

## ERIE CRIZ AUTHORITY

February 19, 2025 Meeting

Attendees: Board Members: Matthew Wachter, Matthew Good, Daria Devlin, Joseph Vendetti; Carla Higgins, Katrina Vincent; Michael Raftis and Roger Richards

Also attending: Brian Cressman, Esq., James Walczak, Esq., Julie Pecoraro, Kathy Kelly, Gus Pine presenting for Convention Center Authority projects; Katie Nagle from Senator Dan Laughlin, Sheila Sterrett, Ed Kissell and David Uhlig.

1. Call to Order - The meeting was called to order at 3:01 by Matthew Wachter.
2. Executive Session - Discussion of personnel matters regarding Executive Director search. No minutes were taken.
3. Public Comment - No public comments.
4. Review of Minutes - A motion to approve minutes from the January 15, 2025 meeting was made by Roger Richards and seconded by Matthew Wachter. The minutes were approved unanimously.
5. Hiring of an Executive Director - The Board voted to hire Brian Polito as the Executive Director of the Erie CRIZ Authority. The motion to do so was made by Matt Wachter. The motion was seconded by Rogers Richards. Daria Devlin abstained from the vote.
6. Discussion of Potential Projects - Gus Pine, the Executive Director of Erie Events, offered a power point presentation, highlighting Erie Events successful revitalization efforts throughout the City of Erie, as well as several current and further projects that would benefit from CRIZ funding. Erie Events believes they would be a great candidate to partner with CRIZ due to the high profile of their current successes. They are currently operating four venues within the City of Erie, including Erie Insurance Arena, the Warner Theater, UPMC Park and the Bayfront Convention Center. All of which are operating without using any local tax dollars. They also operate two hotels on the Bayfront and partner with 8 Great Tuesdays, Erie Promotions & Expos, Two 45 Waterfront Grille, Shoreline Bar & Grille, The Cove Restaurant, Bayhouse Oyster Bar and Restaurant, Pier 6 Rooftop Bar and Restaurant as well as Monacella Massage and Kinesiology.

Mr. Pine discussed several projects in varying stages of readiness and research, including the Market House, which was referred to as a shovel ready project, that they are expecting to break ground on this year. Other projects included parking ramp expansion, Bayfront Place, potential expansion of the Bayfront Convention Center; Downtown Entertainment District; Liberty Park improvements and the Erie Zoo.

Board Members asked several questions about each of the planned and potential projects, including estimated costs, taxability potential, CRIZ requirements and qualifications, as well as the potential need for city counsel approval on some of the projects.

The Board encouraged Mr. Pine to continue to provide as much information regarding any and all projects, indicating that these are the types of redevelopment projects that are perfect for CRIZ funding. The Board indicated that they would be interested in the continued development of the Bayfront and requested that he get more defined numbers and timelines attached to each of the projects discussed, including the possible tax generation results.

Mr. Pine inquired as to whether there is an initial application process. The Board is currently working on creating the process and will know more once they meet with the advisors.

There was a very brief discussion about possibly purchasing bonds at some point, with a warning that this would have to be researched and studied before any steps were taken.

7. Discussion of Hiring of Advisors – It was discussed that the Board has hired FourScore Group as well as Randy Patterson, who has experience with the Lancaster CRIZ. The terms of the advisor agreements were not discussed. FourScore is planning a site visit on March 10th. It was decided that this should occur at the MacDonald Illig Law Firm, so that the advisors can see the Bayfront area.
8. Reminder regarding Ethics Act Filing Requirement – The Board was reminded to send the Ethics Act Filing Requirements to either Attorney Walczak or Attorney Cressman.
9. Old Business / New Business - DCD (Department of Community & Economic Development) is planning a visit on March 11th and would like to get together in the morning. The Board discussed setting up a breakfast event with the DCD and Board Members who would be working directly with them.
10. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:20 pm. Matt Wachter motioned to adjourn. Matthew Good or Joe Vendetti seconded the motion. All remaining board members approved unanimously.