickson Street.

Vote: Motion approved [5 – Yes, 0 – No, 2 – Absent]

III. PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

President Trichka provided welcoming remarks and recognized Councilwoman Staley. He then requested the introduction of all meeting attendees.

IV. DIRECTOR'S REMARKS

Director Moody said an 11:00 a.m., February 25, 2019 demolition date of the former Endicott Inn has been established. Town Board and LDC Board members will be advised of the details.

V. OLD BUSINESS

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- A. President Trichka and Director Moody brought forth a proposal by Councilwoman Staley seeking the creation of a Town of Union Business Plan Competition. Mr. Moody said Ms. Staley previously met with him, as suggested by Supervisor Materese and Councilman Bertoni, to share proposal details. He then suggested presentation of the Councilwoman's plan at the February 21, 2019 LDC Board Meeting. She has secured funding of \$5,000.00 from County Executive Garnar for her proposal, which is modeled after a plan offered by the City of Binghamton. The program proposed by Councilwoman Staley would need to be administered by the LDC.

Councilwoman Staley shared with the LDC Board her proposal to establish a grant program for town businesses. She asked if Board members had any questions prior to her presentation. President Trichka noted that the Local Development Corporation's responsibilities are stated in the LDC's Charter. Consequently, he asked Councilwoman Staley how her proposal fits together with those LDC charges. He said the LDC has fiduciary responsibilities to administer certain funds. He also sought clarification that potential LDC actions regarding her proposal would not result in the LDC relinquishing any responsibility, or providing any program for which it lacks authorization. In essence, he sought insight of how Ms. Staley's proposal would mesh with LDC Charter-based responsibilities and requirements. Supervisor Materese then arrived, at which point President Trichka requested the introduction of all meeting attendees. Councilwoman Staley then replied to Mr. Trichka's inquiry. She said her intention was to ascertain the funding amount the LDC can provide for her town Business Plan Competition proposal. She is familiar with the City of Binghamton grant program, as she previously won that contest with her own business proposal. Her plan would interface with the SUNY-Broome Entrepreneurial Assistance Program (EAP). She also mentioned the possibility of workshops inclusion, and the value of such business aspects as bookkeeping and marketing, within her proposal. Mr. Trichka then opened the floor for further discussion. Mr. Strong referenced his prior program sponsorship experience and the marketing focus of Ms. Staley's proposal. He indicated applications to the City of Binghamton competition have lessened. Ms. Staley said it was her understanding the number of 2018 applications was considerable reduced. Mr. Strong said it is common for applications to spike during the initial offering, followed by notable lessening of participation. Consequently, he asked Ms. Staley how her proposal differed from the city's grant program. Ms. Staley said the town plan would differ by offering a team concept of interaction with applicants. For example, besides providing funding, the town could hold an event at the grant recipient's business. Also, the EAP desires to have ongoing interaction with businesses.

Mr. Peduto asked what the rationale is for the town Business Plan Competition proposal, versus application to the Town of Union Economic Development Office. Ms. Staley said her prior loan application to the Economic Development Office lacked fundamental business planning familiarity. Her subsequent participation in EAP classes provided the instructional environment to acquire greater business-development knowledge. Supervisor Materese, in replying to Mr. Strong's question about program differences, said a primary purpose of Ms. Staley's proposal is to better inform Town of Union residents about economic development opportunities.

Mr. Peduto asked Ms. Staley if she knew how many people applied for a 2018 City of Binghamton grant. Ms. Staley was uncertain of the number of applicants. Mr. Strong affirmed support for enhancing town business growth, but he also expressed reservation as to Business Plan Competition being a viable vehicle for achieving that goal. He said grant competition is marketing-driven without a certainty of securing funds. Mr. Strong also asserted the value of non-grant financing that provides applicants with an assurance of obtaining qualitative loans.

Ms. Staley asked Counselor Pope if the grant competition proposal could include a disclaimer stating that, if a non-minimal number of applications is not submitted, the competition would be rescheduled for the following year. Counselor Pope said such wording could be included, but advised that a disclaimer requiring a minimal amount of participants may be counter-productive to competition intent. Mr. Trichka questioned the practicality of requiring training for applicants, due to potential time conflicts affecting availability. He also suggested the \$5,000.00 grant amount may be insufficient to meet the business operational needs of applicants. Mr. Trichka additionally asked how the three year town location stipulation would be enforced. Ms. Staley said that her plan, like the city plan, seeks a grant percentage recovery of awarded monies. Mr. Peduto asked if it was known how many jobs were created via the city grant program. Ms. Staley offered insight into one business beyond her own; an approximation of all created jobs was unknown. Mr. Strong noted that greatest job creation may have occurred at the outset of the grant program.

Mr. Trichka asked Ms. Staley what the projected plan is for maintaining, beyond the county-provided \$5,000.00 funds. Ms. Staley replied that, if the first year proves successful, she hopes to secure LDC funding for future years. Mr. Moody said LDC Board members expressed interest in 2016-2017 in establishing a PILOT grant program. Also, the Board was disinclined at the time to base such an LDC grant program on a competition. Mr. Peduto then asked Ms. Staley about the marketing plan for her proposed plan. Ms. Staley said distribution of a flyer by the EAP and other networking sources will be a means of marketing, as well as media releases and Facebook utilization. Mr. Peduto said it seems much of the grant proposal marketing is predicated on the amount of participants. He suggested that to achieve a sustaining program during times of modest participation, and to differentiate town and city grant programs (due to overlap of mutual networking sources) there should be identification of marketing cost. Mr. L'Amoreaux cited the importance of sustained funds, and the value that winning grant applicants and businesses bring to the community. Counselor Pope noted, in recognition of the grant competition proposal being limited to businesses of 5 employees and under, that it may be advisable to expand the application terms to include businesses having more than 5 employees. The implementation of such a term would likely beneficially enhance the number of grant applicants.

Supervisor Materese sought verification of LDC Board intent to provide a matching amount of grant funding. He also inquired as to LDC Board definition of what the minimal grant amount may be for attracting grant applicants. Mr. Strong spoke in support of the concept of an LDC PILOT program. His concern with solely a grant competition program is the initial one and two year peaking of participation, followed by a substantially lower number of applicants in subsequent years. Supervisor Materese suggested a compromise of integrating aspects of both a PILOT program and a Business Plan Competition. Mr. Trichka commented that requiring matching funding by the applicant notably strengthens a financing request. He affirmed that job creation is the LDC Board's primary objective when providing funding. He summarized the collective perspective of the LDC Board as being interested in helping to provide grant funding. However, his concern is the possibility of the LDC being on the periphery of financing and operational activities. Consequently, due to the LDC having an established and legally binding infrastructure and process, Mr. Trichka said it is essential to have the LDC centrally involved. He affirmed that if the LDC is to financially pick up the grant competition program – and due to the legal requirements by which the LDC's finances and operation are governed – all aspects of the grant program are to go through and to receive approval by the LDC Board of Directors. The question was then posed as to LDC resources for managing the program. Mr. Moody believes his office has the resources to manage a PILOT program. Mr. Leighton inquired about the disbursement process of the county-provided \$5,000.00. Mr. Trichka asked Mr. Moody for his thoughts about the procedural aspects of integrating the Business Loan Competition program and funds with the LDC's

financial and operational structure. Mr. Moody suggested the \$5,000.00 loan from Broome County being matched with \$15,000.00 from the Town of Union LDC for a total of \$20,000.00 for the PILOT program. Applications would first be made via an Intent to Apply Form, to be followed by LDC Board review to determine qualification for submitting a full grant application.

Counselor Pope firmly stated that, if the Town of Union LDC is to be involved in grant competition, then the LDC has to be the mainstay of that competition (as is the case with the City of Binghamton LDC). Counselor Pose also raised the question as to whether involvement in grant competition is in the Town of Union LDC's Charter. She will need to review the LDC's Bylaws to determine if there is allowance for engagement.

Supervisor Materese concurred with President Trichka's earlier statement as to the importance of the LDC overseeing grant competition program. Mr. Trichka requested Director Moody's perspective on how to structure the grant competition program so it fits within the LDC's Charter. In essence, to synch up the grant competition proposal with current LDC programs. Mr. Moody will work on the criteria for a grant program. Mr. Strong said marketing and messaging (including social media messaging) are essential tools for promoting the program, as tailored to the program's business parameters. He offered his professional social media assistance for promoting the program. Councilwoman Staley concurred with the plan for moving forward.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

- A. Director Moody reiterated that the demolition of the former Endicott Inn will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Monday, February 25, 2019. He said all interested parties will be notified.

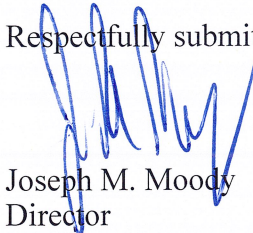
VIII. ADJOURNMENT

- A. President Trichka asked all attendees if they had any additional topics to consider. Due to the completion of discussion and consideration of all pertinent Board matters, Mr. Trichka requested a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 a.m.

Motion: Jeff L'Amoreaux
Motion 2nd: Jim Peduto
Motion: To adjourn the regular meeting of February 21, 2019.
Vote: Motion approved [5 - Yes, 0 - No, 2 - Absent].

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Joseph M. Moody
Director