

**COUNTY OF CATTARAUGUS
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY**

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

November 18, 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
Mr. Brent Driscoll
Mr. Michael Wimer
Ms. Ginger Schroder
Mr. Thomas Cullen

Excused:

None

CCIDA Staff/Counsel:

Mr. Corey R. Wiktor, Executive Director CCIDA
Mr. Robert Murray, Harris Beach Murtha Legal Counsel
Mr. Russell Gaenzle, Harris Beach Murtha Legal Counsel

Presenters/Guests:

Gerald George, George Dairy Farms
John Borer, Edelweiss Dairy (via zoom)
Bob Clark, Olean Times Herald (via zoom)
Rick Miller, Olean Star (via zoom)

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. Driscoll, Mr. Snyder, Mr. Cullen, Ms. Schroder and Mr. Wimer were present.

-Mr. Buffamante. We have Bob and Russ from our law firm attending. Russ has a short schedule today. We will come back to the minutes and we will get right into Edelweiss Dairy. I'll turn it over to you Corey.

-Mr. Wiktor: Good Morning everyone. Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule. As the Chairman indicated, we do have Russ Gaenzle who is special bond counsel to the Agency as well as Bob who is general counsel to the Agency. With that, today's Agenda is light as there is only one project in process which is Edelweiss Dairy. Russ, with the time you have, could you give a quick overview of the update on the project.

-Mr. Gaenzle: Sure, this came into our ballcourt some time ago with the process of what is called buying cap allocation, undertaking the SEQRA review and typical transactional work that goes into a project of this magnitude. It has taken quite some time to get where we are, but we are basically at the finish line. We anticipate closing shortly after the resolution is considered by this board, this is the last approval if you will, that is required. The documents substantially are in final form and we are pretty much a go. We do have a working group call tomorrow and we anticipate we will actually schedule the closing on that call so everything is seemly going quite well and we should have it done by the end of year, at the latest.

-Mr. Wiktor: Thank you.

-Mr. Driscoll: I have a question. Given there is not an approval as we have not voted on it, when will the project actually start?

-Mr. Wiktor: John is on the line so we could ask the company. John, in terms of the project starting, I assume timing is now so to speak with the project?

-Mr. Borer: Yes, we are currently working through it.

-Mr. Wiktor: Ok, I would assume the start date is in process.

-Mr. Gaenzle: They are authorized assuming the resolution is adopted. They have made what is called an official intent declaration which allows them from that date, to and 60 days back, to reimburse themselves for qualifying uses from the bond proceeds, which again will hopefully close in a few weeks.

-Mr. Wiktor: And what we did add to the board packet as supplemental information is a general email on how the project has been qualified for the use and the application the company submitted to the State to request the volume cap. There were various letters of support and documentation from our elected officials, the letter from ESD granting the volume cap and a variety of back up data and information with respect to the project. The conclusion of SEQR Parts I, II and III and various conversations and meetings we held with LaBella Associates who was contracted to help coordinate the SEQR with the IDA is also included. In terms of the project, I have been here with the Agency about 20 years and I think this is our first bond qualifying. Russ, how did those bonds or project qualify?

-Mr. Gaenzle: Under the federal tax regulations there are certain types of projects that can be financed with tax exempt debt. The list is pretty short, you typically see ones for 501(3)c organizations (not-for-profits), affordable housing, occasionally small manufacturing, but the regulations are so stringent on those types of transactions you don't see those very often. What we are doing here is what is called under the tax regulations is a solid waste disposal. The federal government years ago implemented authorization to do this type of project and our tax partner undertakes quite extensive tax diligence and at the end of the day we deliver an opinion on your behalf to the bank that the interest is tax exempt. It does qualify and portions of the project do qualify for this type of debt.

-Mr. Buffamante: I think this is the first private company that has been done since the 1990s.

-Mr. Wiktor: I would say.

-Mr. Gaenzle: Bob and I were talking and I think our firm has done maybe 5 solid waste disposals, 4 of which were refinancing of an existing one, so they are very few and far between. It does quality and we are comfortable.

-Mr. Wiktor: Back on March 18, 2025, Russ joined us for the public hearing that was in the Town of Freedom and those minutes are included in the board packet. There was no one in attendance or comments. As standard procedure, we look at the SEQR Parts I, II and II, the public hearing, the cost benefit analysis. The breakdown of the highlights of the project are included in the resolution which we try and encapsulate on the agenda for quick reference of what the project signifies. Again, with the project retaining of 21 employees and could add roughly 12 employees over the next couple of years.

-Mr. Buffamante: Just as a clarifying point, this is project also gets mortgage tax exemption and a PILOT which we induced already several meetings ago.

-Mr. Wiktor: Correct, there was mortgage recording tax and a 10 commercial year PILOT, no sales tax applicable with respect to the project.

-Mr. Murray: It was part of the package with the official intent resolution but now you are officially passing all the financial assistance.

-Mr. Buffamante: Is there any other questions?

-Mr. Murray: You have 2 resolutions today. The SEQR Determination Resolution which is lengthy because it was a large project, a type I which required coordinated review. The Agency was lead Agency and you retained a consultant where LaBella did a very thorough job analyzing all the potential adverse environmental impacts. The conclusion the board is being asked to make is there is not a potential significant environmental impact and the board can issue a negative declaration and that is what this resolution first up for today.

-Mr. Buffamante: Just to comment on that, in the board packets there is a rather lengthy description of the various SEQR steps that were went through and all of which were ok.

Resolution from Application/Project in Process

--1. Edelweiss Dairy, LLC:

-Edelweiss Dairy LLC has submitted an Application to the Agency for tax exempt financing along with requesting consideration for Real Property Tax abatement on value added, Revenue Bond and NYS mortgage tax abatement related to the various construction projects that include: of a new dairy facility to replace their existing, outdated 50-year-old facility located at 10826 Osman Road in the Town of Freedom. The project includes a new 120 stall rotary parlor to milk cows, 4 cattle barns, roughly (650,000 sq. ft in total), and a manure separation sand recycling facility. The project will not only retain 21 current employees, it will add roughly 12 new employees as well.

A public hearing was held on March 18, 2025 in the Town of Freedom, a copy is enclosed in each Board Member's packet as well as the cost benefit analysis. The County Legislatures approved their Resolution on November 12, 2025 for issuance of the bond, a copy is enclosed in each Board Member's packet.

-Revenue Bond Issuance \$15,500,000. (Total Project Investment: \$32,500,000+,-)

Resolution:

A Motion was made by Brent Driscoll seconded by Michael Wimer, RESOLUTION OF THE COUNTY OF CATTARAUGUS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY ISSUING A NEGATIVE DECLARATION PURSUANT TO THE NEW YORK STATE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY REVIEW ACT FOR THE EDELWEISS DAIRY PROPOSED EXPANSION. A roll call of the Board of Directors of the CCIDA was taken, Mr. Buffamante, Mr. Higgins, Mr. Driscoll, Mr. Snyder, Mr. Cullen, Ms. Schroder and Mr. Wimer voted yes. **Motion Carried.**

-Mr. Buffamante: Our second resolution is the bond resolution.

-Mr. Wiktor: Yes. Mr. Chairman, before that, I just wanted to say this project did require underneath that to get a resolution authorizing the Chair of the County Legislature to approve the proposed action by the IDA for issuance of the bonds for Edelweiss Dairy. The County Legislature did act on that at their last week's meeting on Wednesday, with the approval and a copy of that was included within your packet as well.

-Mr. Buffamante: Also, we need IDA Finance Committee approval of the resolution. We had a meeting earlier today where the IDA Finance Committee unanimously approved recommendation of resolution to the board. Are there any comments or questions?

Resolution:

A Motion was made by Brent Driscoll seconded by Joseph Higgins, RESOLUTION (i) AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE, EXECUTION, SALE AND DELIVERY OF THE COUNTY OF CATTARAUGUS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY'S SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL TAX-EXEMPT REVENUE BONDS (EDELWEISS DAIRY, LLC PROJECT), SERIES 2025, IN AN AGGREGATE PRINCIPAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$15,500,000; (ii) RATIFYING THE SCHEDULING, NOTICING, AND CONDUCTING OF A PUBLIC HEARING IN CONNECTION WITH THE PROJECT; (iii) APPOINTING THE COMPANY, OR ITS DESIGNEE, AS ITS AGENT TO UNDERTAKE THE PROJECT; (iv) AUTHORIZING THE UNDERTAKING OF THE PROJECT TO PROVIDE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO THE COMPANY IN THE FORM OF (A) A MORTGAGE RECORDING TAX EXEMPTION BENEFIT FOR FINANCING RELATED TO THE PROJECT AND (B) A PARTIAL ABATEMENT FROM REAL PROPERTY TAXES BENEFIT THROUGH A PILOT AGREEMENT;- AND (v) AUTHORIZING THE NEGOTIATION AND EXECUTION OF A LEASE AGREEMENT, LEASEBACK AGREEMENT, A PAYMENT-IN-LIEU-OF-TAX AGREEMENT, AN AGENT AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND PROJECT AGREEMENT AND RELATED DOCUMENTS. A roll call of the Board of Directors of the CCIDA was taken, Mr. Buffamante, Mr. Higgins, Mr. Driscoll, Mr. Cullen, Mr. Snyder, Ms. Schroder and Mr. Wimer voted yes. **Motion Carried.**

-Mr. Buffamante: Corey and our attorneys will move on towards closing.

-Mr. Wiktor: Yes, the applicant is looking to close most likely next week so we appreciate the board's support of this project and the County Legislature's support. To see this project go forward, we appreciate everyone's help and support to date.

-Mr. Buffamante: Moving backwards, we need to approve the October 28, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes.

A Motion was made by Brent Driscoll seconded by Thomas Cullen to accept the Board Meeting Minutes from October 28 2025. All in favor. **Motion Carried.**

***CCIDA Financial Reports:**

-Mr. Wiktor: We do anticipate 1-3 closings prior to the end of the year so it will be a rush over the next 6 weeks on various projects that are outstanding.

A Motion was made by Brent Driscoll seconded by Ginger Schroder to accept the October 2025 CCIDA Operating Statements as presented to the Board. All in Favor - **Motion Carried.**

***Income for October 2025 (\$13,281.25):**

- \$13,281.25 - *First half administrative fee for Kinley Contractors.*

***Income for November 2025 (\$15,725.00):**

- \$15,725.00 – *Full administrative fee for Win-Sum Ski*

- *General update on projects in process; including the Agency has 4 projects in the closing stage which should close in the 4rd quarter of this year.*

-Mr. Buffamante: Any questions or comments? I would note that through October our cash balance has dropped a couple \$100,000 from the prior year most of which relates to the funding we have provided on RevRail.

-Mr. Wiktor: Yes, that is correct. All of our invoices have been paid to date. We will footnote that with Denise as we go through the audit proceedings here in January.

-Mr. Buffamante: I think there is reimbursement coming the County.

-Mr. Wiktor: That was already received and will be noted. It was excellent help and support by the Legislature.

-Mr. Wiktor: A few highlights, a quick update report. Last Thursday we had a kickoff event for the Cattalyst Collective Group which Tom Cullen is a member as well as myself. We had really good participation, I think roughly 50-60 people in attendance at HoliMont. It was a great opportunity to highlight the 3 new programs. Tom, is there anything you want to add on that event?

-Mr. Cullen: I think it was an incredible event with a lot of different people in the entrepreneur and economic development world in Cattaraugus County. It was good to have everyone together, working together and showing momentum that is being made around our area. I know the State was represented, ESD, the Ralph Wilson Foundation flew in from Detroit for it, and it was great.

-Mr. Buffamante: Yes, I thought it was very positive and echo what Tom said. The group of people that were there that supported it was wonderful. I think it's important that the related organizations are getting the messages out because it's really targeted towards small entrepreneurial type endeavors that are important to the economic development to the County.

-Mr. Cullen: Ultimately Ralph Wilson Foundation gave a million dollars as a leverage fund for the County and so the entities that are involved in this group, which included the IDA, JCC, St. Bonaventure, SBDC and those

types of organizations, are trying to figure out the best ways to leverage that money and capital in ways that will ultimately lift up the County from an entrepreneur economic development standpoint.

-Mr. Wiktor: As Tom was touching on, it's a new vision with the collective team that Crystal Abers through the County started about 15-16 years ago of coordinating getting all of the economic development groups, agencies, collegians and workforce people together on a by-weekly meeting. That which then spawned out of that working with Bob Fornes and Tom Cullen who more or less spearheaded the relationship with the Ralph Wilson Foundation.

-Mr. Wiktor: Just a couple of project updates. Regarding Alle-Catt Wind, the IDA has received some revised documentation and application and components of the application process so that project is re-engaged with 3 public hearings set for December 3, 2025. We will be working with the board once we hear more and lean towards moving forward on that project.

-Internal (IDA Meetings/Discussions, Snapshot):

- ✓ Meeting with Andy Burr regarding County wide project and development updates.
- ✓ Meeting with Scott Symans.
- ✓ Attended Greater Buffalo Sports Hall of Fame ceremony.
- ✓ Continued meeting and discussion with a possible Canadian Manufacture considering a project in the Olean Area.
- ✓ Met with a commercial developer with respect to possible commercial development in the County.
- ✓ Attended the Cattalyst Collective meeting.
- ✓ Attend Cattalyst Collective kickoff event at HoliMont on 11-13-25.
- ✓ General project updates and notices to the Board.

-Mr. Wiktor: Holiday Valley was just ranked #4 in the East by Ski Magazine which is a tremendous ranking. Last year I think they were ranked #12 or #13 so they greatly moved up. Also, they recently were ranked #1 for lodging in the East so that is a great feather in their cap. I pass this along to the board in their support of various projects where those improvements, expenditures and investments into the resort are not just known locally, but are also ranked in Ski Magazine. I think it is just great for the resort and I appreciate the board's support in their projects.

-Mr. Buffamante: It's interesting they were ranked above a lot of well-known resorts in New England, New Hampshire, Adirondacks and Vermont.

-Mr. Higgins: They are the only area that has critical drop that is below 1500 which is another really amazing thing.

-Mr. Wiktor: Thank you all for carving time out for this meeting. Are there any specific questions?

-Ms. Schroder: I would to ask you to follow up with the Towns on their Host Community Agreements for Alle-Catt Wind as heard last night that Freedom has a meeting as they are extremely unhappy with their Host Community Agreement. I would reach out to Dustin Bliss and find out what is going on there.

-Mr. Murray: It was approved, Freedom?

-Ms. Schroder: Under duress. I don't know much about it but am asking you to shepherd the process.

-Mr. Wiktor: Absolutely, the process has rekindled with an updated project and what we have explained with our partners within the County is, until those HCAs are signed off with the Towns, County and Schools, this board has no ability to act universally.

-Ms. Schroder: We just need everyone going in the same direction.

-Mr. Wiktor: I appreciate that, I will follow up with Dustin.

-Mr. Snyder: Is there any construction going on?

-Ms. Schroder: They have the entire Article 7 transmission line going up, so all those towers and they have done the access roads.

-Mr. Buffamante: Is there any other official information we need to do at the meeting?

-Mr. Snyder: Is there any updates on Olean Center Mall?

-Mr. Wiktor: Bob, I and their counsel had a conversation back in October and they did put in an application to the State with respect to a housing component and they have not heard back yet. Outside of that, we have heard very little from the developer. I will check in on that project in December.

-Mr. Higgins: The next meeting says location to be determined.

-Mr. Wiktor: We may have our meeting at a different location here in Ellicottville. We will keep you posted.

-Mr. Wiktor: Again, to the board, we appreciate all your time and I am honored to have you part of the board.

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

- ✓ **Handout:** *“Economic Impact of the Seneca Nation of Indians.”*
- ✓ **Times Union:** Article: *“Large renewable energy projects are blindsiding upstate communities.”*
- ✓ **SkiMag:** Article: *“The Reader-Ranked Top 20 Resorts in the East for 2026.”*
- ✓ **WGRZ:** Article: *“New York’s all-electric building law faces legal challenge.”*
- ✓ **Handout:** *“Olean Job Fair.”*

-Mr. Buffamante: This was set up to be an abbreviated meeting so I would call for a motion to adjourn.

A Motion was made by Brent Driscoll seconded by Joseph Higgins to adjourn the meeting at 11:52 a.m. All in Favor – Motion Carried. .

*** Next CCIDA Board of Directors Meeting: January 13, 2026 at 11:15 a.m.**
at the CCIDA Offices
9 East Washington Street
Ellicottville, NY
and also, via Zoom