

**George E. Leveille**  
*Chairman*

**Frank S. Venezia**  
*Vice-Chairman*

**Judith E. Kehoe**  
*Treasurer*

**Sam Messina**  
*Secretary*

**David A. Petraglia**  
*Assistant Secretary*

**Pamela C. Robbins**  
**Robert B. Ward**

**TOWN OF BETHLEHEM**  
*Albany County - New York*  
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**Thomas P. Connolly Esq.**  
*Agency Counsel*

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING**  
January 17, 2006

The meeting of the Town of Bethlehem Industrial Development Agency was convened in public session on Tuesday, January 17, 2006, at the Bethlehem Town Hall, Delmar, New York.

<u>Board Members Present</u>	<u>Board Members Absent</u>	<u>Staff Present</u>	<u>Others Present</u>
George Leveille Frank Venezia Judith Kehoe Sam Messina Robert Ward Pamela Robbins	David Petraglia	Thomas Connolly Theresa Egan Deborah Kitchen A. Joseph Scott	Marie Capone

Chairman Leveille called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

**APPROVAL OF 12/20/05 MINUTES**

The first item on the agenda was the approval of minutes from the December 20, 2005 meeting. A motion was made by Judith Kehoe, seconded by Frank Venezia and passed by all members present to accept minutes as written.

**FINANCIAL REPORT**

Ms. Kehoe presented the Financial Report and provided information on the following:

- Update on status of incoming PILOT payments paid to the Town
- Audit preparation underway – currently working on year-end closing adjustments
- No final 2005 figures available for the Annual Financial Report
- Letters will be sent to projects funded by the IDA requesting confirmation of current employment and outstanding debt payments
- Annual report to be filed with the State Comptroller's office - 04/30/06

Ms. Kehoe also distributed copies of the 2006 Financial Report and responded to questions from the Board. Chairman Leveille asked Ms. Kehoe to prepare a list of the nine outstanding PILOT agreements and distribute the information to the Board Members and staff. Chairman Leveille thanked Ms. Kehoe for the financial information provided.

## **PROPOSED NEW PILOT POLICY**

Regarding the proposed new PILOT policy - Chairman Leveille informed the Board that two meetings have already taken place – one with Albany County and the other with the Ravena-Coeymans CSD. A third meeting, scheduled with the Bethlehem CSD, will take place later today. The proposed PILOT policy was sent to Guilderland CSD but a meeting is not expected due to the fact that there is no commercially zoned property in that District. No written comments have been received to date.

Ms. Robbins inquired as to whether or not any of the School Board members have participated in or were made aware of these meetings. Chairman Leveille stated that the decision to present the new PILOT to the School Board members was deferred to the District's Executives. Supervisor Egan stated that IDA staff would evaluate the need to pursue this issue based on the outcome of the meetings.

The PILOT will be presented to the Town Board and the public on February 8, 2006. If there are no objections, a move to formally amend the Uniform Policy will be made in the later part of February.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **American Housing Project**

Thomas Connolly indicated that there is nothing new to report. The project owner is still working with the underwriters on the financing.

### **Plasticware**

Chairman Leveille reported that Plasticware has extended their option to acquire the building. They have also qualified for USDA financial support in the sense of loan guarantees that are eligible to businesses in this area of Town. This will be of benefit to them on the credit side of the equation.

In their effort to secure financing, and on the recommendation of an underwriter, Plasticware is acquiring an existing operation. The operation is based in New Jersey and currently manufactures its products with polystyrene.

Chairman Leveille believes that between the guarantee and the pending acquisition, Plasticware should be in a better position to close on their financing. Plasticware will keep the IDA informed of their progress.

## Vista Update

Chairman Leveille reported that Vista has submitted an application to the Town Board for approval of a Mixed Economic Development Concept Plan and thereby has initiated the SEQR process. It is anticipated that the environmental review will take roughly 12 months to complete.

The applicant is scheduled to appear before the Town Board on January 25, 2006, to request the Town's support for a Betterment Application to NYS DOT – to provide a roundabout entrance to their property at LeGrange Road. A preliminary traffic feasibility study has been completed.

Vista has also submitted an updated Economic & Fiscal Impact Analysis Report based upon recent changes in eligibility requirements for the Empire Zone. Originally it was thought that the entire site would qualify for Empire Zone Benefits, however, it is now anticipated that approximately 20% of the occupants may not qualify. The IDA may be asked to provide some form of abatement to the companies that will not be eligible for benefits.

## NYS Economic Development Council IDA Conference

The NYS Economic Development Council IDA Conference will be held on 01/18/06 and 01/19/06. George Leveille, Thomas Connolly and Robert Ward are planning to attend.

## Holiday Luncheon

The holiday luncheon will be held at Bellini's on 01/20/06. The cost will be \$25.00 per person. Checks should be made payable to Thomas Connolly. A portion of the money collected will be used to purchase a thank you gift for Sheila Krauss. Invited guests include: Sheila Krauss, Former IDA Secretary, Supervisor Egan and Deborah Kitchen. No business will be conducted at the luncheon.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### 2006 BIDA/TOB Service Agreement

Ms. Kehoe provided an explanation for Exhibit A of the 2006 Service Agreement. She stated that the Economic Development & Planning staff would be working on special projects and grants currently listed on the IDA's 2006 work plan. The figures shown in Exhibit A reflect estimated time spent by the DEDP staff on IDA related activities.

Mr. Venezia inquired as to whether Town staff will keep track of their actual time spent on IDA activities and what types of documentation will be maintained. Ms. Kehoe indicated that there are several ways to track the work within payroll. She will meet with Chairman Leveille to review the procedures so that reports can be generated on a monthly basis if need be.

Mr. Scott stated that he felt the level of detail on the contract was very good and offered to look into the types of documentation other IDAs are using to report fees charged for staff time as well as the level of detail used on the reports.

Board Members, including Ms. Robbins and Mr. Messina, suggested alternative ways to document staff time on IDA projects.

Ms. Robbins inquired as to why all of the consultant services were not listed on Exhibit A. Mr. Leveille said these items were seen as issues driven by the Town's Comprehensive Plan and the items were presented to the Town Board, through the budget process, to get their consent on those studies. They have been accounted for as Town functions supported by the IDA rather than an IDA functions directly supported by the IDA.

Mr. Venezia inquired about payment for services provided by other departments such as the Comptroller's office. Ms. Kehoe stated that the figure would be higher if it included every department, but the purpose was to demonstrate that the IDA has devoted this much in resources to these activities.

Mr. Messina reiterated that Economic Development is a commitment the current administration made and it is also in line with the IDA's Strategic Plan. Supervisor Egan noted that there was also an efficiency component added due to the fact that no additional staff was required.

Mr. Venezia inquired as to whether we are creating a liability issue if, at some point in the future, the IDA cannot support the current figures. Mr. Connolly said it was his understanding that a legislative body cannot commit future boards to certain obligations, except in special circumstances. Mr. Scott agreed that elective bodies could not be bound to long-term contracts. Mr. Messina stated that he sees this as a one-year agreement; based on the Town's budget and the IDA's budget. He also recognizes that revenues and costs may change in both situations and he does not view this as commitment beyond one year. Mr. Ward recommended that Town Board members be made aware of this understanding. He also suggested that the minutes reflect that the issue has been discussed.

Mr. Connolly noted that the Service Agreement is going to be presented to the Town Board in March.

### Member Participation

Chairman Leveille initiated a discussion concerning member participation such as:

- Support at Public Meetings
- Creating Forums for Open Discussions
- Participating in Business Visitation Programs

Supervisor Egan shared her thoughts about the benefits of this type of approach:

- Providing Staff Support
- Sharing Insights
- Focusing on Areas of Interest/Concern
- Raising Levels of Understanding/Interpretation

Mr. Venezia thought it would be helpful if Chairman Leveille would provide the Board with a list of upcoming meetings/events. Ms. Robbins inquired as to whether or not any working committees had been created in the past. Mr. Messina referred to the strategic plan and suggested that the members look over the plan to see if they might be interested in taking a lead role. He believes this might help the Board to remain on target with its key initiatives.

## Business Visitation Program

The purpose of the Business Visitation Program is maintain an open channel of communication with the Town's largest tax-paying businesses. Supervisor Egan and Mr. Connolly have agreed to put together a list of businesses to visit and will circulate the list to the Board Members to see who might be interested in participating in the visitation meetings. Chairman Leveille added that it would be beneficial for the Board to participate in these meetings as representatives of the IDA as well as members of the business community.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### Board Member Contact Information

Ms. Robbins recommended that the website be updated to include prior agendas and minutes. She also requested that her name be corrected in her biography.

### Vacant Office Space Within The Region

Mr. Messina brought up the subject of current office space vacancy rates. He believes it is important to recognize the fill-in side of the equation. Chairman Leveille will arrange to have a representative from one of the leading real estate firms come in and talk about the current levels of office occupancy and what is happening in the market place.

### Flags and Flowers

Mr. Venezia would like the Board to revisit the subject of Flags and Flowers. He recently attended a Chamber of Commerce meeting and was given the email address of a gentleman from CDPHP, who had expressed an interest in participating in the project. Staff acknowledged the need to commence planning, set a deadline for ordering flowers and pursue National Grid approval to use the poles.

### Governor Pataki's Tax Cut Package for Business

Chairman Leveille distributed copies of an email he received from Brian McMahon announcing the Governor's Tax Cut Package for Business.

### Date of Next Meeting

The next IDA meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 14, 2006, at 8:00 a.m.

### Motion to Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Venezia, seconded by Mr. Messina and carried by all members present.

*Minutes Recorded and Transcribed By: Deborah M. Kitchen*