

**Business Development Corporation for a Greater Massena
Board Meeting Minutes
July 14, 2021**

DRAFT!

Board Members: Mike Besaw, Jason Hendricks, Jeff Dobbins, Dan Pease, Sherry Thompson

Excused: Melanie Cunningham, Dave LaClair

Staff: Jim Murphy, Executive Director

Public: Sam Carbone, Sue Bellor, Matt LeBire, Pat Facticeau

Call to Order

President Mike Besaw called the meeting to order at 4:46 p.m.

Town Board Liaison Report – Sam Carbone, who had to leave early, started the meeting with an update on the Town of Massena’s summer fishing tournaments, offering several examples of the positive economic impact these tournaments have had on the entire region. He also discussed an idea to develop a volunteer group or groups, perhaps as a subset of the BNDC, to work on a wide range of town/village projects, including everything from hiking trails to dog parks to signage. He noted that there was grant money available and with NYPA’s reopener on the horizon, there may be financial support available for specific projects. He said the next step was to hold a meeting of those who are interested and begin brainstorming ideas.

Jim noted that the BDC had sought public input regarding the economic impact of the local fishing tournaments. We received some great feedback, including a report from one area B&B who said that he was not only booked for the season thanks to the tournaments, he had actually received reservations from Louisiana and Pa. for next year, based on the TV exposure the region has received.

Jason noted that he felt that too few businesses “got in front of” the tournaments to take advantage of the events. He and Jim would work on that. Sam noted that he expected at least three food truck vendors at the concert/fireworks.

Village liaison Matt LeBire also provided a quick update. He noted that the village had been busy with its own CFA applications, including two for economic development projects related to properties owned by Bill Fiacco in the downtown area. In order to expedite the process, the Village extended its contract with Strategic Development Specialists for another six months, noting that the firm had a very successful track record for past grant applications. The Village will be able to opt out of its contract if it so desired.

Approval of Minutes of the June 9, 2021 Meeting - A motion was made by Jeff and seconded by Mike to approve the minutes of the June 2021 Board of Directors meeting. The motion, however, was tabled because there were not enough board members present at this meeting who were at the last meeting.

Financial Reports

Monthly financial reports were provided to the Board. (See attached)

Treasurer Jeff Dobbins noted that the BDC had received payments from the town (\$25,000) and the village for \$2,500 to complete its contract for 2020-2021. The BDC had also received \$7,700 from the US Treasury in recovery funds identified by Mark Bogdan. The BDC did not qualify for these funds in the second quarter, but may in the future.

Dan moved to approve the Financial Reports, seconded by Jason. The motion passed unanimously

Executive Director's Report

Jim provided board members with an overview of his activities, outreach efforts and connections made over the past 30 days as well as a short update on the Microenterprise Grant Program.

Jim also discussed his difficulties in getting a response to his questions about the BDC's audits, going back to 2017. Sherry said she would reach out to John Purcell to see what she could find anything out regarding a timeline for completion or what they might still need. Getting the audits done is critical for us to be in compliance with ABO requirements.

Other Board Action Items:

Board members discussed how best to handle the loan it had made to MATA to help that organization cover its match requirements for its CDBG loan. Jim noted that he worried that the BDC might have lacked the statutory authority to issue the MATA loan and that the BDC lacked the proper underwriting guidelines to operate a loan program. He noted our intention was to support the project with a "one-off" loan to get the project going. Dan said that he recommended that the BDC bite the bullet, vow never to do this again and write the loan off on our books as a bad debt – but still bill MATA in hopes of recouping some of its funds. Motion made by Sherry, seconded by Jeff. Motion passed unanimously.

New Business/Other Business

None

Questions from the Public/Press

Pat Facticeau asked about long-term planning efforts and the need to develop strategies to guide the future (See attached plan).

Executive Session

None

Adjournment

Jeff made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:20 p.m., that motion was seconded by Jason and passed with all members voting 'Aye.'

Next Regular Meeting Date: September 8, 2021 at 4:45 p.m.