

HAMILTON COUNTY IDA

ZOOM MEETING

JANUARY 26, 2022

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 P.M.

The Executive Director, Ms. Wilt, called the roll with the following Members answering:

Steve Tomlinson, Chairman
William Farber, Vice Chairman
James Bateman
Robert Peck
Tim Pine

Absent:

Tim Brownsell

Also Present:

Christy Wilt, Executive Director
Laura Abrams, Secretary
Brian Wells

Election of Officers:

Ms. Wilt called for a nomination for Chairman for 2022. Mr. Pine nominated Mr. Tomlinson for Chairman. Seconded by Mr. Bateman. Carried.

Chairman Tomlinson called for a nomination for Vice Chairman. Mr. Pine nominated Mr. Farber for Vice Chairman. Seconded by Mr. Peck. Carried.

Chairman Tomlinson called for a nomination for Treasurer. Mr. Farber nominated Mr. Brownsell for Treasurer. Seconded by Mr. Pine. Carried.

Chairman Tomlinson called for a motion to adopt the By-Laws, Investment, Procurement, Ethics and Sexual Harassment Policies for 2022. Motion by Mr. Bateman, seconded by Mr. Pine. Carried.

Ms. Wilt explained that the Committees also need to be adopted. All IDA members are on the Audit and Governance Committees. Mr. Peck made a motion to appoint all members to the Audit and Governance Committees. Seconded by Mr. Pine. Carried.

Financial Report:

Ms. Wilt reported that the NBT Bank account has \$392,767.99 and Community Bank has \$80,790.26. Ms. Wilt reported that all of the loans are up to date except for one. Mr. Farber asked if we have heard from anyone that has interest in loans or borrowing money. Ms. Wilt stated no. Ms. Wilt stated that in all of the Boards that she sits on, giving 0% in the first year with 1.9% thereafter, is not enticing people to borrow money. People are just not comfortable borrowing

money right now. Mr. Farber asked Ms. Wilt if she has a tally of the money that the IDA has in the bank as far as how much is restricted by the grant sources and how much is un-restricted. He believes the money they received from the sale of the cell tower is un-restricted and so we must have a fair amount of money, it would be nice if we could come up with a creative means to generate some interest. The Board discussed business owners' hesitation right now. Mr. Farber made a motion to accept the Finance Report, seconded by Mr. Pine. Mr. Peck asked Mr. Farber if he had his question answered. Mr. Farber stated that he doesn't believe so, what he heard is that it is a moot point about how much of it is restricted. Mr. Farber further stated that the IDA did some tourism enhancement loans at one point in time that were 0% interest for the first 4 years, the 5th year payments were forgiven, principal included if you had fulfilled all the obligations. That's the type of thing he was thinking, but what he heard was that this is just a tough time to get money out there. Ms. Wilt added that the Community Bank funds do have restrictions, but most of NBT funds do not. Mr. Farber stated that we have enough funds to do something creative if we thought it would help, but if we don't feel it would help then there is no point to it. Motion to approve the Finance Report. Carried.

New Business:

Ms. Wilt stated that she has started the Annual Audit process with BST.

Ms. Wilt also reported that there was a Facebook post by Chrissy's Café brought to her attention. They are closing. Ms. Wilt reached out to her and asked what her plans were for her collateral. Ms. Wilt sent her a copy of her collateral which includes all her equipment, tables, chairs, etc. Ms. Wilt read through her loan documents and there was nothing written by the attorney as far as a provision stating that if she closes, only if she defaults. She is paid through February 20th. She is not in default, so there isn't anything the IDA can do. She did reach out to Ms. Wilt and ask what her balance was. It was discussed that language should be written into the loans to cover situations like this, if a business closes or moves out of the county.

Old Business:

Ms. Wilt stated that Charlie Frey has still not paid on the second loan. It is up to almost \$58,000, which is \$8,000 more than he borrowed. His property is still sale pending on the website of the listing agent.

Regarding the IDA's lot that is for sale at Oak Mt., there was a lot of damage from the micro-burst. She was talking to the gentleman that wants to buy it and trying to figure out what type of problems he is running up against with the Village of Speculator. He told her that it was not so much that he is having issues with the Village, it is that he has a project that he has laid out, he has cabins he wants to put there, he is working with Matt, owner of the ski area, to make sure they complement the ski area, but he doesn't want to pay for surveys, permits and engineer drawings etc. until he owns the property. He asked Ms. Wilt to try to come up with a plan with the IDA that we feel comfortable with, that he would purchase the property outright, and promise to do whatever part of his plan the IDA wants to see and if he didn't complete that, there would be a penalty. Mr. Farber asked if he has done anything to shore up the business plan, the business plan he submitted did not have a lot of substance. Mr. Farber stated that he appreciates him looking at the option of just buying the property out right. He created a much heavier lift for himself when he asked the IDA to give him the property. There are very few start-ups like this that show a profit in year one.

Ms. Wilt stated that the property is assessed at \$42,300, the IDA is asking \$45,000. Mr. Farber stated we have the price out there if he just wants to buy it and not be obligated to update his business plan in advance. If he wants the IDA to give weight to the project, then we get into the dynamic where we need to be able to evaluate the business plan, the project and the likelihood of it. Mr. Tomlinson asked Ms. Wilt if he had given her an offer to buy it outright. Ms. Wilt stated no, but she told him that she will reach out to him after this meeting, she will see if he is interested in buying the property outright. Mr. Farber stated that once he buys it, he can always come back to the IDA for a loan for the project.

Ms. Wilt stated that regarding the other IDA lot, the buyer is frustrated with our attorney. Just last week she signed the papers so that there can be a closing. The buyer signed the purchase agreement last March, the title work was done in August, and we are just getting to closing. It has almost been a year since he started this process. Mr. Farber asked what we have done to pursue another attorney. Ms. Wilt stated that Carol, of the Essex County IDA is going to refer an attorney to her that would do it on a case-by-case basis.

Ms. Wilt discussed the third lot the IDA owns at Oak Mt. that is not for sale that does not have utilities. It will take some investigating to find a way to run water and sewer to it. The IDA needs to figure out what to do with it. Ms. Wilt stated that she will send the Board members the information on the lot. Mr. Farber asked why it wasn't on the market. Ms. Wilt stated that she believes because it doesn't have any utilities, we were hoping we could figure it out.

As there was no further business, motion to adjourn by Mr. Farber, seconded by Mr. Bateman. Carried.