

Pittsfield Economic Development Authority
December 19, 2015

Meeting Minutes

In attendance were, Chairman Mick Callahan, Larry Tallman, Pam Green, George Whaling, Mike Matthews, Mike Filpi, Christina Barrett, Doug Crane, Board Members.

Also in attendance was Beth Goodman, legal counsel, Ryan Killeen, PEDAs Treasurer, members of the press, Colleen Hunter-Mullett, substitute clerk, and Cory Thurston, Executive Director.

I. Administration

Call to Order – Chairman Callahan called the meeting to order at 7:59 AM, reminding everyone that the meeting was being both audio & video recorded.

Approval of October 14, 2015 Meeting Minutes – **Mike Matthews made a motion to approve the minutes of October 14, 2015. The motion was seconded by Mike Filpi and passed unanimously.**

II. Committee Reports

Finance – Mike Matthews introduced Ryan Killeen as PEDAs new Treasurer, stating that he will be attending all Board meetings, as well as all Finance Sub-Committee meetings.

Mr. Matthews asked Board members to review the 3rd quarter financials that were submitted, stating that PEDAs continues to operate as anticipated, on or under budget, with the only red flag continuing to be the stormwater basin.

Mike Filpi made a motion to approve the 3rd quarter financial report. The motion was seconded by George Whaling and passed unanimously.

Mr. Matthews asked the Board to review the preliminary 2016 budget that was submitted, stating that in his time on the Board the operating budget has been reduced from approximately \$600,000 annually to approximately \$300,000 annually. He stated that the committee is still looking at ways to reduce costs, such as consolidation with City operations. He further stated that the proposed budget is level funded from last year.

Mr. Thurston stated that PEDAs is only funded by cash reserves, with rent or land leases as its only income at this point. Chairman Callahan asked if there were any anticipated changes with Nucleas announcement. Mr. Thurston stated that he was not sure. Mr. Matthews stated that the Finance Committee needs to add another member with Patrick Reuss's resignation.

Christina Barrett made a motion to accept the preliminary budget. The motion was seconded by Pam Green and passed unanimously.

Marketing – Ms. Barrett informed the Board that the Marketing Sub-Committee had met on November 18 and gave a brief summary of items discussed at the meeting, such as developing a manufacturing specific video and potential advertising plans. She stated that she feels marketing is really an evolution in changing people's perceptions.

Ms. Barrett also informed the board that the BIC sign would be constructed and installed before the end of the year and that it would be illuminated.

Ms. Barrett informed the Board that the Woodlawn Bridge would be completed sometime in the spring and there will be a need to promote it opening.

Ms. Barrett gave a brief update on changes that are in the works for social media.

Mr. Thurston stated that the BIC sign will be located on East Street and the “coming soon” language will be removed once construction begins.

Ms. Barrett informed the Board that BCC is hosting a robotics challenge on Saturday from 9:00-11:00, stating that she believes it’s a great idea to get young kids involved with STEM. Mr. Thurston stated that a video will be shot during the robotics event that PEDA will use as part of its promotional materials.

Ms. Barrett informed the Board that the BIC is working on its own website.

III. Executive Director’s Report

Berkshire Innovation Center Update – Mr. Thurston informed the Board that the project continues to move forward. He explained that there is a funding gap and that the project will be re-bid in the spring once additional funding is received. Mr. Thurston informed the Board that, in his opinion, the BIC had met all the benchmarks required in the grant agreement and that he anticipates making the final payment to them on January 4, 2016.

Water Quality Improvements – Mr. Thurston stated that he had not received anything back from the EPA as of yet, but the Committee continues to think of new ways to improve the water quality system.

Woodlawn Avenue Bridge – Easement – Mr. Thurston informed the Board that the project is moving along nicely and that work will continue for as long as the weather permits. He anticipates the bridge to re-open in the spring. He informed the Board that a permanent Easement with the City for the maintenance of the roadway has been approved by the City and it’s expected to go before the City Council sometime in January of 2016.

Tyler Street Planning Study – Mr. Thurston informed the Board that the TDI is also moving along nicely, stating that PEDA is actively involved on the steering committee and will be meeting with Berkshire Medical Center as the other anchor of this district to discuss issues such as housing and the amenities that go along with it. He stated that the planning study should be available to the public sometime in March.

Tenant Prospects – Mr. Thurston stated that he is still working with a couple of prospects, but no one new since the last meeting.

2015 Highlights – Mr. Thurston made a correction to his highlights and added the hosting of a Women’s Legislative event.

Teens - Chairman Callahan encouraged Board members to put their boots on and walk the site in order to observe the existing conditions. He reviewed some of PEDAs accomplishments for the year, stating that PEDA had strong accomplishments for the year.

Mr. Thurston stated that he is still working to replace the clerk for PEDA.

IV. Other Business

Chairman Callahan submitted a list of proposed meeting dates for 2016, stating that he would like to stay as close to these dates as possible, however, from time to time dates may need to change.

Chairman Callahan informed the Board that Patrick Reuss has submitted his resignation because he is taking a position in southern Connecticut. He thanked Mr. Reuss for his expertise and service to the Board.

Chairman Callahan also thanked Mayor Bianchi for his service to the Board, as well as all existing Board members.

Chairman Callahan informed the Board that they are each required to do an online ethics certification and encouraged them to all complete it by the end of the year.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for February 17, 2016.

V. Adjournment

There was a motion to adjourn at 8:34 AM, seconded and carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Colleen Hunter-Mullett