

**Watertown Empire Zone  
Administrative Board Meeting  
May 2005**

The Watertown Empire Zone Administrative Board meeting was held on Wednesday, May 26, 2005 in the City Council Chambers, City Municipal Building, 245 Washington Street, Watertown, New York.

**Members Present:** Chairman Peter Clough, Peter Sovie, Thomas Cesta, Joseph Butler, Jr., William Welbourn, Robert Lawlor, Phillip Gaffney

**Also Present:** Michael N'dolo of Camoin Associates, City Manager Mary Corriveau, Community & Planning Coordinator Kenneth Mix

Chairman Clough called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

**Minutes**

**Motion was made by Mr. Sovie to approve the minutes of the April 28, 2005 meeting and the May 2, 2005 meeting. Motion was seconded by Mr. Gaffney and carried with all voting in favor thereof.**

**Treasurer's Report**

The board reviewed the financial statements.

Mr. Sovie suggested that the board should be looking at putting some of the money into a CD instead of having \$150,000 in a regular savings account.

Mr. N'dolo commented that the board is allowed to have an interest bearing account and he will check with the State to see if it can be in the form of a CD.

**Motion was made by Mr. Welbourn to accept the financial statements. Motion was seconded by Mr. Gaffney and carried with all voting in favor thereof.**

Chairman Clough asked the board to review the invoice details in their packets.

Mr. Sovie remarked that he doesn't think it is necessary for the board to review them since he and Mrs. Corriveau have already done so.

Mr. Butler suggested that the invoices be emailed to the members instead.

**Development Policy**

Mr. N'dolo outlined the various draft changes in the policy. He explained that the policy change has to be in place by the end of June with the development plan and the contiguous areas being completed by December 31<sup>st</sup>.

Discussion centered on “distressed areas.” Mr. Mix commented that it could be argued that the Northland Plaza is distressed.

Mr. Cesta remarked that the term residential should be incorporated into the policy, if that is what the board wants.

Mr. N’dolo advised that the language, which reads “any type of suitable redevelopment”, should be sufficient to cover the residential concerns.

The board also discussed the State’s suggestion to put in a section indicating that the businesses must demonstrate that they will pay their employees 135% or more of current minimum wage.

Mrs. Corriveau commented that 135% is fine for places downstate. However, the economy here is not the same and the prevailing wages here are lower than in some other areas of the state.

After much discussion on this issue, Mr. Butler suggested that the figure be changed to 125% and submitted along with the reasons outlined by Mrs. Corriveau. The board concurred with this.

**Motion was made by Mr. Gaffney to accept the policy as written, with the change indicated in the paragraph concerning employee wages. Motion was seconded by Mr. Lawlor and carried with all voting in favor thereof.**

Mr. Sovie left the meeting at 5:25 p.m.

### **Applications for Certification**

Mr. N’dolo advised the board that due to recent changes in the law, the board couldn’t certify a business until the State gives us a cost benefit analysis. Therefore, the one voted on last month, will have to be re-voted on once the board receives the cost analysis.

Mr. N’dolo referred to his letter to Zenekim Associates, Inc. He made the board aware of the situation and will keep them informed of any further developments.

### **Boundary Revision**

Mr. Gaffney submitted the summary of applications for inclusion into the Watertown Empire Zone to the board members. Mr. Gaffney explained that the committee recommends rejecting the applications of Dealmaker Dodge and Matthews & Dier because the applicants did not contact us prior to April 1, 2005 and therefore did not meet the requirements of law. In addition, both applicants did not demonstrate any need for EZ benefits and the projects are already moving forward.

Mr. N'dolo explained that the applications from the City of Watertown and the Development Authority of the North Country couldn't be considered because both are residential developments and the State has a major concern that neither will create permanent jobs. He also explained that DANC is a quasi-state agency. He further explained that neither entity could be considered a certified company under state standards. Mr. Mix remarked that he is quite sure that DANC is self-funded. Mr. Cesta responded that DANC hasn't received state funding in years. Mr. Mix also explained that the DANC employee would stay on as a permanent position, albeit not in that particular location once the project was completed.

Mr. Gaffney advised the board that the committee has recommended including the following businesses into the zone:

1. COR Route 3 Company
2. Great Lakes Cheese
3. Hotel 45
4. Washington Summit Associates

**Motion was made by Mr. Gaffney to include COR Route 3 Company, Great Lakes Cheese, Hotel 45 and Washington Summit Associates in the boundary amendments. Motion was seconded by Mr. Welbourn and carried with all voting in favor thereof.**

The board discussed the taking back of acreage. Mr. N'dolo explained that the State only allows adding in this process. However, the acreage that the board determines that should be returned can be done by not including it in the three areas. In addition, de-certification could be recommended.

**Motion was made by Mr. Gaffney to proceed with the preliminary submission. Motion was seconded by Mr. Lawlor and carried with all voting in favor thereof.**

### **Adjournment**

**Motion to adjourn at 6:05 p.m. was made by Mr. Butler, seconded by Mr. Lawlor and carried with all voting in favor thereof.**