



VERMONT ECONOMIC PROGRESS COUNCIL

DRAFT – COUNCIL APPROVAL REQUIRED AT NEXT MEETING.

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

SEPTEMBER 29, 2020

WEBEX VIRTUAL MEETING

1:15 P.M. TO 2:46 P.M.

Members Present: Chair John Davis; Thad Richardson; Michael Keane; John Russell; Rep. Charlie Kimbell; and Sen. Cheryl Hooker

Members Absent: Mark Nicholson; Rachel Smith; and Patricia Horn

Staff Present: Megan Sullivan, Executive Director; Abbie Sherman, Grant Programs Manager

Others Present: Jessica Chappel, Finance Manager, NuHarbor Security; Justin Fimlaid, CEO, NuHarbor Security; Kathie Cheney, Human Resources Director, NuHarbor Security; Curt Carter, Senior Vice President, Greater Burlington Industrial Corporation; and Joan Goldstein, Commissioner, Department of Economic Development, Agency of Commerce & Community Development.

1:15 p.m. Roll Call and Agenda Review

Chair John Davis called the meeting to order.

Chair John Davis requested a roll Call. Members present are noted above.

Chair John Davis inquired as to any additions or deletions to the agenda, hearing none, moved to the next Agenda item.

Chair John Davis requested an introduction of all in attendance. Those present are noted above.

9:38 a.m. Minutes – June 25, 2020

Chair John Davis inquired as to any corrections or changes to the draft meeting minutes for June 25, 2020. Michael Keane offered a correction to the minutes for the motion made at 10:53 a.m. The motion should state that the new revenue of the proposed project generates to the State exceeds the costs of the activity to the state by \$1,446,489, which represents the pre-incentive benefit to the State.

- ❖ **At 1:20 p.m.** Michael Keane moved to accept the June 25, 2020 meeting minutes as corrected. John Russell seconded the motion. Chair John Davis inquired as to further discussion, hearing none requested a roll call for the vote. The motion passed. 4-0-2.
 - ◆ Aye: Chair John Davis; Thad Richardson; Michael Keane; and John Russell
 - ◆ Nay: None

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- ◆ Abstain: Rep. Charlie Kimbell and Sen. Cheryl Hooker

1:22 p.m. Public Comment

Chair John Davis inquired as to any members of the public present to provide public comment or announcements, hearing none, moved to the next Agenda item.

**1:22 p.m. Vermont Employment Growth Incentive (VEGI):
NU Harbor Security, Colchester (Initial)**

- ❖ At **1:22 p.m.** Michael Keane moved to enter into Executive Session to discuss VEGI applications, citing 1 VSA, §313(a)(6). John Russell seconded the motion. Chair John Davis inquired as to further discussion, hearing none requested a vote. All voted in favor and the motion passed. 6-0-0.
 - ◆ Aye: Chair John Davis; Thad Richardson; Michael Keane; John Russell; Rep. Charlie Kimbell; and Sen. Cheryl Hooker
 - ◆ Nay: None
 - ◆ Abstain: None
- ❖ At **2:39 p.m.** the Council exited from the Executive Session.
- ❖ At **2:40 p.m.** Michael Keane made a motion regarding the Initial Application filed by NU Harbor Security, for a project in Colchester, that the Council find that:
 - ◆ The new revenue of the proposed project generates to the State exceeds the costs of the activity to the state by \$638,943.
 - ◆ The company is not a party to any State action, the host municipality welcomes the new business and the proposed economic activity will conform to applicable town and regional plans;
 - ◆ The applicant does not operate in a limited, local market, and the incentive would not give the business an unfair competitive advantage over other Vermont businesses in the same or similar line of business; and
 - ◆ As certified in their application and during testimony before the Council, company officers have provided compelling information and arguments that but for this incentive the proposed economic activity would not occur in Vermont, or would occur in a significantly different and less desirable manner.
 - ◆ And therefore, the Council approve the Initial Application, giving initial authorization of VEGI incentives of up to \$277,129 with an estimated incentive of \$230,941 based on application data, for activity to commence October 1, 2020, subject to submittal and consideration of a Final VEGI Application before the end of calendar year 2020.

John Russell seconded the motion. Chair John Davis inquired as to further discussion, hearing none requested a roll call for the vote.

- ◆ Aye: Chair John Davis; Thad Richardson; Michael Keane; John Russell
- ◆ Nay: Rep. Charlie Kimbell and Sen. Cheryl Hooker

- ◆ Abstain: None

The vote was 4-2-0. Initially it appeared that the motion passed however, upon further review VEPC Operating Procedures requires a concurrence of six (6) votes¹ with the vote remaining open to obtain votes from absent members at VEPC's next meeting.

❖ **2:44 Other Business**

Executive Director Megan Sullivan mentioned prior to the conclusion of the meeting:

- It is expected that the Council will have an October meeting.
- The legislature extended by 1 year the period for certain TIF Districts to incur debt due to impacts of COVID19.
- VEGI Applicant, Desert Harvest, who was approved at a previous meeting this year has indicated that they do not intend to move forward with that project in Vermont at this time.

The meeting ended at **2:46 p.m.**

Minutes taken by Abbie Sherman: September 29, 2020

Revised by Megan Sullivan: October 2, 2020

Approved by the Council:

¹ VEPC Operating Procedure 10.6.4 states "If, because of member absence, a concurrence of six (6) votes cannot be attained, the vote will be considered incomplete and the record left open. The absent member(s) will be provided with the application information and the meeting record and the vote of the absent member(s) will be obtained at the next regularly scheduled meeting or, if required, a special meeting will be called, warned and held to obtain the vote of the absent member(s)." Therefore, the vote will remain open and is subject to completion of the vote at a next VEPC meeting.