

**Tompkins County Industrial Development Agency
Board of Directors Meeting Final Minutes
November 15, 2017
3:00 PM
Tompkins County Legislative Offices
121 E. Court Street, Ithaca, NY**

Present: Jim Dennis, Rich John, Will Burbank, Martha Robertson

Staff Present: Heather McDaniel, Ina Arthur

Guests: Rick Snyder (TC Finance), Richard Schneider (LeChase Construction for Cayuga Ridge LLC)

CALL TO ORDER

Jim Dennis called the meeting of the **Tompkins County Industrial Development Agency** to order at 3:00 pm.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Theresa Alt – 206 Eddy Street, Ithaca NY - She has looked at the TCIDA meeting agenda and saw that there was an application from Cayuga Ridge. She thought this would mean job creation. She sees on the application that the jobs to be created are not living wage jobs and the construction jobs are not committed as “local.”

Patricia Siegard – IBEW 241 member/representative - She echoes the comments of Ms. Alt.

BUSINESS

Cayuga Ridge – Sales Tax Abatement Application

Ms. McDaniel introduced the project and Richard Schneider of LeChase Construction for Cayuga Ridge. Cayuga Ridge is a skilled nursing facility – the building was constructed in the 1960s and is suffering from age and a lack of maintenance to the building. The current operators of the facility have an agreement with the NYS Department of Health and need to bring the building/facility up to life safety standards. This will be a \$21M renovation to the inside of the buildings only. The building assessment is not expected to increase significantly.

Cayuga Ridge is the largest Medicaid provider in Tompkins County in terms of a skilled nursing facility. They are also a provider of housing for those of modest means.

Mr. Schneider commented on the project – currently the project renovation costs are over budget. Up to this point, the operator has done short-term “Band-Aid” type upgrades including upgrades to windows and the HVAC system. Adding to the financial short fall of

the budget is the fact that the DOH has reduced the number of beds allowed from 160 to 144. This will be a 15-month project done in phases.

In terms of using local labor/union workers, LeChase Construction has done a number of local projects utilizing local labor when possible and they understand how important this is to local people. Since the construction budget is so tight, they do not know who will be hired until the work goes out to bid and bids are returned. There will be a need to go with the lowest bidder.

Ms. Robertson asked about the Medicaid recipients who are residents. Cayuga Ridge has 50% of their residents who are Medicaid recipients. Other skilled nursing facilities in the County only have 10-15%.

Ms. Robertson commented that the Energize NY Program might help with upgrading the HVAC system.

Mr. Burbank asked if the project is in the Town of Ithaca? Yes. This is old "Lakeside" facility. He acknowledged that Medicaid only covers a portion of the cost for what is provided at the facility.

Mr. Burbank asked about the wage scale and if it was consistent with the nursing facility industry. – Yes they are competitive with the industry.

Mr. Burbank asked how a sale tax abatement to help with low income housing might fit into the TCIDA's mission.

Ms. McDaniel commented that the TCIDA does not have a housing policy per se but it has assisted with other similar facilities in the County such as the Beechtree Nursing Facility and INHS.

Mr. John agrees that the facility needs upgrades. Is there a plan to improve the facilities rating (which is fairly low now)?

Mr. Schneider commented that he does not know if there is a plan, but he does know that the bad rating came from the former owner/operator and that even up to this point, the new operator has made improvements to the facility.

The board asked for a list of other facilities that the current operator operates.

Information was also asked for regarding a possible LPN training program that might be hosted at the facility.

Ms. Robertson highlighted the IDA's local labor policy and the need to work with that. She also commented on the reduction of beds from 160 to 144 – this is mandated by the Department of Health that determines the needs in the County.

Rich John moved to send the Cayuga Ridge Sales Tax Abatement Application to a public hearing. Will Burbank seconded the motion. The motion was approved 4-0.

STAFF REPORT

Ms. McDaniel reported that the IDAs solar policy has been getting some good PR on the Radio.

She also commented that staff has received notice that the Authority Budget Office (ABO) will be conducting an audit of the TCIDA – they will be focusing on Policy, Procedure and Transparency. They will begin on November 27, 2017 and will be hosted at the TCAD offices for at least 4 weeks.

Mr. Dennis commented on the last State audit done by the Office of the State Comptroller. He is looking forward to working with the ABO during this process.

Ms. McDaniel reported the Arrowhead project. It is in the hands of the attorney and the next steps are a formal letter of intent to recapture.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Rich John moved to approve the minutes from the October 12, 2017 TCIDA Board Meeting. Martha Robertson seconded the motion. The motion was approved 4-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:50 PM.