

**Watertown Industrial Center Local Development Corporation**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
**August 26, 2025**  
**Minutes**

The Watertown Industrial Center Local Development Corporation held its regular board meeting on Tuesday, August 26, 2025, in the board room of Building A, 800 Starbuck Avenue, Watertown, NY 13601.

**Present:** Michelle Capone, J. Paul Morgan, Kylee McGrath, John Condino, Mark Bellinger, Don Rutherford

**Unable to attend:** Kent Burto, Robert Cantwell III

**Staff:** Billy Soluri

**Others Present:** Kathryn Harrienger, Esq,

- I. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 8:34 AM.
- II. Meeting Minutes:** The minutes of the June 24, 2025, board meeting were presented. On a motion by P. Morgan and second by D. Rutherford, the minutes from the June 24, 2025, meeting were accepted. All in favor; motion carried.
- III. Financial Report:** B. Soluri presented the financial reports for June and July of 2025. B. Soluri noted that in the month of June revenue was \$40,117 with an operating expense of \$43,630. B. Soluri noted that the line item for building repairs included the Thyssenkrupp Elevator invoice of \$2,648 for services provided when they attempted to troubleshoot the elevator after the transformer failed and the line item for common area included an invoice for the quarterly sprinkler inspections. B. Soluri noted the unrestricted report had revenues of \$40,114 and operations of \$30,250 providing a positive position for the month of June in the amount of \$9,867. B. Soluri stated that the credit of \$898 under revenues related to the electrical reimbursement payment made to Brookfield Power for the SSD's system in their space. B. Soluri noted these are the June financials so once the audit is complete, we will have a better understanding of how the WIC performed this past year. M. Capone asked if most of the \$164,000 gain was related to the ARPA grant. B. Soluri stated majority of the \$164,000 related to the Brookfield Power restroom project that the WIC invoiced them for. B. Soluri noted that what hurt the WIC over the past year related to DOC PPE and the loss of the estimated rental income of \$70,000 that was used in the budget.

B. Soluri noted the line item for work in process for the month of June was \$507,727 which relates to the infrastructure project and the Brookfield restroom renovation project. B. Soluri stated Modern Moving has fulfilled the terms of the repayment plan and are now making payments towards the utilities. B. Soluri stated Modern Moving is sending in an additional \$1,500 per month to go towards those utilities' charges.

B. Soluri noted that in the month of July revenue was \$41,364 with an operating expense of \$61,851. B. Soluri noted depreciation for the month was \$13,380. B. Soluri noted that under the line item for marketing included expenses relating to running an ad on Newzjunky and youth baseball sponsorships. B. Soluri noted the reason for the increase

in salary expenses related to the temporary facilities tech starting in July, along with having three pay periods which included previously approved merit increases. B. Soluri noted the expense of \$1,567 related to the annual fire extinguisher inspection performed by Netto Fire. B. Soluri noted that the line item for building repairs included an expense of \$3,650 to replace one of the A/C Compressors and components in one of the three HVAC units that service the Brookfield Power offices. B. Soluri noted that the unrestricted income report showed revenues of \$41,364, operations of \$48,471 for a loss of \$7,107 for the month of July. B. Soluri stated the decrease in the leasehold improvement fund balance related to a payment made on the infrastructure project to D.C. Builders. B. Soluri noted once the project and expenses have been determined to be complete the WIC would set up a schedule to pay back the funds used from the LHI account with a portion of the monthly revenue received from the capital improvement reserve rents.

On a motion by J. Condino and second by M. Bellinger, the financials for June, and July of 2025 were accepted. All in favor

**IV. Correspondence: None**

**V. Committee Reports:**

A. Facility Update: B. Soluri presented the facility update dated 8-26-25, that was provided in the packet. B. Soluri noted that the rainstorm that occurred yesterday (8-25-25) caused the storm water collection system to backup, not to the point where water infiltrated any of the leased areas, but it had risen to a level where it began to overrun the side of Bldg. A trench drains. B. Soluri noted that even with the completion of the infrastructure project we will continue to have issues with flood threats during periods of extended heavy rain events. B. Soluri noted that the catch basins along the side of Bldg. A that gather runoff from our property as well as the NYAB started to rise to a level of concern. B. Soluri noted from the catch basin the water then travels under the building to the catch basin in the linkway, and then from that point travels out of the building heading towards SPX retention pond.

B. Soluri stated that given the extreme heat this summer has provided the facility HVAC equipment has been working overtime. B. Soluri noted that one of the A/C compressors that service a portion of the office space for Brookfield Power needed to be replaced. This work was performed by DP Bartlett at a cost of \$3,650.00 B. Soluri noted the mini split that provides heat and cooling the Brookfield Power training/break room was not working properly. B. Soluri stated that WIC staff cleaned the coils, checked the pressures but were only able to make the unit run properly for a short time before it would lock out. B. Soluri stated he has DP Bartlett checking the system out. B. Soluri noted one of the two mini split units in the Modern Moving space was also not providing any cooling to the office. WIC staff is working with PSG to identify and resolve the issue. B. Soluri noted if PSG is unable to provide services to resolve the issues, then he would ask DP Bartlett to check the unit out.

Discussion occurred revolving around the person who has been

trespassing/staying on the WIC's property in a small building located in the wooded area to the rear of Bldg. D. In the end it was determined WIC staff would ensure the building is covered under our liability policy, we would work with SWBG to clear out the items and have P&M Construction secure the entryways to the structure. It was also decided that WIC staff would obtain a permit to demolish the structure.

- B. Tenant and Prospects: B. Soluri stated he had leased the back of Bldg. A to Masseys Furniture Barn for a period of two years and they have a one-year option. B. Soluri noted the lease starts on September 1st; after receiving the insurance documentation he provided the tenant with early access, allowing them to begin setting up the space. B. Soluri noted that one of greatest benefits to this new lease was transferring of the four utility accounts that provide electricity and natural gas to space. B. Soluri noted that WIC staff, along with the temporary hires, did a great job to turn that space over so that the tenant could move in.

## **VI. Unfinished Business:**

- A. WIC PILOT: B. Soluri stated at the last meeting the WIC authorized Kathryn Harrienger to reach out to the IDA and their counsel to help move the PILOT discussion forward. K. Harrienger noted she has a phone conference scheduled for early next week with Justin Miller, who is the IDA's attorney. K. Harrienger noted she would use this opportunity to see what the IDA's thoughts are in relationship to the WIC's PILOT and to determine where they are in the process. K. Harrienger noted that in speaking with WIC staff it is evident that the WIC is happy with the current PILOT agreement and hopes it will be the same or a very similar PILOT agreement going forward.

M. Capone stated it is important for the IDA to know that before Keith Caughlin left (former WIC Corporation Counsel) left, he had spoken with Brian Phelps of the City of Watertown assessor's office regarding the WIC's PILOT and the plan upon expiration. M. Capone noted that Keith Caughlin had reported back to the WIC that Brian Phelps agreed to keep the PILOT the same as it relates to how the tax payments are calculated using the occupancy rate and classification of space that is leased and he felt the City Council would agree with this as well. B. Soluri noted Brian Phelps created the formula that determines the tax liability in relationship to the occupancy rate of the three types of leasable space (office, flex, subpar) B. Soluri noted the WIC's PILOT agreement allows the WIC to realize a tax savings during times of low occupancy and then as the occupancy rate increases so the does the tax liability upwards to 100% of full taxes if 100% occupied. J. Condino stated he has spoken with the IDA in regards to simplifying the process as the current PILOT agreement has worked well for all of the agencies involved.

## **VII. New Business:**

- A. Ratify Audit Engagement Agreement with Bowers and Company:  
On a motion by P. Morgan and second by J. Condino, the Audit Engagement Agreement authorizing Bowers and Company to perform the Audit for

FYE 6-30-25 was accepted. All in favor

- B. Ratify Hiring of a temporary facilities member to assist with projects:  
On a motion by D. Rutherford and second by M. Bellinger, the hiring of a temporary facilities tech for a period of 4 weeks, at minimum wage was approved. All in favor
- C. Relocation of the Model Railroad Club: B. Soluri stated that he had spoken with the Railroad Club about relocating to the former Watertown Vending space known as space A-19. B. Soluri stated this would be the best possible outcome for the WIC as the agency does not have the resources to undertake a six-figure elevator modernizations project. B. Soluri noted space A-19 was similar in square footage, provided easy access to restrooms as well as parking. B. Soluri stated that WIC staff, along with assistance from club members, would relocate their items to the new space. B. Soluri stated the club did not like the idea of hiring a moving company as they may not be as cautious as the members and WIC staff would be with the items. B. Soluri stated he anticipates the cost of relocating the club to be under \$300 as WIC staff must remove a non-structural wall within space A-19 that was put up so that Watertown Vending could have an office area with the space.

On a motion by J. Condino and second by M. Bellinger, the board approved the relocation of the Watertown Railroad Club from the second floor of Building A to space A-19. All in favor

- D. Lawn Care Proposal: B. Soluri stated that on July 1 he started using Bice Family LLC., a tenant of the WIC for lawn care services, replacing SWBG (Neil Katzman) who had previously provided lawn care services to the WIC. B. Soluri stated that he had spoken with the owner of Bice Family LLC after they had performed their first facility wide lawnmowing and it was determined that it would be best to continue to use SWBG if they were able to resume services. B. Soluri stated the reason for switching back had to do with the cost/expense to provide the same level of services that were provided by SWBG.

B. Soluri stated Neil Katzman agreed to continue to provide the lawn care services to the WIC at the same rate. B. Soluri stated that Neil Katzman submitted a five-year proposal for lawn services. B. Soluri stated the proposal included a one-time 10% increase to the overall yearly cost. B. Soluri noted an alternative the WIC could begin performing their own lawn care services but would have to purchase a couple of zero-turn riding mowers. D. Rutherford stated WIC's staff is better spent elsewhere and it would be best to move forward with Neil Katzman for an additional five years. K. Harrienger stated that seeing how the service providers have not increased their cost of the previous years of service it is very unlikely that anyone will be able to compete with proposal.

On a motion by M. Bellinger and second by D. Rutherford, the five-year lawn services proposal submitted by SWBG Wholesale (Neil Katzman) to begin with

the 2026 mowing season at a cost of \$4,070 per season was accepted. All in favor

- E. Sprinkler #620 Valve Replacement Proposal: B. Soluri presented quotes to replace the Dry Sprinkler Valve on system #620. B. Soluri noted ABJ Fire Protection, who has been the vendor providing sprinkler inspections and work since they were installed, submitted a quote of \$9,700 well below the other quotes to replace the Dry Sprinkler Valve and trim components. B. Soluri noted that at some point the remaining four dry valves would also need to be changed but for now he is having ABJ order in two dry actuator valves to repair and hopefully extend the life of two of the other systems that are leaking air, he estimates those parts to cost upward of \$2,500 per system. B. Soluri noted that as the systems continue to age the cost of components increases and the ability to find replacement parts decreases. B. Soluri suggested the WIC use funds from the CIR account (savings account) to cover the expense of replacing the dry valve on system #620.

On a motion by M. Bellinger and second by J. Condino, the proposal submitted by ABJ Fire Protection in the amount of \$9,700 was accepted. All in favor

- F. County Appropriation Request – 2026, Due 9-1-25: B. Soluri informed the board that Robert Cantwell III set up a meeting with Ryan Piche who is the Jefferson County Administrator to discuss economic development collaboration opportunities between the WIC and the County. B. Soluri stated the County is looking at ways to have a direct impact on economic development within the county. B. Soluri stated that because of this meeting the County sent over an application for the WIC to be considered in their 2026 public benefit budget request to supply direct funding to help support economic development in the area. B. Soluri stated the request was due by the end of the week. M. Capone stated she would look over the application and work with WIC staff to complete the application in time for submission. M. Capone asked what projects would be considered for this funding. B. Soluri stated replacement of the other Dry Valves on the sprinkler system and HVAC modernization. M. Capone and J. Condino both suggested the WIC seek \$100,000 in funding.

On a motion by J. Condino and second by M. Bellinger, the board authorized WIC staff to submit a funding request in the amount of \$100,000 to Jefferson County, New York for consideration in their 2026 Public Benefit Budget. All in favor

- G. Discussion relating to using Zoom for Board meeting participation: B. Soluri stated that previously the WIC removed the provision in the Bylaws allowing meeting attendance via electronic devices due to the requirements for a board member to be able to attend/vote via this method. B. Soluri stated a board member asked if we would review this and consider changing the Bylaws back to allowing attendance through electronic devices or applications such as Zoom. B. Soluri stated he requested a copy of the policy that the IDA uses and he would review that and talk with counsel about the process required to change it back and use applications such as Zoom going forward.

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**VIII. Adjournment:** On a motion by P. Morgan and seconded by J. Condino, all in favor; the meeting was adjourned at 9:27 a.m.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 28, 2025, 8:30 a.m.