

CHEEKTOWAGA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Annual Board of Directors Meeting
October 9, 2024 - 6:00 p.m.
Town of Cheektowaga
Alexander Community Center
275 Alexander Avenue
Cheektowaga, New York 14211

Board of Directors

Attending

Robert Lowery, Vice President
Paul Gilden
Ethan Ruot
David Tytko
James Antkowiak
Richard Willis (arrived late)

Excused: Jason Mackiewicz and Denis Serugendo

Resource Personnel and Guests in Attendance

Rachel Straker, Cheektowaga Director of Community Development
Michael Thomas, The Harrison Studio, H. Sicherman & Company
Dale Marie Parks, Cheektowaga Community Development Planner

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. by Vice President Robert Lowery. It was noted that a quorum was present.

Introductions

Introductions were made as Dale Marie Parks is new to the CEDC meetings. Rachel Straker stated that the Board of Directors is down to 8 members now that Kristina Groff has tendered her resignation. The by-laws state that 9 members are required. Rachel will reach out to the new Cheektowaga Chamber of Commerce President to see if he will join the Board and get involved. It was noted that Derik Kane was appointed at the last meeting. His appointment will make nine members. Rachel will reach out to Derik and add his information to the list of Directors.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes were provided to the Board prior to the meeting. There were no corrections or modifications suggested.

Motion by: Robert Lowery
Seconded by: Paul Gilden
Motion: To approve the minutes as presented.
Vote: Ayes 6 Nays 0 Abstentions 0

Financial Report

The financial report was provided to the Board of Directors prior to the meeting. There were no corrections or modifications suggested.

Motion by: James Antkowiak

Seconded by: Paul Gilden

Motion: To waive the reading of the financial report and accept the quarterly financial report as presented.

Vote: Ayes 6 Nays 0 Abstain 0

Status Reports

Prospective Loans – M. Thomas, The Harrison Studio

Junk King:

The company did not get the new financial paperwork to The Harrison Studio. Mike will reach back out to them and make sure they know what they have to submit.

ADK Green Living:

Mike informed them they needed to get the bank financing in line and then reach out to us. He has not heard from them, most likely the bank financing did not come through.

Culinary Arts:

Mike was contacted by a broker for Culinary Arts. They are trying to restructure their debt and need to bridge a \$1M gap with a loan from us. Mike feels that any loan to Culinary Arts is too risky right now for the CEDC. The company is not in the black yet, they have contracts for services but the debt has not changed. Everyone agreed that due to the current circumstances of the CEDC (i.e. delinquent loans, not attorney on retainer) this loan would be too risky right now. Mike will stay in touch with Culinary Arts and maybe we can help at a later date.

Professional Service Contracts

Bookkeeper:

Rachel reported that the CEDC could save money by having Community Development take over from the bookkeeper at the end of the program year. We currently pay \$3,000 a year for bookkeeping services. If the CEDC purchases Quick Books (\$8.99/month) Community Development could do the work that the bookkeeper provides.

Motion by: James Antkowiak

Seconded by: Paul Gilden

Motion: To approve the purchase of Quick Books and Community Development to provide parallel bookkeeping services through the end of the program year and take over these duties for the subsequent program year.

Vote: Ayes 6 Nays 0 Abstentions 0

Legal:

Rachel stated that we do not have an attorney as of right now. When Amy Vigneron changed firms, she was intending to continue working for the CEDC. This new firm is larger and the fees are higher than previously and they are unwilling to negotiate a lower fee for a non-profit, so Amy was not going to provide a fee schedule for a new contract with us. Rachel will send out an RFP tomorrow for legal services for new clients. Rachel is to reach out to Amy to provide a fee schedule to take on the three delinquent loans.

Committee Reports

Audit Committee:

Rachel stated that she was going to send an RFP for audit services as EFPR raised their fees to \$6,000. Mike and Robert stated this was a great price for audit services. They are seeing fees between \$8,000 and \$14,000.

Governance Committee:

Rachel stated that there needs to be changes made to the by-laws. The Town no longer needs to approve appointment to the CEDC Board of Directors. The CEDC also needs to adopt a procurement policy. We can adopt the Town's Procurement Policy and tweak it if we feel we need to.

Budget Committee:

Jerry Gabryszak is working on the budget. He should have it to the Budget Committee by November 30th. We will try and have a meeting in January for the Board to vote on the budget.

Review of Existing Loans and Payment Status

Rachel, Town of Cheektowaga

Rachel reported that Dave Gordon has two delinquent loans (payments are past due from April 2024 to current and behind on the balloon payment). Hanzlian Sausage has one delinquent loan (payments area past due from December 2023 to current). Mike will reach out to Kim from Hanzlian to talk about the delinquency. Rachel will email Mike spreadsheets regarding the owed payments. It was suggested that we make part of the loan agreements going forward that we can ACH the accounts of delinquent loans.

Other Items for Review / Discussion

- Rachel gave Mike Thomas copies of contracts for The Harrison Studio needing signatures from Chuck Bell.
- Bank signature cards need to be updated now that Kristina has resigned.
- The NYS PARIS account authorization needs to be changed.
- The web site is not up to date. Meeting minutes need to be uploaded, financials need to be posted, Board members need to be modified, the address needs to be changed, etc. Dale will be working on the web site and will be scheduling a training with Night Owl again for guidance. Anyone who would like to sit in on the training please let us know.

Adjourn

Motion by: Richard Willis

Seconded by: Paul Gilden

Motion: To adjourn the Board of Directors meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.



Signature of Secretary