

ERIE CRIZ AUTHORITY

MINUTES

01/21/26 Meeting

Attendees: Matthew Wachter, Matthew Good, Katrina Vincent, Cathryn Morris-Easterling, Daria Devlin, Michael Raftis and Brian Polito,

Carla Higgins and Roger Richards via Teams

Also attending: Brian Cressman, Esq., James Walczak, Esq., Kathy Kelly, Katie Nagle from Senator Dan Laughlin's Office and Ed Kissel

1. Call to Order: Meeting was called to order by Matthew Wachter at 3:00 p.m.
2. Public Comment: None
3. Review of Minutes: A motion to approve the Minutes from the December 17, 2026 meeting was made by Daria Devlin and seconded by Cathryn Morris-Easterling. The minutes were approved unanimously.
4. Financial Reports – Brian Polito provided a report via email to the board. He reported that the Authority has received the last payment from the foundation on their loan, the balance in reserve is in good shape, he is not expecting any new expenses in the near future.
5. Resolution to Approve Small Business Grant Program – Brian Polito and Development Committee put together the outline for a Small Business Grant Program through the Authority. Discussion was had regarding eligibility and conditions to apply for the Program. Grants would be available up to \$100,000, with the approved applicant receiving \$5 for each \$1 spent. The Development Committee recommends the proposal for the Program be sent to the State for their comments and feedback.

After several questions and clarifications, Matthew Good motioned to approve the Small Business Grant Program be sent to the State for review; Michael Raftis seconded the motion. The Board passed the motion unanimously.

6. Resolution to adopt 457(b) Deferred Compensation Plan - The Board had previously voted to adopt a retirement plan for CRIZ Authority employees, which is currently and has been administered through John Hancock. John Handcock has asked for a Board Resolution, on their form, approving the plan as of January 1, 2025.

Matthew Wachter motioned to sign the Resolution, Carla Higgins seconded. The Board approved unanimously.

7. Recommendation to appoint Maher Duessel as Local Auditor

A brief discussion was had regarding the process, experience and recommendations to hire Maher Duessel CPAs as the local auditor for the Authority. Maher Duessel has extensive experience with non-profit and government organization. The Audit is due in May and they will need to begin the audit process shortly. Matthew Wachter motioned to appoint Maher Duessel as the local auditor; Matthew Good seconded. The motion was passed unanimously.

8. Administrative Update – No administrative update was given.

9. Committee Reports

a. Development Committee –

The Development Committee reported that they have received a new project, that is still in the early phase of research. They also indicated that with so many projects waiting on the State for a response, they will explore other projects, but will not move forward with any until responses are received from the State.

10. Old Business:

Roger Richards gave a report on his meeting with the Governor last month. He indicated that the meeting went very well and feels that there may be more cooperating from the State forthcoming. He also believes that they made good headway on the tax increment decision from the Department of Revenue. Roger indicated that he asked for a predetermination to move things forward. The Governor is supposed to get back to Roger on how and when to proceed.

There was continued discussion regarding difficulty getting loans or the applicant getting bridge loans, without certification from the State or possibly asking for some kind of written determination from the State if we have to wait for certification.

There was a brief discussion on what Brian has and should convey to applicants that may ask about the timeline.

Brian did reach out to the State with a list of applications and the dates they were sent, requesting status updates on all. The State did relay that they understood the Authority had a number of outstanding application and that they would answer shortly regarding the first round of projects submitted. Brian was encouraged to reach out again for an answer.

There was concern and discussion about the number of non-filing businesses located with the zone. It was mentioned that some small businesses in the Harrisburg zone were voluntarily removed from the program and that may be something to look into.

11. New Business: None:

12. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 3:44 PM. The Motion made for adjournment by Matthew Wachter and seconded by Katrina Vincent.