

Pittsfield Economic Development Authority

March 7, 2012

Meeting Minutes

In attendance was Vice Chairman Mick Callahan, Christina Barrett, George Whaling, Michael Matthews, and Dan Bianchi, Board Members.

Also in attendance was Beth Goodman, legal counsel, Regina Burgio, consultant, Cory Thurston, Executive Director, and Colleen Hunter-Mullett, clerk.

I. ADMINISTRATIVE

a. Call to Order

Vice Chairman Callahan called the meeting to order at 8:00 AM.

b. Approval of February 8, 2012 Minutes

There was a motion to approve the February 8, 2012 minutes as presented, seconded and carried.

Mayor Bianchi informed the Board that he had sent a formal request to the legislature to expand the PEDA Board from 7 members to 11 members. He stated that he thought the process would take a couple of months and he asked Board Members for any recommendations for appointment.

Mr. Matthews stated that he felt the skill set of Board Members should be looked at to cover any gaps in expertise. Mayor Bianchi stated that he would like to see a lawyer and someone in construction management appointed to the Board. He informed the Board that the original legislation suggested certain categories of expertise, such as environmental.

Mr. Thurston stated that he would send Board Members a current list of Board Members, which will include the terms of each appointment. Mayor Bianchi asked Mr. Thurston to send each member a copy of the enabling act as well.

Mr. Thurston stated that he thought increasing the Board is a good idea because it will allow more sub-committee activity. Mr. Matthews stated that there is a learning curve involved with being a Board Member and suggested that Mr. Thurston put together an orientation package for new Board Members.

II. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

City Council Presentation – Mr. Thurston informed the Board that he had given his presentation to the City Council and it went well, stating that it was a long night, but a healthy discussion. He felt

the PEDAs' interests were parallel with the City's. Since the presentation the general reaction has been good. He invited City Councilors to tour the site and five or six Councilors have responded in favor of a site visit and a couple of them have stopped in for a face to face discussion.

Silver Lake Shoreline – Mr. Thurston informed the Board that the amended PPA has been signed with the EPA and is being published in the Federal Register for public comment. Ms. Goodman is working on a draft of the City easement for the walkway. Mr. Callahan asked what the time frame for this would be. Ms. Goodman informed him that once the 30-day publication requirement has been met, it becomes strictly a timing issue between the City and PEDA. Mr. Thurston reminded everyone that the Lake remediation will be a 2 year project.

Life Science Meeting – Mr. Thurston informed the Board that the Mayor, Mr. Whaling and he had met with representatives of the MA Life Science Center, which assists to identifying companies in the life science industries. He stated that PEDA has to develop a proposal and linkages with other organizations such as Berkshire Community College and Nuclea. One of the representatives suggested that PEDA reach outside the area and named Rensselaer Poly Tech as a possibility.

Mayor Bianchi said that he was encouraged by the meeting and that the representative recommended searching local companies, such as plastics firms to assist PEDA. Mr. Whaling stated that the process is more complicated than he had thought and that there are also layers of tax credits available to potential incubator companies.

Mr. Matthews asked if the Life Science earmark has an expiration. Mayor Bianchi stated that the earmark is for western Massachusetts, not PEDA specifically, so if someone else in western Massachusetts gets their package together before PEDA, they could potentially receive the money. Mr. Thurston stated that the good news is that they came to Pittsfield because they're interested in the area. Mr. Thurston stated that PEDA has to create focus as well as an exit strategy for incubator companies.

Mr. Whaling suggested that PEDA hire someone to become an expert in six months. Mr. Thurston stated that it's almost a grant writer that PEDA needs. The Board agreed. Ms. Barrett asked when the earmark expires. Mr. Thurston stated that the earmark will continue to be there, the question is if the earmark is funded. Mr. Thurston stated that PEDA could utilize City experts and possibly the expertise of a marketing firm we will hopefully be retaining soon.

Mr. Matthews suggested finding the person who assisted in the successful completion of the Springfield Technical Park and the one at UMASS to see if they would be willing to assist PEDA. Mr. Thurston stated that he will begin his outreach to local plastics firms.

Design Review Committee – Mr. Thurston informed the Board that the signs for Mountain One had been approved and that they are on track to receive an April certificate of occupancy.

MassDOT Meetings – Mr. Thurston informed the Board that the bridge on Woodlawn Ave is being completely redesigned and the effort is moving along at a very active pace. The new structure will be

a single span bridge and that drawings had been submitted for review, which include sidewalks on both sides. He stated that they will not be re-using the existing abutments therefore, additional environmental work will be required for excavation, adding time to the project. He estimated that the bridge will be removed in early summer.

Financial Report – Mr. Thurston informed the Board that the field work for our 2011 audit is complete and that he will have a report next month. He showed Board Members a copy of the fraud questionnaire that Mr. Callahan would be signing on behalf of the Board.

Mr. Callahan asked Mr. Thurston for a draft report before the next meeting. Mr. Thurston stated that he would provide it once the adjusting entries had been made by the auditors to ensure their accuracy.

Mr. Matthews stated he felt a budget needed to be developed. Mr. Thurston informed him that a budget would be ready for the next meeting. Mr. Matthews expressed concern about the numbers not matching up. Mr. Thurston stated that this is why he wants to provide the Board with the most accurate information at next month's meeting. There was some discussion about the bank statements and who opens them.

Marketing Update – Mr. Thurston stated that he had e-mailed a draft scope of work for marketing to Board Members for review and comment. Ms. Barrett had already sent her edits to him. Mr. Matthews, Mr. Whaling and Ms. Barrett have been working on this issue as a sub-committee and will meet to discuss. Mr. Thurston informed the Board that this is a working document and that the language is generic. There was a brief discussion on the language as well as funding.

Mr. Callahan stated that the Life Science Building will only cover 1-2 sites and that PEDDA still needs to sell the remainder of the park. Mr. Whaling asked Mr. Thurston if core testing had been done. Mr. Thurston stated that the core testing was complete and the samples looked good. He further stated that they had performed two successful drills on the Action Ambulance site and that they would be doing three more next week.

Project Matrix – Mr. Thurston briefly reviewed updates to the project matrix.

Mr. Whaling asked Mr. Thurston where he was in regards to obtaining insurance. Mr. Thurston stated that he is still reviewing PEDDA's options.

Mayor Bianchi noted that there were a few people in attendance and asked if anyone would like to speak. Peter Martin informed the Board that he written a letter to the Mayor informing him that he had an ad agency for 38 years and reviewed some of the highlights of his career. He stated that he

felt PEDDA should go after the plastics industry to locate here and listed the reasons why he thought this. The Board thanked him for his comments.

III. MEETING CALENDAR

The next Board meeting is scheduled for April 11, 2012 at 8:00 AM in the PEDDA offices.

There was a motion to adjourn at 9:10 AM, seconded and carried.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Colleen Hunter-Mullett".

Colleen Hunter-Mullett

Clerk