

**Watertown Industrial Center Local Development Corporation
Board of Directors Meeting
April 29, 2025
Minutes**

The Watertown Industrial Center Local Development Corporation held its regular board meeting on Tuesday, April 29, 2025, in the Building A board room, 800 Starbuck Avenue, Watertown, NY 13601.

Present: Michelle Capone, J. Paul Morgan, Robert Cantwell III, Kylee McGrath, Kent Burto, John Condino

Unable to attend: Don Rutherford, Mark Bellinger

Staff: Billy Soluri

Others Present: Kathryn Harrienger, Esq,

- I. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 8:37 AM.
 - A. M. Capone introduced John Condino as the new JCIDA Board representative.
- II. Meeting Minutes:** The minutes of the February 25, 2025, board meeting were presented. On a motion by P. Morgan and second by R. Cantwell III, the minutes from the February 25, 2025, meeting were accepted. All in favor; motion carried.
- III. Financial Report:** B. Soluri presented the financial reports for February and March of 2025. B. Soluri noted that in the month of February revenue was \$46,036 with an operating expense of \$55,306. B. Soluri noted depreciation for the month was \$13,380. B. Soluri stated expenses for the month of February included \$13,712 for natural gas and electricity, which is a large part of the expense for this period. B. Soluri stated he had ordered two pallets of ice melt during this period as well. B. Soluri noted this winter we had to use additional salt due to the major icing events. M. Capone asked if the WIC would have any salt left over at the end of the season. B. Soluri stated normally we will have a pallet or two left at the end of the season, but that depends on how long the winter extends.

B. Soluri stated on the unrestricted report revenues were \$41,374 and expenses of \$41,926 with an operating loss of \$551.00. B. Soluri noted that loss is minor given the utility expenses for the month of February. K. Burto asked if the WIC has the ability to adjust the lease rates to cover increased expenses. B. Soluri stated the WIC leases do have language that will allow rates to be increased upon a 30-60 day notice. B. Soluri stated the leases do not currently have any Common Area Maintenance language also known as CAM charges. B. Soluri stated the base rent portion of the lease has been used to cover those types of expenses although it is not specific to CAM charges. K. Burto suggested the WIC consider adding Common Area Maintenance language to leases as they come up for renewal.

R. Cantwell III asked if the leases have rent escalators built into them. B. Soluri said they do, and those increases are normally two – three percent. B. Soluri stated the base rent portion of the lease is used to cover salaries and other expenses not directly covered by lease revenues. R. Cantwell III stated he would like to see CAM language added to new

leases going forward. B. Soluri noted he would calculate the per square foot cost for the CAM charges based off any losses the WIC has this current year and then adjust that rate annually going forward.

M. Capone asked if it would make sense for the WIC to look at doing their own solar project as there is plenty of land to do so and it would help to reduce the utility bills at the facility. B. Soluri noted if this project was the WIC's, it would probably be fine with using the land for a solar project, but when Convalt wanted to do a solar project on the property they were going to need a land lease which the WIC was not sure they would be able to do. M. Capone suggested we have a conversation with NYSERDA, National Grid to see if they are aware of any programs, rebates or even grant money available that could assist with putting a solar project at the facility. B. Soluri stated that Ms. Harrienger mentioned, based on the size of the solar project, there could be several permitting hurdles to move a solar project forward and major expenses with those permits.

B. Soluri stated the month of March had revenues of \$49,015 with \$3,331 of that being for the electrical reimbursement the WIC receives from SPX in regards to the soil vapor intrusion exhaust system. B. Soluri noted operations of \$53,202, depreciation of \$13,380 for a loss of \$4,187 on the restricted income statement. B. Soluri noted a sharp decline in utility bills for the month. B. Soluri stated this decline was a result of WIC staff shutting down certain heating systems and monitoring the temperature in those areas. B. Soluri noted the first of two payments to SWBG for winter plowing services in the amount of \$6,850 was made. B. Soluri noted the cost for the bobcat and salter for the winter was \$8,094, which is broken down by \$3,050 for the salter and \$5,044 for the bobcat. B. Soluri said going forward if the WIC continues to rent a bobcat for the winter, he would not rent the salter anymore, this will provide \$3,000 savings. B. Soluri noted that the cost to purchase a new bobcat is \$25,000 - \$65,000 used \$3,000 - \$15,000, but he recommends getting a bucket and brush-hog attachment for it. B. Soluri stated he has budgeted \$10,000 in the new budget for equipment rentals/purchase. B. Soluri noted work in process increased to \$278,553 as a result of a payment made to Continental Construction relating to the BFP Restroom project.

On a motion by R. Cantwell III and second by P. Morgan, the financials for February, and March of 2024 were accepted. All in favor

B. Correspondence:

- a. B. Soluri presented the Loss Control Recommendation letter received from Central Insurance dated March 14, 2025. B. Soluri noted any tenants that were directly identified in the letter have been contacted and advised to correct the concern. B. Soluri stated that WIC staff has addressed the empty circuit breaker slots in the electrical panel identified in the letter. B. Soluri stated that tenants have been advised to change any plastic fuel storage cans to metal safety cans.

C. Committee Reports

- A. B. Soluri provided a facility update in the board packet. B. Soluri gave an update regarding both the Infrastructure Project and Brookfield Power Restroom renovations as detailed in the report. B. Soluri discussed details relating to Fire Sprinkler system 620 trip incident that occurred on March 17 at 8:15 p.m. B. Soluri noted ABJ fire protection would be replacing the air regulator on system 620 and looking to see if they can obtain a replacement dry valve actuator. B. Soluri noted that he would be reaching out to various HVAC companies now that our normal service provider is going through some medical procedures. R. Cantwell III suggested WIC staff send out a RFP seeking a two-year preferred vendor status with local HVAC, and Plumbing companies, asking for their hourly rates, after-hour rates, response time, staff size. R. Cantwell III stated this process could be done every couple of years to ensure the rates are staying competitive.
- B. B. Soluri noted under leases and prospects the last day for Pick and Go should be June 1, they have stated they will need to keep the office space for a few more months and they have an interest in leasing exterior yard space on a month-by-month basis.
- C. B. Soluri noted that the Personnel Committee met on April 28 and that the meeting minutes were distributed prior to the start of the board meeting.

D. Unfinished Business: None

E. New Business:

- a. Staff Bonus and Merit Increase Consideration: B. Soluri presented staff evaluations and job descriptions for WIC staff. B. Soluri went over the recommendations made by the Personnel Committee relating to staff bonuses and merit increase. B. Soluri stated the committee recommends the facilities tech receive a \$3,000 salary increase and a one-time bonus of \$1,300. B. Soluri stated the committee recommends the Director of Site Facilities receive a 3% raise and a \$2,700 one-time bonus. M. Capone excused WIC staff from this portion of the meeting. M. Capone stated the board agrees with the recommendations made by the Personnel Committee. On a motion by P. Morgan and second by K. McGrath, the merit increase and bonuses for WIC Staff were accepted as presented. All in favor; motion carried.
- b. WIC Operating Budget FYE: 6-30-2026: B. Soluri presented the Operating Budget for the year ending June 30, 2026. B. Soluri stated the budget has been updated to include the merit increase recommendation made by the Personnel committee. B. Soluri is projecting that lease revenue will remain flat for half of the year and assumes that we will have leased an additional 15,000 sq.ft of flex space over a 6-month period. B. Soluri stated the budget assumes all tenants as of July 1 remain tenants in good standing over the course of the budget with no reduction in leased space or their monthly rents. B. Soluri noted the budget presents a operating profit of \$10,248 which takes into account the assumption of leasing an additional 15,000 sq.ft. of flex space

for a period of 6 months. B. Soluri noted the budget provides \$5.72 sq.ft. of revenue and an expense of \$5.55 sq.ft..

B. Soluri discussed the Salaries line item and the recommendations made by the Personnel Committee. B. Soluri stated the committee recommends a \$3,000 salary increase for the facilities tech and a 3% merit increase for the Director of Site Facilities. B. Soluri stated he had lowered the bonus consideration amount from \$4,000 to \$2,500 and suggested that item could be looked at again should the back of Building A become leased.

M. Capone noted the budget is projecting revenues of \$28,700 in relationship to taxes but expenses of \$36,000. B. Soluri stated that normally we collect enough rent on taxes to cover the taxes, but he uses the average expense relating to taxes of \$36,000 for the budget. B. Soluri stated the tax calculation is based on our occupancy rate, and that rate has decreased. B. Soluri stated the WIC should collect enough tax revenue to cover the tax expense, but the WIC's PILOT expires at the end of the year. B. Soluri stated that Keith Caughlin tried to get the WIC's PILOT setup before he retired, he had spoken with the City Assessor's office who supported the notion of renewing the WIC's PILOT under the same terms, and he had spoken with the IDA's attorney. B. Soluri stated that Mr. Caughlin reported that the IDA's attorney needed time to review the PILOT and that it would not be done prior to Mr. Caughlin's retirement.

B. Soluri stated he had reached out to the IDA to find out if they had any updates relating to the PILOT. B. Soluri stated the IDA did not have anything to report but they would reach out to their attorney to check on the status of the review. M. Capone stated we need this PILOT agreement in place before our current one expires. B. Soluri stated he has stressed the importance of having this agreement in place prior to the end of November expiration. M. Capone asked if something else other than the original agreement was being negotiated. B. Soluri stated the original agreement is beneficial to all parties and all that really needs to happen is dates being changed and there shouldn't be anything new to negotiate. J. Condino noted he would also follow up with the IDA regarding the WIC's PILOT.

R. Cantwell III suggested that WIC staff talk to various insurance agencies prior to the renewal date to see if there are any opportunities to reduce that expense. B. Soluri stated he would do that and noted where we need to find cost savings is with insurance and utilities. P. Morgan asked how cash would be impacted if there is a delay in getting a new tenant for the back of building A. B. Soluri stated if we are unable to reduce other expenses and we are unable to find a tenant for the back of building A then we could see a loss of \$30,000 on the year. P. Morgan stated that this type of loss is unsustainable. B. Soluri stated the other option to reduce expenses would be with salaries if we are unable to find additional savings or additional revenue. B. Soluri stated we are going to have expenses, we are going to have issues that arise that we weren't planning on having. J. Condino asked if any of the buildings could be mothballed to reduce expenses. B. Soluri stated to do that we would

have to move tenants to the back of building A and that would require a buildout. On a motion by K. McGrath and second by K. Burto, the Operating Budget for FYE June 30, 2026 was accepted. All in favor; motion carried.

Adjournment: On a motion by P. Morgan and seconded by R. Cantwell III, all in favor; the meeting was adjourned at 9:24 a.m.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 24, 2025, 8:30 a.m.