

## Tompkins County IDA Meeting Minutes

### ACTION ITEMS

April 4, 2008

- Larry Baum and Michael Stamm will review the current recapture policy. **STATUS: subcommittee formed. Review on hold pending changes in NYS IDA law.**

January 16, 2009

- TCAD to study the IDA's competitive strengths and incentives. **STATUS: Ongoing.**

June 5, 2009

- The blank density application should be placed on the next IDA meeting agenda for discussion. **STATUS: Still needs to be reviewed**

November 6, 2009

- Staff to develop a policy draft on benefits standards. **STATUS: Work with WIB who will survey IDA customers regarding benefits.**
- Staff to develop a policy draft on Empire Zone and non-property tax benefits. **STATUS: Ongoing.**
- Staff to develop a policy draft on administrative fees for refinances. **STATUS: Done.**

December 4, 2009

- Mr. Furman asked that a formal letter of agreement/approval be asked for from the Lansing School District regarding the AES Cayuga PILOT Agreement reopener. **STATUS: Request sent.**

January 8, 2010

- Cayuga Green Apartment occupancy rates requested.

**Tompkins County IDA Meeting Minutes  
January 8, 2010  
Scott Heyman (Old Jail) Conference Room  
Ithaca, NY**

**Present:** Martha Robertson, Dan Cogan, Larry Baum, Jeff Furman, Kathy Luz Herrera, David Squires

**Excused:**

**Staff Present:** Michael Stamm, Ina Arthur (recording), Mariette Geldenhuys

**Guests Present:** Michael Lane (TC Legislator), Michael Talarski (Union Local 241), Krissy Gashler (Ithaca Journal), Alex Brawl

**CALL TO ORDER** Ms. Robertson called the meeting to order at 3:30 PM

**ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

**PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR**

Mr. Talarski spoke regarding the “Keep it Local” campaign. He supports this effort and feels that it should go deeper than retail shopping. It should include using local construction and workers. It is important that money spent on projects stay here in Tompkins County. He referenced the Cayuga Green project that did use local contractors and workers.

Mr. Brawl echoed and supported Mr. Talarski’s comments. When asked how “business is going,” he commented that they are busy but could be busier.

Ms. Robertson reported that the Tompkins County IDA received an award from Sustainable Tompkins for its sales tax abatement for renewable energy and efficiency projects.

**BUSINESS**

AES Cayuga Resolution to amend the PILOT Agreement

Ms. Geldenhuys outlined the proposed resolution calling for a public hearing regarding the amended AES Cayuga PILOT agreement. The change to Rider A and the amounts of assessment are due to poor economic factors. There have been changes in regulations overseeing carbon emissions and there has been a significant drop in demand for energy from the plant.

**Dan Cogan moved to approve the AES Cayuga PILOT Agreement amendment resolution. Larry Baum seconded the motion.**

Mr. Furman asked that a letter of support from the school district be obtained as well as the County and the Town of Lansing.

Ms. Luz Herrera stated that it would be good for the public to know this too.

Ms. Stamm mentioned that there is concern with tax revenues going down, but in the long run there is a need to work with the company to keep them a viable company. If they shut down operations it would be disastrous for the Town, the School District and the County.

Ms. Robertson commented that both "sides" need each other. The PILOT agreement is being used to ease down in a controlled manner to the current assessment.

A special meeting will need to be called for February in order to finalize this after the public hearing.

**The vote was called on the motion. The motion passed with Yeas 5 (Robertson, Cogan, Baum, Luz Herrera, Furman); Nays 0**

#### Cayuga Green

Mr. Stamm discussed the agreement with the project that provides for a look back on return on investment after five years. What the IDA is interested in is the amount that is being charged for rent with the apartments. That information has been requested from the developer. Clarification of what definition of net rent is being used is forthcoming. This information should be presented at the February IDA meeting.

Ms. Luz Herrera asked for occupancy rates as well.

#### TCAD 2010 Funding Request

Mr. Stamm stated that TCAD used to receive a large amount of funding from Tompkins County. At one point this funding was as high as \$70,000. Now the funding from the County is less than \$10,000. The county felt that the IDA could support economic development and TCAD due to its large fund balance. The revenue source and the fund balance have now begun to dry up due to a change in NYS law regarding civic facility bond issuance and also less deal flow due to the economy. There is hope that the newly formed Tompkins County Development Corp. will be able to generate administrative fees from civic facility bond issuance.

Mr. Stamm outlined the TCAD work plan and all the 2009 accomplishments as well as the goals for 2010.

Ms. Luz Herrera commented that the breadth of work is impressive. She is concerned over the TCAD goal regarding developing and supporting a legislative agenda against wage mandates. She would like efforts to get good paying jobs and suggested focusing on economic development that includes good paying jobs locally.

Mr. Stamm stated that there is a distinction in that TCAD's prime mission is to create quality jobs for local residents. The concern at the State level is that wage mandates will not achieve what anyone wants. The decisions should be left to the local municipalities. The current State legislation on wage mandates only focuses on IDAs and not the Dormitory Authority.

Mr. Furman stated that it would be helpful to have TCAD's position paper on these issues.

Mr. Furman commented that he feels there is real opportunity to attract companies interested in sustainability and he would like the IDA to focus some of its funds to do social recruiting. This would be similar to TCAD's targeted marketing initiative.

Mr. Baum stated that what drove up the IDA's fund balance was civic facility bonds being issued by Ithaca College, Cornell University, TC3 and Cayuga Medical Center and the growth with these institutions. Now there is a down turn in deal flow and also no help from the State. He commented also that TCAD took some funds and helped entrepreneurs and technology start ups. He is not disagreeing with Mr. Furman's idea but feels that TCAD is already doing something similar. Exploring the idea on packaging help for companies is a good thing.

Mr. Stamm also mentioned that TCAD will be working with NYSERDA to help market their programs. Some finder's fees could come from this effort.

Responding to Mr. Furman's comments, Mr. Stamm stated that nationwide 80% of good jobs created are by existing companies or entrepreneurs in the community. So TCAD's focus is on helping existing companies expand and grow here in Tompkins County.

TCAD administers the current Empire Zone Program and will continue to do so without State funding. TCAD has created the County's Economic Development Strategy, the Workforce Strategy, and has worked for improved sewer and water infrastructure. TCAD does quite a bit for local government with limited funds and scarce resources.

Mr. Furman commented that his idea would not take a lot of money, perhaps \$15,000 - \$20,000. He is not sure if it would work. Ms. Robertson commented that every idea needs a champion. We need to know what "it" is.

Mr. Furman stated that this is a discussion about resources and he would like to see this as part of the work plan for TCAD.

Mr. Stamm agreed that the IDA does provide a large portion of TCAD's funding. Therefore the IDA board members can ask TCAD to consider certain goals and projects.

Ms. Robertson asked about the TCAD's intent to study the impact of Natural Gas drilling on the local economy. Mr. Stamm stated that TCAD will be gathering information to see what positive and negative impacts there could be due to any drilling and how to maximize or minimize these impacts.

**Kathy Luz Herrera moved to approve the memorandum of understanding with TCAD. Dan Cogan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

## **ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Mr. Stamm reported that TCAD is actively marketing the new Tompkins County Development Corporation. He reported that TCAD is also working with the Workforce Investment Board staff to develop a benefit survey of current and past IDA projects.

Mr. Stamm reported that Kionix, Inc. was sold to Rohm Co. The company will remain in Ithaca, NY. This is a local success story.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Dan Cogan moved to approve the minutes from the December 4, 2009 board meeting. Larry Baum seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at 4:55 PM