

2023 Annual Report

(January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023)

RENSSELAER COUNTY INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Justin Law, Chairman

Matthew Polsinello

Justin Buchanan

John Clinton

Cory Jones

Frank Lewandusky

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I. Summary

"Government's view of the economy could be summed up in a few short phases: If it moves, tax it. If it keeps moving, regulate it. And if it stops moving, subsidize it."

~~Ronald Reagan

National and International Promotion Campaign of "Tech Valley"

Rensselaer County, located in the heart of what has been coined "Tech Valley", has a rich history of successes in technology innovation – yet the RCIDA "success story" is not well known outside of upstate New York. This effort seeks to bring a greater national and international awareness of Rensselaer County and the benefits of becoming part of the Rensselaer County technology-innovation ecosystem. The goal is to showcase, through creative messaging and the national media, the potential of Rensselaer County as a place to live and work.

Technology Innovation Internship Program (TIIP)

The RCIDA in partnership with NYSTEC invested \$300,000 in an initiative to engage local students and academic institutions with established companies to explore the impact of innovation and disruptive technologies, such as artificial intelligence, machine learning and quantum computing, on industries and businesses within the region. The envisioned TIIP Program will serve as a model for attracting and retaining top-tier talent while creating growth opportunities for the region, highlighting Rensselaer County as a leading technology hub in the United States. Anticipated academic institutions include Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and Hudson Valley Community College. Industry areas that students will have the opportunity to intern include semiconductor engineering, digital gaming, cyber security and life sciences.

Sustainability of Joseph L. Bruno Stadium

The Joseph L. Bruno Stadium is located on the campus of Hudson Valley Community College. In May of 2001, Senator Joseph Bruno secured funding to construct a \$14-million baseball stadium at HVCC. The stadium is the home field of the Tri-City Valley Cats minor league baseball team. For more than 20 years the "Valley Cats" have enjoyed incredible success in providing a "quality of Life" experience for Capital Region families. However, in 2022, despite their consistent success, two factors greatly impacted the viability of the Valley Cats and the future of the stadium. The first factor was the Covid-19 pandemic as the Valley Cats were forced to lose nearly two seasons of revenue. The second was MLB's cost cutting dissolution of the NY-Penn League, which the Valley Cats were affiliated with. To survive, the Valley Cats had to come up with a new business model. The owner decided to partner with an independent (non-affiliated MLB) Frontier League. The new business model requires the Valley Cats

to incur significant additional expenses, a courageous decision just to keep minor league, professional baseball in the Capital Region.

The RCIDA will partner with the Tri-City Valley Cats in an effort to increase awareness and significance of the Joseph L. Bruno Stadium. The focus will be on rebooting the stadium as the summer place to be for corporate entities to bring employees as well as their family and friends. The effort will create a pro-active “outreach” program targeting the regional business community in time to positively impact the 2023 baseball season as well as demonstrate the value of the stadium as an asset to our community for economic growth as well as for quality of life.

Route 9/Interstate 90 Corridor Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement – Town of Schodack

The Route 9 Corridor in the Town of Schodack has become increasingly attractive to development with its convenient access to Interstate 90 via Exits 11 and 12 and its close proximity to the Adirondack Northway and the Capital District. Considering the potential for new development and the need to balance land use and environmental considerations, the Rensselaer County IDA hired Bohler Engineering to prepare a Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS). Development in that area would provide jobs for residents and increase the tax base, which will help keep housing affordable while maintaining the quality of public services provided by the Town of Schodack. The GEIS was completed in June of 2023.

RCIDA Offices

The RCIDA staff are now all located in the Quackenbush building in downtown Troy. When Rensselaer County announced it would be moving its offices to East Greenbush, it was decided that it would be best to centralize RCIDA staff in one location. Additionally, the staff of the County Economic Development and Planning Department are now located on the second floor of the Quackenbush building. This allows for collaboration and a more streamlined and efficient process of working with business partners and the citizens of Rensselaer County. The new offices were equipped with fiberoptic cabling and new phones. Also, the RCIDA initiated the process of moving all RCIDA data/files to the cloud under the operation of an entity independent of Rensselaer County. It is anticipated this will be complete by the Spring of 2024.

RCIDA Website

In order to remain in compliance with the ABO guidelines on IDA websites, the RCIDA contracted with Web Instinct to upgrade its website. Web Instinct will be generating a more aesthetically pleasing site while organizing it in a manner that is easily accessible. Moreover, the website will contain livestreaming capabilities for RCIDA board meetings and public hearings. It was anticipated that the website would be completed in March 2023, however, unforeseen issues have pushed out the completion to early 2024.

II. Industrial Development Agency Projects and Other IDA Initiatives

First Columbia, L.L.C.

First Columbia, L.L.C. initially applied for IDA benefits in 2021. After continued modification of their plan, First Columbia re-submitted a revised application in 2023. The projects are located in the Hoosick Waterfront District at the bottom of Hoosick Street in Troy. Two existing commercial building are slated for renovation. A new building and a structured parking facility

493 Campbell, LLC

This project consists of the construction of a 12-unit residential apartment complex. the building will offer reasonable market value rental rate to the Capital District including Hudson Valley Community College faculty.

Troy Lofts LLC

The Corporation purchased an existing building in the City of Troy containing approximately 24,000 square feet of space comprised of 3 commercial spaces and 21 apartments.

III. Authority Measurement Report in Accordance with Section 2824 – a of the PAL

In 2023, the Rensselaer County IDA provided support to 55 projects with a combined total project investment of \$1.322 billion. A total of 7,264 full time equivalent jobs were supported by these businesses. An additional 195 construction jobs were also supported in 2023.

These projects provided \$2,042,272 in PILOT payments to the County, \$1,977,475 to local governments and \$7,412,562 to school districts in Rensselaer County. In addition, these businesses reported \$915,249,342 in total payroll (some project owners did not report their payroll, making the actual payroll number higher).

IV. Management Report on Internal Controls

In an effort to further improve timeliness and accuracy of information provided to the public, potential business prospects, the Authority Budget Office and State Comptroller, Management initiated a number of actions starting in 2015. First, Management initiated and the Board approved entering into a multi-year contract with Millennium Business Communications, LLC to update and improve the Industrial Development Agency and related economic development offices website. The new site allows for enhanced public dialogue through Facebook and Twitter. In 2022, in order to remain in compliance with the ABO guidelines on IDA websites, the RCIDA contracted with Web Instinct to upgrade its website. Moreover, the website will contain livestreaming capabilities for RCIDA board meetings and public hearings and will be ADA Compliant. In addition, Management transferred, effective with the fall 2015 responsibility for calculating County, local and school PILOTS to the County Office of Real Property Tax Services. This has allowed the Agency to provide a greater direct effort in monitoring project compliance with their job growth and retention performance goals and the accuracy of information required by the Agency. Also, following the recapture of State and local sales tax exemptions that were claimed by a project in excess of the amount in their Uniform Project Benefit Agreement in 2017, the Board initiated some policy changes to help address potential excess sales tax claims before they require recapture. Following a 2018 Authority Budget Office review of the Rensselaer County IDA's Sales Tax reporting procedures, monitoring processes were upgraded to enhance accuracy and timeliness. In 2019, the Agency updated its Whistleblower "Retaliatory Action Policy to better conform to Section 2857 of the NYS Public Authorities Law. The Agency also authorized the Executive Director to make minor equipment purchases of less than \$5,000 without prior Board approval as long as such amounts were within the approved Agency Budget. In 2020, the Agency adopted a new Records Retention and Disposition Schedule. Finally, in 2021, the IDA Board adopted a Standard Work Day.

V. Industrial Development Agency Board Member Biographies

Justin A. Law, Chairperson – Mr. Law is a lifelong resident of Rensselaer County. He is a graduate of Siena College and Albany Law School and is an attorney specializing in Real Estate and Estate Planning.

John H. Clinton, Jr., – Mr. Clinton is the owner of Clinton Funeral Home and is a former staff member (retired) in the Office of New York State Senator Kemp Hannon.

Justin Buchanan – Mr. Buchanan has been a resident of Rensselaer County for over 20 years. He graduated from SUNY Oneonta with a BA in Business Economics and received his MPA from the University of Southern California. He has worked in the Banking Industry for over 20 years.

Frank Lewandusky – Mr. Lewandusky is President of Franklyn Wholesalers.

Cory Jones – Mr. Jones is a lifelong resident of Rensselaer County. He is a 2004 graduate of Eastern Connecticut State with a BS in Communications.

Matthew Polsinello – Mr. Polsinello graduated from the Lally School of Management at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. He is President of Polsinello Fuels and was the Chairman of the East Greenbush Planning Board for over 10 years.