

**Watertown Empire Zone  
Administrative Board Meeting  
October 22, 2003**

The Watertown Empire Zone Administrative Board meeting was held on Wednesday, October 22, 2003 in the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor conference room, City Municipal Building, 245 Washington Street, Watertown, New York.

**Members Present:** Chairman Peter Clough, Peter Sovie, Joseph Butler, Jr., Stephen A. Mitchell, Laurie Foster-Nortz, Phillip Gaffney, William Welbourn, Robert Lawlor

**Members Excused:** Dave Cheney

**Others Present:** Zone Coordinator Andrew Davis, City Comptroller James Mills

Chairman Clough called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

**Minutes:** The board reviewed the minutes of September 24, 2003. Mr. Butler asked that the following correction be made to the minutes. Under Personnel, at the bottom of page 3, the minutes should read as follows: **Mr. Butler needed clarification on the salary increase given to Mrs. Taylor for the 2003-2004 Watertown Empire Zone budget because the Watertown Trust would no longer be the administrative entity for the remainder of the budget year. Mrs. Taylor stated the bonus and salary approved by the Administrative Committee was allocated to Mrs. Taylor for all her hard work and efforts to the zone and extra hours put into the boundary revision for 2003. It was determined the salary was given in advance and thus forgone.**

Mr. Welbourn made a motion to approve the minutes as amended, seconded by Mr. Sovie. All in favor. Unanimously approved.

**Treasurer's Report:** Mr. Sovie reviewed the report, which included profit and loss sheets and a balance sheet as of September 30, 2003, with the board members.

Mr. Butler asked about the consultant/legal services expense.

Mr. Davis explained the amount was may have been for September as well as some expenses incurred in August since there was no August report.

Mr. Mills advised the board that the amount of \$8,170.57 is for professional fees only. Other expenses, such as office supplies and printing costs, are broken down separately.

Mr. Butler referred to the invoice included in the packet and commented that there must have been a great deal of work done in September.

Mr. Davis explained that this figure included costs for setting up. There was also much travel involved, since a trip up here is a 12-hour day. However, the expense for October

is only \$2,467 at this time and is on target for a total expense of about \$3985 for the month.

Chairman Clough explained that he had received an email from Rob, which indicated that the expenses were higher in September.

Mr. Butler commented that the travel cost of \$30 per hour really adds up to a large expense.

Mr. Sovie responded that a local individual could have been hired. However, training expenses would have been incurred.

Mr. Mills advised the board that Quickbooks was purchased and the old data has been imported into the system.

**Transition Update:** Chairman Clough led the discussion concerning the remaining office furniture. He suggested donating the furniture to either the City or Town of Watertown.

Mr. Gaffney remarked that the City was going to look at it and give the board a price.

Chairman Clough explained that they had looked at it. However, he felt that Supervisor Bartlett should also be contacted to see if the Town was interested in it.

Mr. Sovie remarked that the funds from selling the furniture could be used to reduce the City's commitment. He stated that the Empire Zone is a separate program from the City and therefore, the furniture should be sold, not donated.

Mrs. Corriveau was called into the meeting and explained that while she had looked at the furniture, the City would not pay the \$3,200 price, which Mr. Sovie mentioned when asked what the price might be.

The board members concurred to sell the furniture.

Councilman Clough commented that the board could contact the Town to see if they would put in an offer.

**Boundary Amendment Status:** Mr. Davis advised the board that there was no news on this as of yet.

Mr. Sovie commented that he had been told that Ultimate Goal had been informed that they couldn't apply for zone certification until it was formally accepted. However, that is not the case and businesses should submit the application as soon as possible.

**Development Regulations:** Mr. Davis reviewed, with the board, the draft regulation sheet, which he had prepared. He explained that there has to be something that states why a business can be certified such as a business creating new positions or making new

capital investments in the Zone greater than \$5,000. In addition, he listed one exception to receiving EZ local approval without projecting growth. When a business has existed and resided in one location inside the Zone for more than five years and intends to prevent a loss of jobs in the Zone, it will be considered for certification.

Chairman Clough asked if Ogdensburg and other communities with Empire Zones had been contacted as to what they do for development regulations.

Mr. Davis explained that each municipality handles it differently.

Chairman Clough responded that he feels this board should see what some of the other zones are using for criteria.

Mr. Gaffney agreed. However, he also remarked that we have our own needs, which may differ from other localities.

Chairman Clough stated that the board needs to look at these regulations and reminded the members that the City Council still has to approve the boundary amendments.

Mr. Butler commented that the board should come up with a regulation policy and present it to Council in January.

Mr. Mitchell commented that it was important that the committee meet to discuss a policy regarding zone business certification both for the current zone and any boundary amendments that may be coming up in the future. This would clear the path for a meeting in January with the City Council and the Town of Watertown. Mr. Mitchell added that a draft policy regarding this could be worked on now and lead to a constructive discussion at the joint meeting.

Mr. Mitchell suggested that Mr. Davis seek information from other Zones around the state that may help provide a foundation for a specific local development policy as it may evolve as a draft from the committee. This would ensure that the January meeting with key stakeholders would be productive.

Chairman Clough advised the board that when this is presented to Council, there needs to be a discussion, not presented as being set in stone. He also asked Mr. Davis to do more background work into checking with other municipalities.

Mr. Davis explained that no one seems to have a development policy in place, with most using the state statute.

Chairman Clough remarked that they may have unwritten policies.

Mr. Davis explained to the board that he would have done more on this issue. However, he misunderstood the board's request at the last meeting.

Councilman Clough suggested a joint meeting with the board and the Town and City of Watertown. He stated that there needs to be an open discussion from all three entities.

Mrs. Foster-Nortz commented that she thought that the board would begin with a draft on what they felt should be included before meeting with the others.

Mr. Gaffney suggested that the committee could meet and work on some ideas relative to policy amendments and investments and then bring the suggestions back to this board.

Mr. Davis commented that he is not sure that he would know where the focus should be.

Chairman Clough responded that it should be more of a policy as to what can be put in the zone. He also asked that Mr. Davis be present at the January City Council meeting.

**Marketing & Outreach:** No date has been set for the Zone Benefits 201 Information Session.

Mr. Davis advised the board that the website revisions are completed.

**Business Certification:** Mr. Davis presented the report listing the businesses for local and state certification status. The majority of the thirteen listed on the local certification sheets are in pending the zone boundary approval. The other five pending state certification are all in the current zone.

Mr. Davis also explained that Salmon Run LLC has a change in their application and it should read five to twelve jobs not 1100 jobs. After discussion, the board agreed that the Pyramid Corporation would have to submit a new application instead of crossing out figures that appear on the current one.

**Adjournment:** Mr. Gaffney made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mrs. Foster-Nortz. All in favor. Unanimously approved.