

WYOMING COUNTY BAC BOARD MEETING MINUTES

The WCBAC Board of Directors met on May 13, 2021 at 3:00 p.m. at the Wyoming County Agriculture and Business Center 36 Center Street Warsaw, New York.

Due to the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Emergency and State and Federal bans on large meetings or gatherings and pursuant to Governor Cuomo's Executive Order 220.1 issued on March 12, 2020 suspending the Open Meetings Law, the Wyoming County Business Assistance Board Meeting was live steamed on You Tube instead of a public meeting open for the public to attend in person. Members of the public could listen to and view the Board meeting at the Wyoming County IDA's You-tube channel.

1. Roll call to establish quorum

Chairman Dadd, called the meeting to order at 3:19 p.m., in attendance were: Mark Dadd, Chairman; A. Douglas Berwanger, Vice-Chairman; Rebecca Ryan, Treasurer; E. Joseph Gozelski, Director; Thomas McCormick, Secretary; James Pierce, Executive Director; Jennifer Tyczka, Program Manager; Scott Gardner, Economic Development Specialist and Kevin Zanner, Hurwitz & Fine, Agency Counsel.

Absent: James Rutowski, Director; Robin Marschlok, Director of Operations

2. Administrative

A. Review/approve minutes from April 8, 2021 Board Meeting

The minutes from the April 8, 2021 Board Meeting were reviewed. A motion was made to accept the minutes by J. Gozelski. The motion was seconded by T. McCormick and unanimously carried.

B. Review and approve Financial Statement April 2021

J. Tyczka presented the financial report from April 2021. After review the Board approved the financial report on a motion made by R. Ryan. The motion was seconded by T. McCormick and unanimously carried.

3. Action Items

A. Request from The Entertainment Collective for a 6-month deferral of principal and interest on their loan for the Williams Opera House in Attica.

The Entertainment Collective which owns the Opera House in Attica has reached out with a request for a 6-month payment deferral due to issues with accounts being hacked and funds being tied up causing the owner to fall behind in payments. Along with this the Covid-19 pandemic was detrimental to the music industry and previously the building had suffered extension damage when the back wall collapsed. The owner feels a 6-month deferment of principal and interest payments would give him time to get his finances back on track. After discussion the Board approved the request for a 6-month payment deferral starting March 1, 2021 and

ending August 31, 2021 on a motion made by D. Berwanger. The motion was seconded by T. McCormick and unanimously carried.

B. Wyoming County Destination Assessment Proposal- Mapping out a short & long term tourism recreation & economic development strategic plan.

Pierce explained to the Board that the WCIDA has not had a Strategic Plan since 2016. It was time to update our strategy with an emphasis on recreation tourism. Our economic development team got together and decided where we wanted to go and came up with a scope of work to be accomplished. We then met with a Plan Consultant who has provided us with an economic proposal that is in the packet. Pierce then turned the floor over to our new Economic Development Specialist, Scott Gardner to present the proposal. Gardner explained that we had met with Famous Destination Marketing last year before the pandemic stopped everything. We had continued conversations and have been able to identify our initial goals and worked out a strategy including reaching out for expert advice. This has two-fold benefits for the IDA and the Chamber/Tourism as the info will be valuable to us to develop a strategy for what and who we want to market to. We were able to develop a scope of what we wanted to get accomplished and met with the marketing specialist, Josiah Brown from Famous Destination Marketing. Brown is a Rural Marketing Specialist, and has recently worked with Alleghany County to develop a Marketing Plan there. From our scope of work he sent us a proposal including a full month worth of work to gather information and provide an analysis. The work will include, secret shoppers, visitors to the area, 3-day discovery tour of the County, stakeholder interviews, assessment and analysis of the information. Gardner continued that it is important to recognize that tourism in Wyoming County accounted for approximately \$50 million in economic development activity in 2019. Even in 2020 we did well with our over-night stays. We want to target our resources wisely and it works nicely with the CDBG Grant that the Count just applied for as we will target Tourism destination businesses.

Pierce then added that the cost of the proposed Scope of Work is \$33,000. We have closely examined the funds available with the WCBAC and feel the HUD funds left from a program started many years ago, and some of the funds were used for the Arts Grant Initiative in 2017, would work well for this activity as well. There are also non program income funds available from the current CDBG account which would be available. The Board moved to fund the \$33,000 Scope of Work on a motion made by D. Berwanger. The motion was seconded by R. Ryan and unanimously carried.

Discussion Items

A. Application to The Office of Home and Community Renewal for a Micro Enterprise Grant was submitted May 7th.

Pierce explained that the Wyoming County Board of Supervisors will be the applicant and the WCBAC will be the sub recipient for a Micro Enterprise Grant request to the NYS Home and Community Renewal. The application was completed and submitted May 7th. We applied for a \$300,000 grant. The funds will be used to

supply \$10-20,000 grants to small businesses with less than 5 employees. There is an education piece that goes along with it so there will be a training program. The application was completed using consultants from Harry Sichertman's office and now we wait to see if we will be awarded the grant.

4. **Other Business** - None

5. **Next Meeting** – The next meeting of the WCBAC Board is scheduled for June 10, 2021 immediately following the WCIDA Board Meeting.

6. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:26 p.m. on motion by T. McCormick. The motion was seconded by R. Ryan and unanimously carried.

Minutes prepared by: R. Marschilok