

COUNTY OF CATTARAUGUS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

July 21, 2026

North Park Innovations Group-Conference Room

6442 NY-242- East

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. Brent Driscoll
Mr. Michael Wimer
Ms. Ginger Schroder

Excused:

Mr. James (Joe) Snyder
Mr. Thomas Cullen

CCIDA Staff/Counsel:

Mr. Corey R. Wiktor, Executive Director, CCIDA
Mr. Robert Murray, Legal Counsel, Harris Beach Murtha
Ms. Crystal Almeter, Executive Assistant, CCIDA

Presenters/Guests:

Lori Northrup, Chairman of North Park Innovations Group, Inc.
Bill Northrup, CEO of North Park Innovations Group, Inc.
Bill Bursee, CEO of Steelbound Franchising LLC/Steelhouse of Buffalo, LLC
Kim Cook, Director of Operations of Steelbound Franchising LLC/Steelhouse of Buffalo, LLC
Dan Sessler, President/Owner of I&S Inc. of NY (via zoom)
Emily Palumbos, ESP Consulting on behalf of I&S Inc. of NY (via zoom)
Rhonda Destino, ESP Consulting on behalf of I&S Inc. of NY (via zoom)

Mr. Buffamante called the meeting to order at 11:17 a.m.

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

A Motion was made by Brent Driscoll seconded by Michael Wimer to accept the Board Meeting Minutes from June 23, 2026. All in favor. **Motion Carried.** Mr. Snyder and Mr. Cullen were excused.

-Mr. Wiktor: Thank you everyone for joining our July 21, 2026 Board Meeting. We do have a pretty tight agenda and will be maneuvering a few things around. We will start with the first application for Steelbound, then jump to I & S, have a tour of North Park and then come back and conduct the remainder of the business. Bill Bursee and Kim Cook are here today from Steelbound. We have included the application, the cost benefit analysis, the SEQR and a general write up of the proposed project. It is a very unique addition not only to Steelbound but to the market of Western New York that would all be produced locally right here in Ellicottville at their corporate location. Bill has been a long time committed investor in the County and the region. Bill, if you could give a quick introduction and overview of the project.

-Mr. Bursee: Sure. New York State has created a farm program that allows us to circumvent the tide house law which says if a manufacture manufactures liquor, then it cannot sell then to a restaurant or bar as they have to sell through a distributor. New York State says if we use 75% ingredients indigenous of New York State, made here, in this State, by our local farmers, then we can then get outside of that law and conduct business in New York State. That allows us for the first time to make a product specific to an organization and sell them that product. We are realizing companies are hurting as they have to buy for example 10 cases of a product to get a good price point to put in on their shelves so their cash flow is getting crippled. We want to come in and sell them the liquid only so we can do that with these ceramic coated bottles that go through a sanitizer. We can deliver them what they need and pick up their empty bottles and start territory by territory until we establish the areas that we wish to take care of, which is about 6 counties. Because we are a franchise, we are going to amend the franchise to be able to sell now manufacturing along with what we currently sell. What we are building here is not just a liquor, but a product that is going to help out our local restaurants, event centers, banquet centers, bars, liquor stores or wherever we sell this, we are going to create an infrastructure. The infrastructure is worth more than the product because once we build this and show that is scalable, we will be able to sell at wholesale and at retail. The other thing we have been doing is we have gotten very close with the New York State Police. We have rights to their logos and products and produce for all 12 troops within the State and they all get a challenge coin with the product. We are going to the State Fair and last time we sold about 200-300 bottles with them. The other thing we are doing is a special bourbon with a bust of Grover Cleveland's head on it. You have to buy the introductory bottle which comes with a coin and a book which talks about the history of Grover Cleveland. Currently we have zero competition. No one is doing anything near to what we are doing. This is something we can be proud of.

-Mr. Wiktor: What I think is a great focal point is it has 6 new net jobs. It's not just sliding from his current deck. Bill is putting a lot of investment into new jobs, the manufacturing and what I like is 75% of the product is grown in New York State. There is a spinoff of agriculture and by him promoting this new line not only does it afford a cost point to various bars and restaurants, but is utilizing local manufacturing, local distribution as well as New York products. This is a significant new net investment with a 6,000 square foot building, the trial phase, an electric vehicle, the casts, the bottles, the racking and the cleaning. Bill has spent a significant amount of time and research. I think from a board point of view, this hits a new line of business, manufacturing and reenforces the local New York State agricultural side and allows him to sell his product at a price point that I think most bars have a need for it. We are not asking for any action today, that will be in August. I would pose to the board if there are any questions?

-Mr. Buffamante: The next step is the public hearing and then it will come back to the August meeting.

-Mr. Wiktor: Correct. Thank you Bill and Kim.

New Applications

- 1. Steelbound Franchising LLC/Steelhouse of Buffalo, LLC:

- Steelbound Franchising LLC/Steelhouse of Buffalo, LLC is proposing a refillable spirits program built around a simple but powerful idea: the customer should not have to buy a new glass bottle every time a retailer buys vodka, gin, whiskey, rum or other spirits. Instead, Steelbound would sell the liquid, collect the empty bottle, sanitize it, refill it, reseal it and place it back into circulation. The program would use durable ceramic-coated 1-liter bottles, stackable return crates, electric delivery vehicles and a local route system.

The first market would be Western New York, branded as Steelbound 716. Future markets could use regional prefixes such as 585, 315, 518 and a Five Boroughs / New York City identity.

- Launch market: Western New York 716.
- Manufacturing and operating base: Ellicottville, New York.
- Primary customer: retailers, restaurants, bars, banquet centers and hospitality accounts.
- Primary advantage: reusable bottle economics plus New York Farm Distillery regulatory privileges.
- Environmental advantage: major landfill diversion, reduced glass/cardboard waste and electric route delivery with zero tailpipe emissions. The project will be located at 6600 Route 219, Ellicottville, NY. *We have included an attachment that describes and gives the complete project overview in its entirety.*

-The Total Project Investment: \$1,200,000 (-,+)

-Mr. Wiktor: We will jump to I & S Inc. of NY. We have 2 Resolutions to consider. I & S Inc. of NY was at our June Board Meeting. The IDA conducted the public hearing on July 14, 2026 and there was no one in attendance nor did we receive any comments. We did include in the packet a letter from the Town Attorney, Peter Sorgi, conveying the Town's support of the IDA and its benefits to the project. The project has been moving along and there are some critical dates ahead due by July 31, 2026. We have our Inducement Resolution as well as a Supporting Resolution for I & S CFA Application for Empire State Development Regional Council Capital Funds.

-Mr. Buffamante: As a reminder, this is for all three of our benefits, sales tax, PILOT and mortgage.

-Mr. Wiktor: Correct.

Application/Project in Process

- 1. I & S Inc. of NY:

- I & S Inc. of NY was founded in 1988 and is headquartered in Allegany, NY where they serve the oil, gas and solution mining industry. I & S Inc. of NY has submitted an Application to the Agency seeking NYS Sales Tax Abatement, Mortgage Tax Abatement and Real Property Tax Abatement relating to their proposed expansion project. The project will consist of the acquisition and construction of a new office, new lay down yard and cold storage buildings at property located at 4174 Route 417 & 4296 Route 417, Allegany, NY. **The Public Hearing was held on July 14, 2026 at 9:00 a.m. in the Town of Allegany.** No one was in attendance. Included in your board packet is a letter from the Town of Allegany attorney (Peter Sorgi) conveying the Town's support of the IDA and the project.

-The Total Project Investment: \$9,000,000 (-,+)

Resolution:

A Motion was made by Joseph Higgins seconded by Michael Wimer, RESOLUTION OF THE COUNTY OF CATTARAUGUS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY: (i) ACCEPTING THE APPLICATION OF I & S, INC. OF N.Y., 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) RATIFYING THE SCHEDULING, NOTICING, AND CONDUCTING OF A PUBLIC HEARING IN CONNECTION WITH THE PROJECT; (iii) MAKING A DETERMINATION PURSUANT TO THE STATE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY REVIEW ACT; (iv) APPOINTING THE COMPANY, OR ITS DESIGNEE, AS ITS AGENT TO UNDERTAKE THE PROJECT; (v) AUTHORIZING THE UNDERTAKING OF THE PROJECT TO PROVIDE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO THE COMPANY IN THE FORM OF (A) A SALES TAX EXEMPTION BENEFIT FOR PURCHASES AND RENTALS RELATED TO THE ACQUISITION, CONSTRUCTION AND EQUIPPING OF THE PROJECT, (B) A MORTGAGE RECORDING TAX EXEMPTION BENEFIT FOR FINANCING RELATED TO THE PROJECT, AND (C) A PARTIAL ABATEMENT FROM REAL PROPERTY TAXES BENEFIT THROUGH THE PILOT AGREEMENT; AND (vi) AUTHORIZING THE NEGOTIATION AND EXECUTION OF A LEASE AGREEMENT, LEASEBACK AGREEMENT, A PAYMENT-IN-LIEU-OF-TAX AGREEMENT, 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. Driscoll, Ms. Schroder and Mr. Wimer voted yes. **Motion Carried.** Mr. Snyder and Mr. Cullen were excused.

A Motion was made by Michael Wimer seconded by Brent Driscoll to approve the resolution supporting I & S, Inc. of New York 2026 CFA Application for Empire State Development Regional Council Capital Funds. All in Favor - **Motion Carried.** Mr. Snyder and Mr. Cullen were excused.

-Mr. Wiktor: Dan, Rhonda and Emily. Thank you for being on zoom today. Do you have any questions for us?

-Mr. Sessler: I do not have any questions but I would like to thank everybody for your support.

-Mr. Wiktor: Thank you Dan. Emily, I will give you a call later this afternoon.

-Mr. Driscoll: Good luck with your project.

-Ms. Palumbos: Thank you. Again, the letter of support is extremely helpful and the supporting resolution is great. We would like to thank the board as this partnership is great.

-Mr. Wiktor: We appreciate it and will keep moving forward.

-Mr. Wiktor: Welcome Bill and Lori Northrup. We would like to convey our sincere thanks and appreciation to Bill, Lori and Gallagher not only for hosting us today, but for also providing a tour of their operations. Just a little bit of a background, if the Board recalls, back in 2024 North Park submitted an application with CCIDA with respect to the various abatements. I believe you were considering either a 3,000 or an 8,000 square foot facility.

-Ms. Northrup: It was 5,000.

-Mr. Wiktor: Ok, and you had 38 positions and were looking to hire 2-3 more positions at that time. They are now I believe at 51 positions.

-Ms. Northrup: We are at 54.

-Mr. Wiktor: It is incredible. I can give the floor over to you and you can give a context on the new project and then we can do a quick tour.

-Ms. Northrup: Ok, I am Lori Northrup and this is my husband Bill Northrup and my secret weapon Gallagher. We will give you a little history of the company and then give you a tour.

-Mr. Wiktor: Yes, that would be great.

-Ms. Northrup: I started the company in 1980. We grew the company from 1 product. Bill joined the company about 15 years ago after having a variety of his own businesses. In 2016 we sold off the main company with the brand name Stratton Tool and we retained a couple of small product lines. We changed the entity name from Stride Tool to North Park Innovations.

-Mr. Northrup: To give you a perspective, in those 10 years, it has grown 43% every year. We just happen to be in a time where education is changing and the hands-on people are recognizing that you cannot have critical thinking without some type of hands on.

-Ms. Northrup: Luckily, we are in training of the skilled trades.

-Mr. Wiktor: Yes, there is a great need for this. The products you make and ship right here in Ellicottville are going from international to all over the country.

-Ms. Northrup: You all have a set of our catalogs as there are not a lot of products on the floor today.

-Mr. Wimer: Quick question. Your project is to provide additional capacity for what you are doing here now?

-Ms. Northrup: Yes, the same business.

-Mr. Wiktor: Great point Mike. The project that is before the board is the purchase of the former O'Laughlin/Timberhut building on 219. They need the space and it includes about 10 new net jobs. I think they will utilize the front for a show room. It really sets up perfectly as people could come in and have a training seminar/demo and have the showroom as it is. That is the project for the board.

New Applications

- 2. North Park Innovations Group, Inc./Lakeview Overlook LLC:

- North Park Innovations Group, Inc./Lakeview Overlook LLC has submitted an Application to the Agency seeking NYS Sales Tax Abatement, Mortgage Tax Abatement and Real Property Tax Abatement relating to their manufacturing Operations. The project will consist of the acquisition of a commercial building located at 4580 Route 219 in the Town of Great Valley, NY as well as upgrades to the building and equipment purchases. The project will create 10 new jobs within the County as well! *We have included an attachment that describes the Company and investment in its entirety.*

-The Total Project Investment: \$500,000 (-,+)

-Presentation and Tour by North Park Innovations Group, Inc.:

-Lori and Bill Northrup of North Park Innovations have graciously offered to provide a tour of their facility, and their recent expansion project following today's Board Meeting. We sincerely thank Lori and Bill for all their hospitality and gracious hosting and support and continued investments! The expansion that they constructed in 24-25', is already at capacity!

-Mr. Wiktor: We really appreciate the tour so the board can see and touch what you do here. We will have the public hearing and bring this back to the board in August. It is a tremendous investment. Are there any questions?

-Mr. Buffamante: Are you moving specific products down to Great Valley?

-Ms. Northrup: That is a good question. We need to gather as a team as there are a lot of different strategies.

-Mr. Northrup: In the front where there is glass, we are going to do a showroom. We are going to put a router down there and aluminum automated processing.

-Ms. Northrup: The building is going to allow us double the room so we are excited about it.

-Mr. Wiktor: The building is 14,000 square feet. That will be a neat opportunity for your customers. Again, thank you for the tour, hosting the meeting and delicious lunch. Thank you for your investment into the county and region and being community minded in your operations since day one.

-Mr. Northrup: Thank you for coming, we appreciate it.

-Ms. Northrup: I would like to tell you how impressed it has been to work with Corey over the years and the amount of opportunities and ideas he has brought forth. He is able to whip through everything that needs to be done and I am very impressed with him. As a business owner I would like to say thank you Corey.

-Mr. Northrup: Norm was good, but you take it to another level so thank you.

-Mr. Wiktor: Thank you, that is very kind of you. Thank you.

-Mr. Northrup: We look forward to seeing you again.

-Mr. Wiktor: I appreciate your time today. To reiterate, with Steelbound there was no formal action, we will conduct a public hearing and come back to the board in August. Same with North Park, we will hold a public hearing in the Town of Great Valley and bring back to the board in August. I appreciate the support on both of those projects.

***CCIDA Financial Reports:**

A Motion was made by Brent Driscoll seconded by Ginger Schroder to accept the June 2026 Operating Statement as presented to the Board. All in Favor - **Motion Carried.** Mr. Snyder and Mr. Cullen were excused.

-Mr. Wiktor: We are going to meet with the finance committee to review the 2026 budget and revise a few items and bring to the August meeting.

***Income for June 2026 \$127,461.75:**

-\$49,752.00- (Full Administration Fee-Win-Sum Ski Corp.)

-\$ 7,491.00- (Full Administration Fee - HoliMont, Inc.)

-\$70,218.75- (2nd half Administration Fee – Hidden Gems/Creeley Construction)

- General update on projects in process; including the Agency has 5 projects in the closing stage which should close in the 3rd-4th quarter of this year.

***Invest Buffalo Niagara-Board Level Membership:**

- At our June IDA Board meeting, Matt Hubacher from Invest Buffalo Niagara presented an overview of IBN and discussed strategies and opportunities for closer collaboration, including how Invest Buffalo Niagara can assist with site development initiatives in Cattaraugus County. The objective is to significantly expand collaboration in order to strengthen the County's economic development base and business attraction efforts. Matt presented an informative slide deck presentation to outline the discussion and overview.

We have included in the Board packet a breakdown for the Investor Level that IBN currently has. I am seeking support from the Board to increase our yearly contribution of \$5,000 to a \$10,000 to become a Board Member (level).

A Motion was made by Michael Wimer seconded by Brent Driscoll to increase the yearly contribution to \$10,000. All in Favor - Motion Carried. Mr. Snyder and Mr. Cullen were excused.

***2024 ALICE NYS ALICE and 2024 Cattaraugus County ALICE Report(s):**

-In 2024, based on the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), 14% of New York households were defined as being in poverty. Yet this measure did not account for an additional 34% of the state's households — more than twice as many — that were also in financial hardship. These households are ALICE: Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed — earning above the FPL, but not enough to afford basic expenses in the county where they live. Forty-Eight Percent of New York Households Faced Financial Hardship in 2024:

Total State Households: 7,809,082

Above ALICE Threshold hold 52%

Poverty 14 %

Below ALICE Threshold 48%

Sources: ALICE Threshold, 2024; U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2024 Combining ALICE households plus those living in poverty, an estimated 48% of households in New York were below the ALICE Threshold in 2024 (Figure 1-see handout). This rate was higher than the [national average](#) (41%) and placed New York 49th among all states and the District of Columbia (with 1st representing the lowest rate of hardship).

The Cattaraugus County United Way recently gave our office a call wondering if we have any economic data to share **as there was a significant drop in poverty level in Cattaraugus County from 2023 to 2024.**

Census-based ALICE data shows households below the financial-hardship threshold in Cattaraugus County fell from 50% in 2023 to about 40% in 2024 — roughly 2,900 fewer struggling households in a single year, the largest one-year improvement in the 2010–2024 series. The timing lines up with major job-creating investments in the county, including Great Lakes Cheese and Cimolai-HY reaching hiring milestones in 2023–2024. This is a genuinely encouraging, third-party-verified data point.

It is not proof that any one project — or any one organization — caused the change, and it should never be presented that way, we underline this point.

We have included the entire 2024 ALICE Report, the specific Report for Cattaraugus County, as well as a write

up that Corey provided (he worked on with a friend of his who is an accountant who helped formulate a general synopsis), with caveats relating to the findings of the 2024 ALICE Report.

-Congressman Langworthy Announces More Than \$3.1 Million in FAA Grants for Southern Tier Airports; \$2.21 Million for Olean Airport:

-This is great news for the Olean and the Southern Tier as whole! We thank all worked work so hard to secure this key grant money relating to further vestment and infrastructure buildout at the Airport.

Corey has also provided a general economic development impact report on the Olean Airport and its key infrastructure/figures that it provides to the City, County and Region as a whole.

***Executive Director's Monthly Report:**

-Please see included detailed *Executive Directors Reports for June 2026 and July 2026* for key business Development meetings and general updates.

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

- ✓ **The Villager**: Article: "*Ski Areas Build More than Mountains/Holiday Valley and HoliMont Drive Economy in Catt. Co.*". Article written by Corey Wiktor that explains in detail the economic engines and economic tax drivers that Holiday Valley and HoliMont are.
- ✓ **Handout**: New York Comptroller's Office: "*Taxpayer Migration in New York State*".
- ✓ **Handout**: Camoin Associates: "*Making Housing Work in Small Markets*".
- ✓ **Camoin Associates**: Article: "*Siting and Building Data Centers: What Economic Developers Should Know*".
- ✓ **Handout**: "*Recap and Economic Impact of the Olean Airport*". Corey compiled
- ✓ **Olean Times Herald**: Article: "*Olean to receive \$2.21M in FAA aid for airport work*".
- ✓ **Handout**: "*Congressman Langworthy Announces More Than \$3.1 Million in FAA Grants for Southern Tier Airports*".
- ✓ **Reason**: Article: "*New York Becomes the First State to Ban New Data Centers*".
- ✓ **WREN**: Article: "*Reaction to Hochul's data center executive order*".

Executive Session:

A Motion was made by Michael Wimer seconded by Brent Driscoll to go into Executive Session for a matter of attorney/client privileges at 1:36 p.m. All in Favor - **Motion Carried**. Mr. Snyder and Mr. Cullen were excused.

A Motion was made by Brent Driscoll seconded by Michael Wimer to exit Executive Session and return to the regular meeting at 1:54 p.m. All in Favor - **Motion Carried**. For the official record, no action was taken in the Executive Session. Mr. Snyder and Mr. Cullen were excused.

A Motion was made by Michael Wimer seconded by Thomas Buffamante to adjourn the meeting at 1:55 p.m. All in Favor – Motion Carried. Mr. Snyder and Mr. Cullen were excused.

*** Next CCIDA Board of Directors Meeting: August 18, 2026 at 11:15 a.m.**
at CCIDA Offices
9 East Washington Street
Ellicottville, NY
and also, via Zoom