



## **Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority**

### **Minutes of the Board of Directors' Meeting**

**October 12, 2017**

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

The Board of Directors' Meeting of the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority was held on October 12, 2017 in the Jordan Room; 5240 Knowledge Parkway; Erie, PA 16510. Legal Notice of the meeting was given through an advertisement appearing in the Erie Times-News. The meeting was called to order by the Chair.

#### **ROLL CALL**

Mr. Bagnoni, Mr. Domino (arrives late), Mr. Paris, Mr. Sample, and Mr. Yapple. Mr. Breneman, Mr. Lee, Mr. Wachter, and Mr. Wood are also present.

#### **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Mr. Paris makes a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Yapple seconds the motion. Motion carries 4-0.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – September 2017

Mr. Yapple makes a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Paris seconds the motion. Motion carries 4-0.

#### **COMMENTS BY THE CHAIR**

Mr. Sample: I have never been involved in a process that took so long to get nowhere. Hopefully it's coming to an end and we can just keep putting in what we put in and hope that everything works out for the good of Erie County.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comment.

#### **PRESENTATIONS**

No presentation.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. Treasurer's Report – Mr. Wood: In the absence of the Treasurer I will give the report if that's okay, Mr. Chairman.

We are halfway through the financials for the year; we're at the six-month mark. If you look at the Profit & Loss Statement, you'll see there is no gaming revenue flowing since that ceased to flow as of the end of May 2017. Therefore, I cannot give you any projections about gaming revenue based upon the fact that the legislation has not been resolved. However, the interest income from the Enterprise Development Fund and Bridgeway Capital does continue to flow as revenue.

We are on budget for our expense categories. The grant categories to date, including settlements, totals about \$1.1M this fiscal year. If you look at the Balance Sheet, you'll see the Notes Receivable are in order; uncommitted, committed, and restricted funds – that's how we decided to show the break-down of funds to correspond with our Grant Reserve Report.

There's the Cash Flow Report and then there is the Budget vs. Actual. We should be at about 50% for most categories since we're halfway through the fiscal year. Of course, if there are any questions about the Budget vs. Actual and the expenses, I would be happy to answer them.

Looking over at the Grant Reserve Report, we do have \$8.2M in uncommitted and \$3.3M in committed funds. You'll see there that the second quarter figures for the restricted funds are light by thirty days, and the third quarter gaming funds aren't in yet; technically they should have been in soon but those will not be in because of the Legislature.

Grant disbursement details by category – if you have any questions, I would be more than happy to answer them. The end section shows total committed funds - original commitments of \$4.3M, and about \$3.3M remaining. We added that new column in there so you can compare the original commitment and the amount remaining.

Then the Check Detail Report. The most significant thing we see on the Check Detail are the payouts of the 2017 Community Assets Grants that we just awarded at the last meeting.

Mr. Sample: Are there any questions of the financials?

Mr. Paris makes a motion to approve the financials. Mr. Yapple seconds the motion. Motion carries 4 – 0.

- b. Regional Assets Committee: Mr. Wood: Mr. Barney is not here. Regional Assets has not met since the last Board Meeting. However, we did wrap up the Community Assets at the last Board Meeting. This month, you will see on the agenda, is Mission Main Street, and if you pass the Resolution, the Guidelines will open up. Tom Maggio has been very active in pursuing some Mission Main Street projects with stakeholders throughout the community. If you recall, the last time we opened this up we saw a significant dip, especially in the municipalities. We have been reaching out and talking to the municipalities about their ability to get matching funds. We've also extended the deadlines an extra two weeks, so instead of awarding it in December we will be awarding it in January at the same time we're opening up the Special Events Grants for 2018.

It is still on our radar to look at the future of Mission Main Street. There are certainly some similarities between municipalities that apply but there are some disparities as well.

Mr. Paris: Is there any interest in Mission Main Street?

Mr. Wood: Based on phone calls, I would say some.

Mr. Maggio: There is money available for historic preservation, but people aren't sure how to access it yet. Melinda Meyer is someone who has been approached about helping to write grants for people to access mission main street funds.

Mr. Yapple: It seems like there is money out there but it is too hard to get; it's easy to get overwhelmed.

Mr. Sample: The question I have is that for Impact Corry, it might have been better, they may have been able to free-up some money had they applied under this; freed-up some money that some other people would have been better served. Last time, we awarded them \$9,000 for a tree project. I'm sorry, that was the Historical Society, but it was for the County so they probably couldn't even apply. It might have freed-up some money for some other groups, especially if they write a light application. I would like to set something up with you and Perry and some others from Corry, and maybe one of the Council members. Corry could use these funds; they're just overwhelmed on the admin end and if they could just get help from somebody else who could handle it. Even Novotny, with the Corry Redevelopment Authority. I forward these things to Jason and I know he gets them and I tell him if he needs help with it to let us know.

Mr. Wood: We are more than happy to do that. We would like to see some new collaboration. In the past, we've done focus groups but we would like to see what we can do differently. We always get accolades for our simplicity of applying to ECGRA, but that enthusiasm is limited to groups with full time main streets groups. Municipalities for example don't always have the capacity to administer main street funds.

Mr. Sample: The problem is waiting; you've got a Council who doesn't vote anybody out because they know they're supposed to be having a checks and balances and they don't want to screw anything up before the end of the year. So, they're fighting it through the courts, so to say. If we can meet with the Union City manager and others and tell them, I think those are the people we're not getting to.

- c. Strategic Planning Committee: Mr. Paris: We have nothing to report but Perry and I are trying to figure out a time that we can meet soon.
- d. Update from County Council: None.
- e. Update from County Executive's Office: Mr. Lee: Thank you Mr. Chairman. There are a couple points that I want to highlight. First of all, the Up for the Jobs Initiative, we're excited about that. There was a little confusion dealing with the contracting process but we got that straightened out we're ready to go. Ten 53 Newton, LLC was the successful proposer and we are going to be meeting with Kate Phillips, she oversees that particular group, on Monday to kick-off the process.

The main point for this particular collaboration, as you recall the Chamber is involved, the County is involved, the local Union here at GE is involved, as well as the Governor's Action Team and the Department of Labor, and the United Way. There are about six or seven institutes involved. What we're attempting to do is market the workforce that we have here to the greater world in hopes of attracting a company to consider coming here. This is the original agreement for six months; we're going to review it after those six months and see where we proceed, but this very first six months is going to be an exciting time and we're really excited about this initiative.

Secondly, the Community College; we had a public hearing by the State Department of Education, they came up on Tuesday. It was a very positive meeting; you had to register in advance and had up to five minutes. It was not a question and answer format, it was just for

the Special Committee to hear the pros, the cons, and anything else from the citizens. There were about 100 people in attendance; 47 individuals had signed up and I believe the final count was 43 who presented.

The overwhelming response was positive, which is good. I still have to remind everyone that this is a process; it can take up to one year from the time that we submitted the application, which was June 30, 2017. The Special Committee will be providing recommendations to the full committee. The three things they are going to be looking at are: 1) to make sure that Erie County can support the College as far as the projections of enrollment and to make sure that we have the compilation to do that, 2) as they put it, the wealth to financially support the College, so they will be looking at the finances very closely that the County has provided, and 3) they are going to be looking to make sure that the County has not “adequate higher education institutions” that can currently serve the needs. Those are the three main criteria.

They are also reaching out to the Governor’s Office asking the Governor if he plans to put it in this coming budget. It’s going to be a very strenuous and tedious process. The County is going to continue to work along with this process because we see the value. Some of the main cons from the meeting was about financing and how the College was going to be paid for. That is a moving target; what I mean by that is we have identified some avenues, mainly in the gaming funds, and since that has not been finalized, we don’t know how that is going to turn out. But that is one of the main areas the County has identified.

Does anyone have any questions?

Mr. Sample: Gary, I apologize for my ignorance in this but have they come to a resolve between the Community College and the Rural College? We were told they were moving beyond that but I just never heard the results.

Mr. Lee: Mr. Chairman, that’s a good question. There were eight from the Rural Regional College that had signed up to speak at the public hearing. From my personal perspective, it was really disheartening to hear some of the comments because the County, in particular the County Executive’s Office along with Council because they are a part of this process as well, has reached out to the Rural Regional College to sit down; we have sat down on a couple of occasions. There seems to be a major disconnect; the Rural Regional College looks more at the Community College as competition. It looks at the Erie County Community College as saying, “We don’t need one because we’re going to be servicing that need.”

In the College application and the Feasibility Study, it addresses the need, for Erie County in particular, our needs are different needs than the other eight counties. The Rural Regional College is representing nine counties, so the two courses that the Rural Regional College have offered in Erie County has really been geared toward students who are either going to college, like they are in high school and are taking a college course to get a little further ahead, or students who are currently in college and want to pick up a class over the summer.

Not to say that that’s going to change; they have shared with us that eventually they are going to get into offering more technical courses; they are looking at various programs but it’s just going to take them time.

From the County, we look at this not as an and/or; we look at this together. I think that the Rural Regional College can complement the Erie County Community College if it goes through, and vice versa. The feed-back that we have received from Empower Erie, because Empower Erie was the one who put the college application together and the Feasibility Study, is that they have reached out as well to the Rural Regional College to share with them that they want to work together.

The bottom line is that this continues to be an ongoing conversation that needs to happen; I still think that there needs to be some ease from the Rural Regional College that the Erie County Community College will not replace the Rural Regional College; we can work together.

Mr. Sample: I'm not really sure that some of our citizens can get to the Community College; there needs to be a satellite facility. The Rural College, is in fact, located in Corry for the high school and higher ed.

I appreciate the comments on that and it's good to know where it's headed.

Mr. Lee: If I could just speak to the fact of a satellite; I know in the Erie County Community College application, they have identified several satellites. Corry would be one of them. From our administration, we want to make sure that this is truly a county College because the County is sponsoring it so we want to make sure that the entire County is represented and we want to make sure that the entire County is served. Thank you.

### REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Mr. Wood:

(Due to audio malfunction, recording was incomplete)

Executive Director covered the following:

- 1855 Capital
- PACA
- Historic Preservation Workshop
- Meeting with Jim Ghrelien, Harry Brown, & Jim Domino on the EDF

### SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Mr. Wachter: Nothing to report.

### OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Wood: I just wanted to give you an update on the auditors. We did propose to enter into a four-year agreement with MaherDuessel; we are still waiting for that proposal. When we get that proposal, we will bring it in the form of a Resolution for the Board to vote on.

### NEW BUSINESS

- A) Resolution No.12: Resolution to Adopt the 2017-2018 ECGRA Regional Assets Guidelines and Application for Mission Main Street.

Mr. Yaple makes a motion to approve. Mr. Paris seconds the motion. Motion carries 5-0.

### ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Paris moves to adjourn. Mr. Yaple seconds the motion.