

**Minutes of the
County of Clinton
Industrial Development Agency
Wednesday, November 13, 2024**

The meeting was called to order by Trent Trahan, Chairperson, at 12:13 p.m. at the County of Clinton Industrial Development Agency (CCIDA) office located at 137 Margaret Street, Suite 208, Plattsburgh, New York.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Trent Trahan, Chairperson
David Hoover, Vice Chairperson
Keith Defayette, Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer
Michael Zurlo, Secretary
Mark Leta, Assistant Secretary
Joey Trombley, Member
John VanNatten, Member

STAFF PRESENT: Molly Ryan, Executive Director
Christopher Canada, Esq., Agency Counsel
Shannon Wagner, Esq., Agency Counsel
Toni Moffat, Executive Assistant
Dorothy Brunell, Administrative Assistant

OTHERS PRESENT: Garry Douglas, North Country Chamber of Commerce
Jason Menghile, Vortex USA, Inc.
Ryan Silva, New York State Economic Development Council

T. Trahan stated there was a quorum present.

T. Trahan waived the reading of the notice of the meeting published in the Press Republican on December 13, 2023.

Presentation: Vortex USA, Inc.

M. Ryan introduced Jason Menghile, the Director of Finance at Vortex USA, Inc. On behalf of the North Country Chamber of Commerce (NCCC), Garry Douglas expressed enthusiastic support for the proposed Vortex USA Project. M. Ryan explained that Vortex learned of the potential benefits available through the CCIDA at a Red Carpet Event sponsored by the NCCC.

J. Menghile stated Vortex is an aquatic play products company that was founded in 1995. Vortex manufactures and sells aquatic play products, primarily splash pads, and has completed 10,000 aquatic play area projects worldwide throughout 50 countries. The company is headquartered in Montreal where they have a 220,000 square foot manufacturing facility. The US market represents approximately 70 percent of the company's business. Vortex was founded by Stephen Hamelin in 1995 and remains a family owned business. The company has their own sales and distribution network and controls the entire installation process. Vortex also sells other complementary products such as tower waterslides, playable fountains, and water management systems. J. Menghile stated 70-75 percent of their business is with municipalities and they sell their products primarily to parks and recreation departments for installation in public spaces. The other approximately 30 percent of their business is to commercial markets such as hotels, cruise ships, etc. Some of their customers include Disney, Parc Safari, Legoland and the Ritz-Carlton Hotel chain. All Vortex projects comply with ADA regulations with an inclusive mindset.

J. Menghile stated they employ welders, technicians, project designers, electrical and industrial engineers, industrial and mechanical designers, customer service specialists, and marketing and sales specialists. He stated that currently at the Montreal manufacturing facility, paint and plastic mold injection processes are outsourced;

however, they plan to include the equipment to accomplish these processes at their new facility in the United States. J. Menghile stated that in 2023/2024, their Montreal manufacturing facility was awarded a “Great Place to Work” certification and they have completed the application process for the same certification for next year.

J. Menghile explained that their five-year business plan includes doubling their revenue and manufacturing capacity. Their intention is to establish manufacturing and supply chain capabilities in the United States to serve their biggest market. Clinton County is an ideal location as it provides close proximity to their Canadian headquarters. J. Menghile stated the proposed Project will utilize local labor, local supply chain, and it is their goal to become an integral part of the community.

Vortex has identified a location for their Plattsburgh Project at 31 Northern Avenue. The 51,000 square foot property provides physical space to accommodate future expansion needs. The cost of the property is \$2.8 million and they plan to invest \$1.2 million in renovations utilizing local contractors. J. Menghile stated that a Letter of Intent has been signed to purchase the property which is contingent upon receiving the requested tax incentives. The company plans to acquire equipment for powder coat painting which is currently outsourced. They will also acquire welding equipment and various manufacturing equipment totaling approximately \$2,000,000 in purchase and installation costs, plus an additional \$250,000 in office equipment. The total capital investment for the Project is \$6.25 million.

J. Menghile advised they anticipate creating 30 new jobs in five years. The anticipated start date for the Project is March 2025, with their first production run slated for October 2025. J. Menghile stated there is the possibility for future expansion in job creation, manufacturing capabilities and building space. The Project is requesting real estate exemption/PILOT and sales tax exemption.

M. Zurlo complimented J. Menghile on his very comprehensive and well thought out presentation. M. Ryan also stated the Vortex application was the most complete application she has received to date. M. Zurlo asked J. Menghile if the project would go forward if they did not receive the requested IDA benefits. J. Menghile advised that no, the Project would not go forward in Clinton County. He stated that many locations offer many different benefits, however, the close proximity of the Plattsburgh location to their Montreal headquarters is definitely important. M. Ryan advised that the Project is looking for a standard Category 2 benefit and scored a solid 10 on the UTEP.

J. Menghile thanked the board for their time and consideration. M. Ryan advised she will provide the board with a cost/benefit analysis prior to the December 9, 2024 CCIDA meeting.

Approval of the Minutes of the October 21, 2024 Meeting

T. Trahan asked if there were any questions regarding the draft minutes of the October 21, 2024 meeting of the CCIDA. There were none.

On a motion by D. Hoover, and seconded by J. Trombley, it was unanimously carried to approve the minutes of the October 21, 2024 meeting of the CCIDA.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Reports

K. Defayette reviewed the October 2024 Treasurer’s Report with the Board. There were no questions or concerns.

On a motion by M. Zurlo, and seconded by J. VanNatten, it was unanimously RESOLVED to approve the October 2024 Treasurer’s Report as presented by K. Defayette.

Committee Reports

Governance Committee

Uniform Tax Exemption Policy (UTEP) Amendments

M. Zurlo advised the CCIDA Governance Committee recommends that a public hearing be held regarding the proposed revisions to the UTEP.

Old Business

There was no old business to report.

New Business

Economic Blueprint Initiative – Ryan Silva, Executive Director, New York State Economic Development Council

M. Ryan introduced Ryan Silva, the Executive Director of the New York State Economic Development Council (NYSEDC). M. Ryan advised the NYSEDC is a great partner to IDA's throughout the state in achieving mutual economic development goals.

R. Silva advised the NYSEDC has been in place for 50 years and they support economic development through advocacy, education and policy development. R. Silva stated the NYSEDC is focused on ensuring organizations such as the CCIDA have the tools and resources needed to grow the economy. The NYSEDC regularly meets with legislators, state agencies, and the governor to advocate for pro-business policies and programs. Some policies that the NYSEDC helped create and/or supported include the FAST NY Shovel-Ready Program, funding for the "Restore New York Communities" Blight Removal Program, and the New York State Green CHIPS Program, to name a few. R. Silva also stated the NYSEDC hosts a delegation of representatives to attend various trade shows throughout the country to promote NYS and try to bring more business back to the state.

R. Silva stated the NYSEDC does an annual IDA economic impact study. R. Silva also outlined some of the economic benefits achieved by IDA's in New York State in 2021 which include 1.3 million annual permanent jobs, \$141 billion in annual wages, 17,000 temporary construction jobs, \$1.5 billion in construction wages, \$12.4 billion in annual tax revenue for New York State, every \$1 in IDA abatements generates \$6.57 in new tax revenue, \$339 million in new PILOT revenue for school districts. Some large projects in the state that IDA's supported include Micron, Global Foundries, Fairlife, Edwards, and Regeneron. R. Silva outlined a number of housing projects facilitated by IDA's which include 411 residential projects approved statewide since 2018. Additionally, 233 wind and solar projects have been approved statewide since 2018 resulting in the generation of 4,809 megawatts of clean, renewable energy.

R. Silva advised one of the NYSEDC initiatives is to produce a competitive analysis of New York State called the Economic Blueprint Initiative. This project will include an assessment of workforce issues within the state, a national scan of best practices that could be appropriate for use within the state, and a strategic action agenda to improve the state's competitiveness and to diversify the economy. They currently have 45 entities contributing to this project. The initial cost of the project is approximately \$100,000.

T. Trahan asked if the board could have a copy of R. Silva's presentation. M. Ryan asked R. Silva if he could send her the presentation and she will forward it to the board. R. Silva stated he will also share a link to the IDA's 2024 Economic Impact Study once it is completed in December 2024.

Hodgson Russ, LLP Invoice for Legal Services Rendered

On a motion by M. Zurlo, and seconded by K. Defayette, it was unanimously carried to pay Hodgson Russ' Invoice in the amount of \$33,291.22 for legal services rendered.

Uniform Tax Exemption Policy Revisions

T. Trahan asked if the public hearing for the UTEP revisions would be publicized. M. Ryan stated that in addition to the standard Public Hearing Notice published in *The Press Republican* newspaper, she intends to issue a press release as well as create some social media posts to increase public awareness of the date and time of the public hearing. C. Canada stated that he and/or S. Wagner would be willing to attend the public hearing if requested.

The following resolution was offered by M. Zurlo, seconded by J. VanNatten, to wit:

Resolution No. 11-24-04

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE AGENCY'S UNIFORM TAX EXEMPTION POLICY.

WHEREAS, County of Clinton Industrial Development Agency (the "Agency") is authorized and empowered by the provisions of Chapter 1030 of the 1969 Laws of New York, constituting Title 1 of Article 18-A of the General Municipal Law, Chapter 24 of the Consolidated Laws of New York, as amended (the "Enabling Act") and Chapter 225 of the 1971 Laws of New York, as amended, constituting Section 895-f of said General Municipal Law (said Chapter and the Enabling Act being hereinafter collectively referred to as the "Act") to promote, develop, encourage and assist in the acquiring, constructing, reconstructing, improving, maintaining, equipping and furnishing of manufacturing, warehousing, research, commercial and industrial facilities, among others, for the purpose of promoting, attracting and developing economically sound commerce and industry to advance the job opportunities, health, general prosperity and economic welfare of the people of the State of New York, to improve their prosperity and standard of living, and to prevent unemployment and economic deterioration; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 874(4) of the Act, the Agency has adopted a uniform tax exemption policy (the "Existing Policy") providing guidelines for the granting by the Agency of certain exemptions from real property, mortgage recording and sales tax exemptions; and

WHEREAS, the Agency desires to make certain amendments to the Existing Policy related to the current needs and expectations of the Agency, which amendments would involve the addition to the Existing Policy of (a) criteria and categories related to the evaluation and approval of various (1) housing projects, and (2) various renewable energy projects, (b) statutory updates, and, (c) if necessary, minor stylistic changes and corrections to the Existing Policy (collectively, the "Amendments"); and

WHEREAS, as provided in the Agency's Governance Committee Charter, the members of the Governance Committee of the Agency have reviewed the Existing Policy and made certain recommendations to the full board of the Agency regarding amending the Existing Policy to include the Amendments; and

WHEREAS, a description of the proposed Amendments is attached hereto as Exhibit A; and

WHEREAS, prior to taking action on the Amendments, the Agency desires to (A) authorize the Executive Director of the Agency to circulate a copy of the proposed Amendments and a brief description thereof to the Affected Tax Jurisdictions (as defined in the Act) and (B) to authorize the Executive Director of the Agency to hold a public hearing with respect to the proposed Amendments (the "Public Hearing");

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MEMBERS OF COUNTY OF CLINTON INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Once the proposed Amendments has been reviewed by the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and/or Executive Director and approved for circulation to the Affected Tax Jurisdictions and after consultation with Agency Counsel, the Agency hereby authorizes the Executive Director to (A) circulate a copy of the proposed Amendments and a brief description thereof to the Affected Tax Jurisdictions; (B) establish the time, date and place for the Public Hearing with respect to the proposed Amendments to the Affected Tax Jurisdictions; (C) provide notice of the Public Hearing no fewer than ten (10) days prior to the date established for the Public Hearing; (D) review and respond to any correspondence received from the Affected Tax Jurisdictions prior to the Public Hearing; (E) conduct the Public Hearing; (F) cause a report of the Public Hearing fairly summarizing the views presented at such Public Hearing (the "Report") to be prepared; and (G) cause copies of the Report to be made available to the members of the Agency.

Section 2. The Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and/or Executive Director of the Agency is hereby authorized and directed to do such further things or perform such acts as may be necessary or convenient to implement the provisions of this resolution.

Section 3. All action taken by the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and/or Executive Director of the Agency in connection with the Public Hearing with respect to the proposed Amendments prior to the date of this resolution is hereby ratified and confirmed.

Section 4. This resolution shall take effect immediately.

The question of the adoption of the foregoing resolution was duly put to a vote on roll call, which resulted as follows:

Trent Trahan	VOTING	Yes
David Hoover	VOTING	Yes
Michael E. Zurlo	VOTING	Yes
Keith Defayette	VOTING	Yes
Mark Leta	VOTING	Yes
John VanNatten	VOTING	Yes
Joey Trombley	VOTING	Yes

The foregoing resolution was thereupon declared duly adopted.

Clinton County Economic Development Update

M. Zurlo advised that discussions are underway with a potential tenant at the Clinton-Business Innovation Gateway property (C-BIG). Discussions are also underway for a potential new tenant at the Plattsburgh International Airport.

Management Team Report

M. Ryan advised the Clinton Community College property feasibility study is progressing. The company performing the study, CPL, is preparing to do a site visit. Also, she has received a draft of the Clinton County Housing feasibility study however they have not started identifying specific housing project locations. M. Ryan will be reviewing the draft document with Camoin Associates next week.

There being no further business to discuss, on a motion by M. Zurlo, and seconded by D. Hoover, the meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Trent Trahan, Chairperson