

**BINGHAMTON LOCAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2020**

ATTENDANCE	2019	2020										
Directors	12/19	1/21	2/27	3/26	4/23	5/28	6/25	7/23	8/27	9/24	10/22	11/19
David , Rich	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	NA	NA	NA	P
Berling, Juliet	P	EX	P	P	P	P	P	P	NA	NA	NA	P
Burns, Joe	N/A	P	P	EX	P	P	P	EX	NA	NA	NA	P
Frank, Kenneth	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	NA	NA	NA	P
Jacyna, Mary	P	EX	P	P	EX	P	P	EX	NA	NA	NA	P
Koffman, Betsy	P	P	EX	EX	P	P	P	P	NA	NA	NA	EX
Sall , Ron	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	NA	NA	NA	P
Saraceno, John	P	P	P	P	P	P	EX	P	NA	NA	NA	P
Shager, Chuck	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	NA	NA	NA	P
Smith, Art	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	NA	NA	NA	P
Strawn, Philip	N/A	EX	P	P	EX	EX	EX	EX	NA	NA	NA	EX
Stromhaug, Per	P	P	EX	EX	P	EX	EX	P	NA	NA	NA	P
Staff												
Joel Boyd	EX	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	NA	NA	NA	P
Lesley Cornwall	EX	P	P	P	P	P	P	EX	NA	NA	NA	P
Other												
Teresa Arington	N/A	N/A	P	P	P	P	P	P	NA	NA	NA	P
Steve Carson	P	P	P	P	P	EX	EX	P	NA	NA	NA	P
Paul Nelson	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	P	P	EX	P	NA	NA	NA	P

Following the close of the Annual Meeting, President Saraceno called the Regular Monthly Meeting to order at 9:28 AM.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 23RD REGULAR MEETING

President Saraceno asked for a review of the July 23, 2020 Regular Meeting minutes. Mayor David motioned, Councilman J. Burns seconded and the minutes were approved (10-0-0).

PRESENTATION OF THE OCTOBER 2020 FINANCIAL REPORTS

President Saraceno asked T. Arington to present the October financial reports. She began with the Restricted Account Statement of Income & Expense noting that the BLDC had been working with the auditors to obtain exemption from filing an IRS 990. The IRS responded that the BLDC needed to complete another form and pay a fee

which had just increased to \$500.00. Concerning the Income & Expense for the UDAG Account T. Arrington noted the payoff of one loan by DDBing Properties, LLC. 142 Court Street, LLC and The Garage were late with October payments but had since caught up. Zach Salisbury – QOLA had not made payment since April, a late letter had been returned. The UDAG income account had an end of month balance of \$11,725.87. There were no changes in the Broome Enterprise Triad. The Mayor’s Veterans Initiatives account was unchanged with an end of month balance of \$59,729.91 and the Grant account was unchanged with an ending balance of \$5,938.76.

Old Business: none

New Business: none

RESOLUTION 20-16: A RESOLUTION AMENDING RESOLUTION 20-9 DATED APRIL 23, 2020, TO CHANGE THE FUNDING SOURCE

President Saraceno introduced the resolution concerning changing the funding source for the loan to the Broome County Council of Churches/CHOW from miscellaneous repayments to the City of Binghamton Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) fund to miscellaneous repayments to the City of Binghamton Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG) fund. Mayor David explained the resolution was changing the funding source to allow the Council of Churches to have more flexibility with regard to how the funds were spent. He said they had received a variety of grants which all have different restrictions for the different aspects of the project: a NYS grant, CDBG grant, a loan used to finance the project until they receive the grant, a \$150K federal grant from US Congressman Brindisi and then a variety of unrestricted grants from foundations and individuals. As they put their budget together on buildout, payroll, inventory their needs would change and they would likely need less money for the buildout and more money for inventory, etc. He said he thought funds were going for capital equipment instead of buildout, coolers, equipment, etc. He said it was a positive development and requested the Board’s support. President Saraceno asked for a motion to approve the amendment to the resolution. M. Jacyna motioned, A. Smith seconded and Resolution 20-16 was approved (10-0-0).

Mayor’s Remarks:

Mayor David began with an update on Canal Plaza. An opening with the Lieutenant Governor was planned for the prior week but was postponed due to the fact the Governor’s Office did not want to have news conferences in areas with a yellow, red or orange COVID-19 designation. Broome County was released from a yellow designation

the prior day and moved back to general NYS COVID restrictions. Mayor David said the Mayor's Office had re-contacted the Lieutenant Governor's office; he wanted to officially celebrate this portion of the project. He said the housing portion of the building was complete, tenants were moving in waves to occupy 48 units. Because of COVID a limited number were moving in each week. He expected by the end of November – early December all of the people would have moved in, all units would be occupied. He said he had walked through the building a number of times and said it was spectacular and was excited to have the official ribbon cutting and have Board Members tour it. He said it was a multi-year project with a lot of challenges that had been overcome and thought it was going to be a transformative anchor in that area of the city. The grocery store was scheduled to open in December. It was originally scheduled to open the end of October – early November but was delayed by the receipt of checkout equipment – the supplier was impacted by COVID-19. He said they wanted to reschedule the project opening to coincide with the store opening. Recounting the project history, he said the project started in 2014-15 with the BLDC successfully acquiring the 4-acre parcel from Broome County government. The County was going to sell or auction the property and as Mayor he was successful in convincing County Executive Debra Preston to donate or sell the property for \$1.00 to the BLDC and if it were unable to turn into a project it would revert back. He said they were able to work with the State, Senator Akshar's office and the Governor's Office to get a RESTORE-NY grant to cover demolition costs, removal of the parking lot, lights, etc. The City was able to work with the Department of Environmental Conservation to do over \$1 million in environmental remediation and was able to work with the NYS Department of Homes & Community Renewal for the tax incentives for the developer, 3D Development of Buffalo, NY to put together financing. The City was able to use its NYSEERDA-granted Clean Energy Program for solar panels on the roof of the project which generates enough energy for a third of common space electrical costs. He said the entire project was a partnership among the City of Binghamton, BLDC, the State, the Binghamton Housing Authority and 3D Development. The 15,000 SF ground floor has three spaces: Binghamton Housing Authority is moving their administrative offices there along with Catholic Charities and the CHOW grocery store. He said he appreciated the creative ideas and financing suggestions provided by the Board throughout the course of the project. He said Board members should be receiving an email invitation for a rescheduled ribbon-cutting with the Lieutenant Governor and other State officials in the next few weeks.

The \$4.1 million Family Enrichment Network housing project at the corner of Liberty and Virgil Streets is expected to be completed by the end of the year. He said he had toured the project, most of the exterior work has been completed and interior work was underway.

He said the 7 Hawley Street parking garage project was progressing, all lights on all floors were installed. The structure was scheduled to open mid-December. He said the asphalt base and top coats were being laid on Washington Street; half of the street was widened to accommodate entrance and exiting from the ramp. Concrete work was done, and working was underway on the elevator shaft and the offices and was moving toward finishing touches.

He said the City was getting ready to bid the Metrocenter plaza project which is part of the DECO District. He said the City conducted several public meetings and obtained design input from citizens and merchants about it. He said the project should be bid out over the winter, break ground and should be completed over the summer.

Mayor David said the City completed its budget on time and held the line on taxes for another year for homeowners and commercial tax payers. He thanked City Comptroller, Chuck Shager; the Finance team and IT Director, Lori Clift who enabled the City to do in a very difficult year what it had done in prior years. The City was not able to do a major tax cut which was desired because taxes remain too high based on previous astronomical tax increases. He said the fact the City in a COVID year was able to hold the line and not do layoffs was an impressive accomplishment. He said it was good for taxpayers and good for the business community.

Mayor David said Boscov's was mentioned in a recent article in Forbes magazine and said he was interviewed for it. He said the article would be forwarded to the Board Members. He said it gave a history of Boscov's in the City. He said he believed once the State received its federal stimulus funds it would enable the project with Boscov's to move forward. He said the City sent out an RFP for the Water Street Parking Garage. He said the City had layered the approach and could not afford to be without more than one parking ramp closed. The RFP was for mixed use development for the Water Street ramp; the ramp was 50-60 years old located along the river and connected to a gateway to the downtown. He said it was a growing area, while parking was needed, the City wanted to see transformative, best and highest uses for the parcel. A few months ago the City sent out an RFP, due date was 11/25. He said the City had received inquiries from 2-3 major developers and expected there would be multiple submissions. When combined with work on Boscov's it could become one of the largest projects downtown in a generation.

Mayor David said the best news the City had received in the last few weeks was about the NY Mets and Rumble Ponies' baseball. He said that was a year-long fight to retain the team aided by US Senator Schumer, US Representative Brindisi, NY Senator Akshar, owner John Hughes and himself. Sen. Schumer had a lot of direct access with Major

League Baseball to Jeff Wilpon and Steve Cohen; he brought many of these key people to Binghamton. With the help of Congressman Brindisi, Sen. Akshar and John Hughes, the City of Binghamton was able to invest a lot of public money into the stadium. Mayor David said that was key; many other communities had deferred or delayed large public projects like parking ramps or sewage treatment plants and only put together plans after the fact when it was too late to do anything. He said Binghamton was very proactive and gave its representatives a good hand to work with. The City had developed a good relationship with Sandy Alderson, now head of operations with the Mets until Jeff Wilpon. He said baseball in Binghamton would be secured for at least a generation to come. He said he knew other communities that lost baseball, knew their mayors personally and it was going to have negative ramifications for their cities. He said he had received criticism in years prior for working with John Hughes and the Mets; had he not worked with them he would have been criticized for not keeping minor league baseball in Binghamton. He said the results proved it was the right thing to do. He said while this was not an initiative of the BLDC many members were supportive, provided input and suggestions and it was a good thing overall for our community. He said it was a huge community win. While the City was able to bring projects to our community to address food insecurity or affordable housing or help businesses stay open during a pandemic it was also making sure it didn't lose ground by losing our AA affiliation Rumble Ponies or losing Boscov's. All of these things done together in a proactive fashion were what make Binghamton special, unique and strong. He wished all Board Members a happy Thanksgiving and a Merry Christmas.

There being no further business to come before the Board, President Saraceno asked for a motion to adjourn. Mayor David motioned, J. Saraceno seconded and the motion to adjourn passed (10-0-0). The meeting ended at 9:53 AM.

Ron Sall, Secretary
Binghamton Local Development Corporation