REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
November 1, 2023 at 12:00 PM
BID Conference Room

Board Members in Attendance
Dana Hollenbeck
Craig Talmage
Josh Miller
Dave Linger
Kyle Ackart
Chevy Devaney*

Others in Attendance
Tracy Verrier, MRB Group
Emma Falkenstein, MRB Group*
David West, City of Geneva
Bo Wright, GCSD
*denotes remote attendance

Agenda Items

Call to Order:
Dave Linger called the meeting to order at 12:00 pm with a quorum present.

Geneva City School District Report
Bo Wright, the Superintendent, provided an update on the Geneva City School District (GCSD). Bo noted a smooth start to the school year. Overall, the GCSD is in good shape regarding staffing and bus drivers but doesn't have much of a buffer for sick leave and is still struggling with vacancy and staff turnover. Bo stated that the GCSD is in a stronger position than last year. He noted that the GCSD big capital project is expected to be completed in the next 18 months and that the school facilities in general are in great shape. Bo stated that the GCSD is making better use of grant funding with the addition of a grants coordinator.

Bo noted that behavioral issues continue to be a concern coming out of COVID-19 and that the GCSD is working to adjust policies to ensure the best outcomes for students. Bo stated that overall, behavioral issues are declining and the 2022 testing numbers show improvement across every area. In particular, the middle school is showing great growth and could potentially move into being in good standing.

Chevy inquired about how the 2023 numbers compare to prior years and the biggest concerns for the coming school year. Bo stated that his largest concerns are regarding student behavior and mental health. The GCSD is working with community partners to build relationships and ensure students have access to resources outside of school, but the demand exceeds current levels of support. Additionally, while the high school's graduation rate improved from 77% in 2022 to 79% in 2023, the rate is still lower than the target of 85-90%. Bo also noted concern for North Street's performance and the regents' math scores at the high school.

Bo noted that the GCSD is also being intentional about looking at the data through an equity lens. However, the data overall is showing process.

Dave inquired about comparable school districts to Geneva. Bo stated that the GCSD improvement plans include a regional comparison as well as a self-audit. The GCSD is working towards competing with the strong school districts in the region. Bo noted that in terms of demographics, the GCSD is similar to that of Newark and Waterloo, particularly regarding the percentage of economically disadvantaged students.

Bo stated the need for the community to work together to support the students and harness collective resources.

Minutes Approval:

- Motion to approve the October meeting minutes by Kyle Ackart, second by Craig Talmage. Motion carried unanimously.

Financial Report:
Tracy Verrier reviewed the November financial report noting not much activity besides the MRB Group contact fees. However, Tracy noted that a CD is maturing, which is currently at $81,000 at 3%. Tracy suggested rolling the funds into a new CD with the Bank of the Finger Lakes at 5%. Craig mentioned that the Finance Committee discussed increasing the CD amounts to improve the CLDC's accrued interest.

Motion to roll over the existing funds and increase the CD to $100,000 for a 7-month term at 5% with Bank of the Finger Lakes by Craig Talmage, second my Kyle Ackart. Motion carried unanimously.

- Motion to approve the November financial report by Craig Talmage, second by Dana Hollenbeck. Motion carried unanimously.

City of Geneva Report:
David West provided an update on the City of Geneva. David noted that the City passed the budget which included a flat tax rate. David stated that the election is coming up and early voting is currently taking place. The November Council Meeting will include the first reading of the zoning update, information about City employee health insurance, and additional policies. The second reading of the zoning will take place December 6th, 2023. David noted that the City has been working with the County during their review of the zoning update.

Dave Linger inquired about City Council's approach to the zoning reading, and if David anticipates additional tinkering with the zoning update. David indicated that City Council understands that if the current Council wants to adopt the zoning update by the end of the year, and substantive changes needed to take place in October.

Dave Linger inquired about the Airbnb section of the zoning update. David stated that this section has already passed but that amendments are being suggested. David stated that there was an on the floor change in the fees associated with the license. Part of the amendment will likely include additional language to tighten the wording regarding the fee.

Dave Linger inquired about the parking requirements for short-term rentals. David West stated that the parking requirements for short-term rentals will be the same as for bed and breakfasts. One parking spot is required per room and one spot is required for any on site occupant. The new zoning update will provide an option for applicants to provide an explanation for why more parking isn't needed on a case by case basis, which will go before the Planning Board.

The Zoning Update will include expanding the Traditional Urban Design District (TUD) in the downtown. The purpose of the TUD is to recognize the traditional urban design of the city which is designed to facilitate a more walkable, urban environment. The TUD update will include some historic preservation requirements, sign requirements, and exempts parking requirements. The expansion of the TUD will include the area near Pultney Park.

Committee Reports
Tracy Verrier noted that the Governance Committee met recently to do a policy review. There was one recommended change to the by-laws from the Governance Committee around the language of the downtown representative board member. The language is currently vague regarding if the BID needed to recommend the board position to the LDC. Tracy noted that the bylaw change will go on the agenda for the December meeting and that the change will then need to go to City Council.

Tracy stated that the finance committee met and discussed moving additional money into a CD. The Finance Committee wants to push for more revenue for the LDC and seeks to leverage the existing interest rates.

Chevy DeVaney inquired about potential downtown representatives to fill the board seat. Tracy noted that Amie Hendrix and David West have some ideas as none of the people who submitted applications through the City qualify for the seat. Tracy urged the LDC to think of potential people who might be interested.

David West stated that the LDC will also need to think about Officer Positions as Dave Linger terms off at the end of 2023. The LDC will need a Chair and potentially a Vice-Chair pending the election. Tracy stated that the LDC will need to determine Officers in January.

Dave Linger provided a brief overview of the obligations of Board Chair. He indicated that outside of the monthly meetings and additional communication with staff, the chair occasionally assists with other matters like hiring committees for the City. Craig Talmage provided a brief overview of the obligations of Treasurer, which does include working with the City's Microenterprise program.

Budget

Tracy Verrier overviewed the proposed 2024 budget. She noted that she included $2,000 of interests from the CD maturing and $85,000 for the cash payout from the property sale. The budget includes the audit fees, fees to the City for staff support, and additional fees for MRB Group administrative support.

Tracy noted that when the current MRB Group contract expires, the intention is to transition to an hourly time and expense with a not to exceed number. This will allow David to have access to MRB Group to assist with the reporting and compliance support. David West indicated that he is potentially bringing on an additional staff member to assist with the LDC and IDA.

The budget also includes $20,000 for potential programmatic funding.

- Motion to approve the budget by Craig Talmage, second by Josh Miller. Motion passed unanimously.

BID Q3 Report:

Tracy noted that the LDC received the BID'S Q3 report but that they are still waiting on one clarification regarding proof of payment. Tracy stated that the BID is requesting to reallocated funding to enable them to purchase an Adobe Suite subscription. They are under budget on graphic design and volunteer interface which will cover the request for the Adobe Suite subscription.

- Motion to approve the amendment to the BID contract to allow the purchase of an Adobe Creative Suite with reallocated funding from other budget items by Craig Talmage, second by Dana Hollenbeck. Motion passed unanimously.

Executive Session

- Motion to enter Executive Session for the proposed sale or lease of real property at 12:43 pm by Kyle Ackart, second by Dana Hollenbeck. Motion carried unanimously.
- Motion to exit Executive Session at 1:04 pm by Craig Talmage, second by Dana Hollenbeck. Motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment:

- Motion to adjourn by acclamation at 1:04 pm.