

**CITY OF ERIE REVITALIZATION AND IMPROVEMENT ZONE AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

November 20, 2024

100 State Street, Suite 700, Erie, PA 16507

Attendees: Matthew Wachter, Matthew Good, Daria Devlin, Joseph Vendetti (via Teams), Carla Higgins, Katrina Vincent, Cathryn Morris-Easterling (via Teams), Michael Raftis, and Roger Richards

Also attending: Brian Cressman, Esq., James Walczak, Esq., Julie Pecoraro, and Katie Nagle from Senator Dan Laughlin's office.

1. Call to Order. Meeting was called to order at 3 p.m. by Matthew Wachter.
2. Public comment. No public comment.
3. Review of Minutes. A motion to approve minutes from the October 9, 2024 meeting and the September 19, 2024 meeting was made by Matthew Wachter, seconded by Carla Higgins, and approved unanimously.
4. Discussion of Project Timelines. Matthew Wachter discussed the timeline of future projects. The Board and then the DCED must approve all projects, even those included in the initial DCED application, and approval can take ninety days and possibly up to a year. Because of this, Mr. Wachter suggested that the Board begin its approval process early in 2025 to be ready to submit project applications to DCED so that projects will be ready to go to cover the first year's increment.

Mr. Wachter suggested asking those with shovel-ready projects to present to the Board in early 2025 regarding their status and what they would need through this project. Daria Devlin requested that because this will be time consuming, the Board start holding time for these presentations now, or create a subcommittee to deal with these presentations.

The Board discussed possible financial arrangements, such as anticipatory bank loans for shovel-ready projects or perhaps a blanket loan to the CRIZ Authority. Once the presentations are made, the Board can create a portfolio of three to four possible projects and take it to the bank. It was suggested that the Board talk to Lancaster banks who have experience with CRIZ funding projects and may be able to suggest a blueprint for going forward.

Daria Devlin suggested possibly hiring a third party for financial advising/modeling and suggested PFM Advisors as an option. She also suggested that the Board create a "menu" of offerings available to recipients, as each project will be different.

5. Update on Financing for Operational Expenses. Matthew Wachter has met with the Erie Community Foundation regarding obtaining a \$1.5 million loan, with a three-year term and a balloon payment at the end. On December 4, 2024, Mr. Wachter will meet with the Board of the Erie Community Foundation, where they plan to vote on the proposed loan.

Mr. Wachter stated that bank accounts for the Authority have been opened at Marquette Savings Bank.

There was a discussion regarding hiring administrative personnel. Mr. Wachter stated that 5% of the tax increment is allowed to be spent on administrative matters.

Katrina Vincent asked if there would be an application fee for those applying for CRIZ funding. There was discussion of the possible ways to include an application fee, including considering it on a case by case basis for for-profit businesses. Roger Richards stated that he was philosophically opposed to an application fee. Mr. Wachter stated that they would return to the subject at a later date.

6. Old Business / New Business. Matthew Wachter stated that the Board received a letter from the Department of Revenue with some questions and issues regarding the DCED application, such as overlapping tax issues, LERTA issues, and whether the Erie School District supports the CRIZ application. Neither he nor Attorney Walczak believe that these issues are significant or would in any way hinder the application. They have a call with the Department of Revenue to clarify these issues on November 21, 2024 and Mr. Wachter will update the Board upon its conclusion.
7. Meeting Adjourned. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:45 pm. A motion to adjourn was made by Matthew Wachter, seconded by Roger Richards, and approved unanimously.