

Greene County Industrial Development Authority

93 E. East High Street
Waynesburg, PA 15370
Tel: 724.852.5259

GCIDA Board Meeting Minutes July 19, 2022

I. The meeting was called to order at 11:30 AM. Those present were as follows:

Mike Belding, Chairman

George Scull, Vice Chairman

Greta Mooney, Secretary

Phil Hook, Treasurer

Cheryl Semonick, Board Member

Crystal Simmons, CDBG/HOME Director

Betsy McClure, Commissioner

Blair Zimmerman, Commissioner

Rich Cleveland, Exec. Director County Development

Phone:

Ernie DeHaas, Solicitor

Connie Bloom, IDA Manager

Public:

None

II. "If a potential conflict exists, you are duty bound to disclose."

III. Approval of Minutes – July 12, 2022

Mr. Belding requested a motion to approve the July 12, 2022 Meeting Minutes.

Motion to approve- Mr. Scull

Second- Ms. Semonick

All in favor.

IV. New Business

None

V. Old Business

a. EPA Consultant

Mr. Belding opened the floor for discussion. Ms. Semonick stated she was made aware of some information after the last meeting and has some unresolved questions. She added that she felt the Board needed more time to make the decision and felt that they were misled on the timeline. Ms. Semonick mentioned at the last meeting it was presented that the decision needed to be made to meet the guidelines, however, looking at the guidelines the Board could have tabled the decision until August and still met the timeline of October. Ms. Semonick stated that it was brought to her

attention that Ms. Simmons has a side business that could be in direct conflict with the IDA. She added that Ms. Simmons is on the committee, she is the one who put together the scoring sheet and her along with Ms. Bloom would have known who submitted a proposal. Ms. Semonick explained that if you would remove Ms. Simmons score sheet and re-average then Moody and Associates should have been awarded the bid. She continued that she is looking at conflicts, who is involved on the committee, direct feedback and she feels the Board should be the one making the decisions. Ms. Semonick stated that if the Board is the one making the decision, then the staff of the IDA should be taking direction from the Board. She added that if you create the score sheet you shouldn't be on the committee to score and that there were issues and confusion with the score sheet. Ms. Semonick explained one member of the committee originally had 11 questions on their score sheet and had to change it to nine. Mr. Belding explained that when the RFQ originally expired, there was only one submission so the deadline was extended. He added that after the extended deadline the Board unanimously voted and awarded AMO Environmental Decisions. Mr. Belding stated that per the Board, Ms. Bloom sent a meeting request to Mr. Firely and he inquired on the topic and Ms. Bloom didn't know since she was not part of that discussion. He added he called Mr. Firely and mentioned the external email that was received and that the Board awarded the EPA consultant to AMO. Mr. Cleveland explained he has handed out each of the committee's score sheets and the tally sheet. He added that he received a phone call from the EPA apologizing for the tone of the email that was received and that our contact is Michael Taurino. Ms. Mooney asked if Ms. Branche was removed as our liaison and Mr. Cleveland stated he is not sure she was ever our liaison. Mr. Cleveland explained he was asked to reach back out to the EPA and ask if any County employee or outside source contacted Ms. Branche to discuss some of the items in the email and the reply was no. Mr. Cleveland added that he indicated he wasn't sure how Ms. Branche found out some of the information since it was prior to the contract being awarded and the EPA response was there could have been some emails. Mr. Cleveland explained the reason he scored the way he did is because of the relationship with the EPA. He added that he is aware of the concern with Mr. Firely being on a couple EPA Committees but in the grant world that is a blessing. Ms. Semonick stated she is concerned with the scoring sheet and Mr. Cleveland stated that this is essentially the same one used for all RFQ's and based on comments changes were made. Mr. Belding added that there is a FOIA request for all emails addressed to Greene County from Ms. Branche. Commissioner Zimmerman's concern is that he reached out to Ms. Branche immediately after the meeting, Mr. Cleveland called twice and Ms. Mooney also called and Ms. Branche never returned the calls. Ms. Mooney stated she shared her thoughts with the Board in Executive Session and those thoughts haven't changed. She added the only thing that changed since then is she became aware that AMO is leasing from Mr. Hook. Mr. Hook stated that is incorrect. He added that a few months ago Mr. Firely approached him looking for an office space so Mr. Hook showed him the offices of Hook and Hook located on High Street, as well as, across from the fairgrounds. Mr. Hook added that a few months later Mr. Firely indicated he was interested in the space across from the fairgrounds but it was unavailable at that point. Mr. Hook said since he hadn't heard back from Mr. Firely, he assumed he was no longer interested. Ms. Mooney said Mr. Firely never had a lease and Mr. Hook confirmed. Ms. Mooney indicated at this point we don't know if he has an office in Greene County. Ms. Bloom asked if we knew where Mr. Firely's office is located and Mr. Hook said no. Commissioner McClure stated he is using the 430 East Oakview Drive address and Mr. Hook indicated that if he is he shouldn't be. Mr. Hook stated that if he needed an address, it was to be the 189 West High Street address. Commissioner McClure explained that she is looking at this from the County's point of view. She added that first off Moody came in lower in cost with an eight-man team and we need an Environmental Engineer within a sixty-mile radius so we don't have to pay travel expenses. Commissioner McClure stated she made her concerns known to the Committee and then a few days later the email came in from Ms. Branche. She added that the email was unsettling because Ms. Branche is listed as Mr. Firely's second reference in the proposal. Commissioner McClure explained that when she questioned the charges for the Environmental Reviews for the HOME program the price dropped from \$6,000 to \$4,000. Ms. Mooney asked what our plan of action would be if we award this and then find something. Mr. Hook stated he feels with the tone of the email the only safe thing to do is to go with the scoring system, however, with Ms. Semonick's concerns, maybe the scoring itself is flawed. Commissioner McClure stated that Ms. Mooney used the wrong scoring sheet and Ms. Mooney stated she did let the Board know that. Ms. Mooney added she was asked to rescore but she didn't feel she would have been able to be objective because of the all and all the information she had learned. Mr. Scull indicated he feels both of the companies are competent and he went with the consensus but he made it known he was a supporter of Moody and Associates. He added he is in favor of continuing a relationship with AMO. Mr. Belding asked Mr. Cleveland how many responses we have received in the

last six month for RFQ's the County has advertised. Mr. Cleveland replied one and Ms. Simmons added she has received three. Mr. Scull mentioned he appreciated the gentleman from Moody and Associates calling in for the GCBRAC meeting. Mr. Hook asked Mr. DeHaas if the Board is able to change the decision since at the last meeting it voted to award the contract to AMO. Mr. DeHaas replied the answer is yes, however, he hasn't seen the guidelines for the EPA grant. He added that this is for services from a qualified consultant and you don't have to take the lowest responsible bid. Mr. DeHaas discussed the other two items that need to be taken into consideration by the Board. He stated if there is conduct by one or more employees of the County that the County would need to address it and the second item is the email that was sent from the Ms. Branche. Mr. DeHaas explained at the last meeting the Board would have been fine with either choice, however, now official action has been taken and the firm is aware of that action. He added that the Authority can legally rescind the award but the consequences could be criticism, scrutiny by the EPA or cause for legal action. Mr. DeHaas stated the Authority doesn't have a signed contract with AMO and if the decision is reversed and awarded to Moody they would be opened up to at least criticism. Mr. Scull stated that he feels that if we rescind the decision the County should maintain a relationship with AMO. Mr. Hook stated the Board can change their mind and award the contract to Moody but it would need to be done with objective material. He inquired if there is enough time to create another panel and have them score. Mr. Belding stated if we would have closed the RFQ on time there was only one applicant. He added it was extended and we went through the scoring sheet, the Board upheld that decision. Mr. Belding indicated that the liability of change is much greater than not. Ms. Mooney suggested putting a motion to the floor on whether the Board is rescinding the award to AMO. Commissioner Zimmerman stated his concern is if something is found in the Right to Know request and Ms. Mooney stated that was her concern as well and wanted to make sure there is a path if that is the case. Mr. DeHaas suggested the better course of action is to not rescind the action.

Mr. Belding requests a motion to rescind the award of the EPA Environmental Consultant award to AMO Environmental Decisions.

*Motion to approve- Mr. Scull
Second-none
Motion failed.*

VI. Public Comment

None

VII. Executive Session

None

VIII. Next Meeting – August 9, 2022

IX. Adjournment

Mr. Belding requests a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:25 PM.

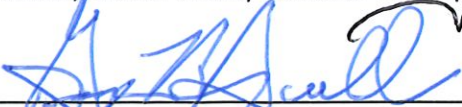
*Motion to approve- Mr. Hook
Second- Mr. Scull
All in favor.*

MEETING MINUTES CERTIFICATION

We, the undersigned, agree that the minutes taken above were approved in their entirety by the Greene County Industrial Development Authority on August 9, 2022.



Chairman, Greene County Industrial Development Authority



Vice Chairman, Greene County Industrial Development Authority



Secretary, Greene County Industrial Development Authority