

COUNTY OF CATTARAUGUS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

May 20, 2025

CCIDA Offices

9 East Washington Street

Ellicottville NY 14731

11:15 a.m. In Person or via Teleconference Call/Zoom

Roll Call: -Taken-

Members

Present:

Mr. Thomas Buffamante-Chairman
Mr. Joseph Higgins
Mr. James (Joe) Snyder
Ms. Ginger Schroder
Mr. Thomas Cullen

Excused:

Mr. Michael Wimer
Mr. Brent Driscoll

CCIDA Staff/Counsel:

Mr. Corey R. Wiktors, Executive Director CCIDA
Mr. Robert Murray, Harris Beach PLLC Legal Counsel

Presenters/Guests:

Ed Youmans, HoliMont, Inc.
John Drake, HoliMont Inc.
Jonathan Epstein, Buffalo News (via zoom)
Bob Clark, Olean Times Herald (via zoom)
Rick Miller, Olean Star (via zoom)
Keelen Quigley, Olean Times Herald

Mr. Buffamante called the meeting to order at 11:15 a.m.

A roll call of the Board of Directors of the CCIDA was taken Mr. Buffamante, Mr. Higgins, Mr. Snyder, Ms. Schroder and Mr. Cullen were present. Mr. Driscoll and Mr. Wimer and were excused.

A Motion was made by Ginger Schroder seconded by Thomas Cullen to accept the Board Meeting Minutes from April 29, 2025. All in favor. **Motion Carried.** Mr. Driscoll and Mr. Wimer and were excused.

-Mr. Buffamante: We have one application today from HoliMont, Inc. and I will turn it over to Corey to introduce their project.

-Mr. Wiktor: Good morning everyone and thank you for attending our Tuesday, May 20, 2025 Board Meeting here at the IDA in Ellicottville. As Tom indicated, we do have a new application and it is wonderful to see John Drake and Ed Youmans. They have submitted an application with a breakdown of the project and there is no formal action today, we would love to bring it back to the Board at the next Board Meeting in June. It is wonderful to see a sizable project for HoliMont, capital, related equipment and other amenities they are proposing to do at the ski resort. Could you start with a general overview of how the season went, how the winter went, upcoming summer events and then an overview of the proposed project.

-Mr. Youmans: Looking back at last year's capital program, we did not put in anything to the IDA as it was so tiny. Last season we were successful and beat all our revenue lines and added about 14% to the revenue lines and we able to keep our operating budget within 2-3% budget. Going forward, the snow making system is always an ongoing and expensive upkeep and we are making small steps over a long period of time to grow all of our pumping pressure. The key to snowmaking is going to be getting the maximum amount of snow on the ground in the minimum period of time and we have a master plan for that. The two seasons prior to last, we made most of our snow. We have a snowcat purchase in two parts; we pay for the first half this year and the second half next year. Snowcats are like everything else these days, very expensive.

Mr. Wiktor: How much are those?

Mr. Youmans: About \$570,000. In addition, we are continuing to grow the capacity of the bike park so more bike carriers. We were fortunate where one of our members stepped up and funded part of that purchase so you are only seeing half. Summer operations have taken off and last year helped the profit margin so we looking forward to having that continue to grow.

Mr. Wiktor: Any weddings planned?

Mr. Youmans: Last year we had a record high number of weddings, probably some due to the backlog of weddings from covid in 2020 and 2021 and we are getting to the end of that now and have a much smaller wedding schedule this year. We are looking to fill space with corporate meetings and banquet events. We really appreciate the support of the IDA. Ellicottville is a great place to do business; I think this Town is thriving and I'm glad HoliMont is sitting in the middle of it.

Mr. Wiktor: This is wonderful to hear, some of the metrics on your forecast in financials as obviously 2023 and 2024 you probably dipped into some of that. You talk about the snowmaking with both resorts, the snowmaking and what that represents, again is less optimal than natural and powder snow it still represents for the development side, it's still bringing people here. When you say being up 38%, you look at the sales tax numbers, the employment, the bed tax and the spin off that you are creating that engine which is help filling the Village and the surrounding communities. We often say with both resorts, in over \$6 million in reinvestment in this year alone, I would put Ellicottville in the top 51 ski resorts in New York State at the top for reinvestment. I'm not sure people often recognize what that means as you are not seeing that in other resorts. To see that reinvestment and what it means to the County and the return to the taxing jurisdictions and what you put into the resort.

Mr. Youmans: There definitely is risk involved by spending money in the Summer and not knowing how the winter is going to pan out.

Mr. Buffamante: I see one of your items is for architect fees. Is there a potential building expansion?

Mr. Youmans: Yes, every time we take a survey there are 2 problems that arise on the top of that list. There is not enough parking on weekends, we resolved that problem and then there is no place to sit on Saturday. We have been planning on this as part of the master plan anyway, so let's do a fairly major project and solve this problem so eventually we are going to add about 4,000 square feet for seating. We will add on to where the director's parking lot is behind the main chalet and go north, but again, that would be down the road.

Mr. Wiktor: For record purposes, there is no physical construction related to this proposed project with the IDA.

Mr. Wiktor: Any further questions?

Mr. Murray: Yes, I have a question and a comment. The Board is going to be asked to approve the Holiday Valley capital investment for the next item and just to refresh everyone's recollection, IDAs are not permitted to do retail projects unless certain exceptions are met, one of them being a tourism destination project and under law that is a project that attracts a significant number of visitors from outside the economic development region. The word significant is not defined, that's for the discretion of the Board, and the economic development region is defined by New York law as anywhere in the Western New York region that is Niagara, Erie, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua and possibility Wyoming or Allegany. The folks at Holiday Valley indicated 65% of visitors come from outside of New York State so that included Canada, Ohio and Pennsylvania. Approximately 20% of that number were from Canada. I think it is incredible, it's wealth creation. We will want those statistics from HoliMont so if you could email Corey, that would be great.

Mr. Buffamante: I think most of the members that own real estate down here are second and third homes. There may be some primary residents, but by in large, I think most are second or third homes.

Mr. Youmans: Yes, a lot of real estate has come in the last couple of years. A lot of big-ticket purchases have happened in Ellicottville. Cleveland is a very hot market for us right now, we have more new members from Cleveland, than since I've been at HoliMont.

Mr. Buffamante: We think of the money that HoliMont invests, but also those homes being built are mostly local labor and materials.

Mr. Wiktor: Absolutely, it's a huge return. I appreciate you both for coming down and presenting to the Board.

Mr. Buffamante: I wanted to comment on the details of your capital projects, that was much appreciated and helped me to get a good understanding of the scope of the project.

New Application/Project

- HoliMont, Inc.:

-HoliMont Inc. has submitted an application to the CCIDA seeking NYS Sales Tax Abatement only with respect to their proposed project for their Resort. They plan to replace piping, make facility repairs, purchase equipment including a piston snowcat, replace electrical systems and outdated computer equipment, add 12 additional bike carriers and additions to the bike trails and replace rental skis. **A complete project list was submitted.*

-The Total Project Investment: \$1,025,500

-Mr. Wiktor: The next item on the Agenda for consideration is the application that is in process with Win-Sum Ski Corp. (Holiday Valley). The application was submitted at our previous board meeting in April with respect to about a \$5,000,000 investment. Again, I do want to stress that the project is sales tax benefit only, meaning if they spend the money, they will receive the 8% sales tax abatement and there is no grant nor any real estate abatement on the proposed project. We did have the public hearing on Thursday, May 15, 2025 at 9:30 a.m. and there was no one in attendance, nor any comments. Those are included in your package as well as the proposed Resolution for consideration of the sales tax abatement.

Resolution from Prior Application/Project in Process

– Win Sum Ski Corp. (Holiday Valley):

- Wim Sum Ski Corp. has submitted an application seeking NYS sales tax abatement to purchase equipment to improve the efficiency of the resort as well as general renovations of the building interiors at 6557 Holiday Valley Road, Ellicottville, NY.

A public hearing was held on **Thursday, May 15, 2025 at 9:30 a.m.** at the CCIDA office. A copy of the public hearing minutes is included in each board members package for their review. *No one was in attendance at the Hearing.*

The Total Project Investment: \$5,105,350

Mr. Buffamante: We have a Resolution in front of us and I need a motion to approve.

Resolution:

A Motion was made by Joseph Snyder seconded by Joseph Higgins, RESOLUTION OF THE COUNTY OF CATTARAUGUS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY: (i) ACCEPTING THE APPLICATION OF WIN-SUM SKI CORP., AND/OR INDIVIDUAL(S) OR AFFILIATE(S), SUBSIDIARY(IES), OR ENTITY(IES) FORMED OR TO BE FORMED ON ITS BEHALF (INDIVIDUALLY, AND/OR COLLECTIVELY, THE “COMPANY”) IN CONNECTION WITH A CERTAIN PROJECT DESCRIBED BELOW; (ii) APPOINTING THE COMPANY, OR ITS DESIGNEE, AS ITS AGENT TO UNDERTAKE THE PROJECT; (iii) AUTHORIZING THE UNDERTAKING OF THE PROJECT TO PROVIDE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO THE COMPANY IN THE FORM OF A SALES TAX EXEMPTION BENEFIT FOR PURCHASES AND RENTALS RELATED TO THE ACQUISITION, CONSTRUCTION AND EQUIPPING OF THE PROJECT; AND (iv) AUTHORIZING THE NEGOTIATION AND EXECUTION OF AN AGENT AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROJECT AGREEMENT, AND RELATED DOCUMENTS. A roll call of the Board of Directors of the CCIDA was taken, Mr. Buffamante, Mr. Higgins, Mr. Snyder, Mr. Cullen, and Ms. Schroder voted yes. **Motion Carried. Mr. Driscoll and Mr. Wimer were excused (*Mr. Buffamante stated he has a working relationship with the company; however, he has no financial interest in the company or this particular project.*)**

Mr. Buffamante: Any comments or questions?

Mr. Wiktor: Included in the Board packet, which we would need a vote required for the April, 2025 financial report.

Mr. Buffamante: Any questions on the financials? I need a motion to approve the financial report for April.

***CCIDA Financial Reports:**

A Motion was made by Joseph Snyder seconded by Thomas Cullen to accept the April 2025 CCIDA Operating Statement as presented to the Board. All in Favor - **Motion Carried.** Mr. Driscoll and Mr. Wimer were excused.

***Income for April 2025 (\$21,234.37):**

-Income relating to Application fees and project closings.

***Income for May 2025 (\$3,000.00):**

- \$ 1,500.00 – Win Sum Ski Corp.- Application Fee

- \$ 1,500.00 – HoliMont, Inc.- Application Fee

-General update on projects in process; including the Agency has 5 projects in the closing stage which should close in the 2nd quarter of this year.

Mr. Buffamante: Corey, do you have anything you want to go over?

Mr. Wiktor: Certainly. Last week there was meeting on Hidden Gems with the planning board and they are looking to hold a public hearing with a zoning change in June, so that project is moving forward. Obviously there has been some news with Ballie-Potter Lumber that there was an announcement of a closure, heavily based on that Baillie-Potter is one of the nation's largest importer of logs and lumber and they have had various plant closures over the last few months. I'm still waiting for a call from them for what the impact will be, are they keeping the saw mill and such. Tourism, we are working with a Canadian manufacture that is very close to executing a project within the County and the Legislature has been very helpful in assisting with that. It would be great news when that project hopefully comes about. We have had a few other potential developer projects, one in the Town of Allegany and one here in Ellicottville. The one in Allegany is a Canadian customer as well. We have been working with Bill Paladino of Ellicott Development as some news broke on Channel 2 news that the Windgate Hotel in Ellicottville is going to do a few million-dollar expansion, so I anticipate that application next month. Also, we will be co-sponsoring the Empire State Development roadshow for the CFAs for 2025 season at Holiday Valley coming up.

***Executive Directors Reports:**

-Internal (IDA Meetings/Discussions, Snapshot):

- ✓ Meeting with Jake Creeley regarding Hidden Gems project.
- ✓ Meeting with attorneys regarding Edelweiss project update.
- ✓ Meeting with Matt Wilkinson from Great Lakes Cheese.
- ✓ Called Don Eichler and Ms. Meyer from Ballie-Potter several times, awaiting return call.
- ✓ Meeting with Kinley Contractors regarding project update.

- ✓ Meeting with Greg Fitzpatrick regarding Fitzpatrick-Weller project.
- ✓ Meeting with Pat Ogoiny about a possible development project in the County.
- ✓ Attending Cattaraugus County Economic Team Meeting in Little Valley.
- ✓ Meeting with Rick Schecter regarding potential new manufacturing project in the County. We've had several follow up discussions as well.
- ✓ Had an update meeting regarding the RevRail Project and construction updates.
- ✓ Conference call with Harris Beach regarding possible Tax-Exempt Bond project/issuance.
- ✓ Met with a developer regarding possible project that would be located in Erie and Cattaraugus County. One developer, two locations.
- ✓ Met with a real estate broker on a possible large processing project. More to follow.
- ✓ Upcoming meeting with Bill Paladino.
- ✓ Meeting with John Drake from HoliMont to discuss 2025 proposed project.

-External (Points of Interest relating to the CCIDA):

- ✓ **Olean Times Herald:** Article: "*STEM Fair promotes potential careers in local manufacturing.*"
- ✓ **Handout:** "*Empire State Manufacturing Survey.*"
- ✓ **Area Development:** Article: "*Large-Scale Projects Face Financing Challenges.*"
- ✓ **Handout:** "*Empire State Development on the Road.*" CCIDA will be co-hosting the event at Holiday Valley.
- ✓ **New York Focus:** Article: "*State Budget Goes Small on Climate.*"

Mr. Wiktor: Tom engaged the matter of executive session based on attorney/client privileges as there are several items I would like to discuss with Bob, our counsel.

Mr. Buffamante: Yes, this is for attorney/client privileges and would ask for a motion to go into executive session.

Mr. Buffamante: Thank you to the attendees on zoom and to the Times Herald for attending

Executive Session:

A Motion was made by Joseph Snyder seconded by Joseph Higgins to go into Executive Session for Attorney/Client Privilege at 11:44 a.m. All in Favor – **Motion Carried.** Mr. Driscoll and Mr. Wimer and were excused.

A Motion was made by Joseph Snyder seconded by Thomas Cullen to exit Executive Session and return to the regular meeting at 1:24 p.m. All in Favor – **Motion Carried.** Mr. Driscoll and Mr. Wimer and were excused. For the official record, no action was taken in the Executive Session.

A Motion was made by Joseph Snyder seconded by Joseph Higgins to adjourn the meeting at 1:25 p.m. All in Favor – **Motion Carried.** Mr. Driscoll and Mr. Wimer and were excused.

*** Next CCIDA Board of Directors Meeting: June 17, 2025 at 11:15 a.m.**
at the CCIDA Offices
9 E. Washington Street
Ellicottville, NY
and also, via Zoom.