

**Jefferson County Local Development Corporation
Board Meeting Minutes
August 7, 2025**

The Jefferson County Local Development Corporation held its board meeting on Thursday, August 7, 2025, in the board room at 800 Starbuck Avenue, Watertown, NY.

Present: Robert E. Aliasso, Jr., W. Edward Walldroff, Paul Warneck, William Johnson, Lisa L’Huillier, Charles Capone, John Condino, David Converse, Rob Aiken, Dr. Dawn M. Robinson

Excused: Dr. Gregory A. Gardner

Absent: None

Also Present:

Zoom: Justin Miller, Esq. (Harris Beach), Craig Fox (Watertown Daily Times)

Staff Present: Marshall Weir, Jay Matteson, Peggy Sampson, Robin Stephenson

- I. Call to Order:** Chairman Aliasso called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.
- II. Pledge of Allegiance**
- III. Privilege of the Floor:** No one spoke.
- IV. Minutes:** Minutes of the meeting held on July 10, 2025 were presented. A motion to approve the minutes as presented was made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mr. Condino. All in favor. Carried.
- V. Treasurer’s Report:** Mr. Warneck reviewed the financials for the period ending July 31, 2025. He said everything is in order with expectations and the revenue is down a little bit, and the expenses are up a little bit but not enough to worry about and the balance sheet is keeping with expectations also. A motion was made by Mr. Aiken to accept the financial report as presented, seconded by Mr. Warneck. All in favor. Carried.
- VI. Committee Reports:** None.
- VII. Council Reports:**
 - a. Ag –** Mr. Matteson said we are in the process of starting the Jefferson-Lewis Dairy Workforce Focus Group which consists of approximately 22 members ranging from dairy farmers, dairy processors up through to the governor’s office. He said this is in response to the challenges that the dairy industry and all other industries are encountering as far as maintaining and finding a workforce. He said the group plans to look at programs that already exist and look at what other efforts are needed to retain and grow the employment base in dairy. He said the first meeting included Alex Walsh (Northeast Dairy Processor Association) who did a presentation on the growth in dairy processing statewide. He said Cheryl Mayforth also spoke about where we are with the current workforce. He said the next meeting will take the conversations that started after the baseline presentations of ‘what is the picture out there?’ and ‘where can we have the most impact with the focus group?’. He said it is a fluid effort, and the most important thing is to position our dairy industry as best we can for the potential for growth. He said it is a critical issue to address.

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- b. Marketing – (Micron)** Mr. Weir said the Building Trades fishing trip was an outstanding day and the guests loved it and caught a ton of fish. He thanked Chairman Aliasso for his help in deploying the guests on the boats. He said there were a number of people working with the boat captains to schedule another trip.

Ryan Piche joined the meeting.

- c. Manufacturing** – Mr. Weir reported that Metalcraft Marine is moving into their new facility at the Corporate Park.

Mr. Weir said the Manufacturers Alliance meeting was held last month which included some of the political folks and was sponsored by Knowlton's. He said it was a great event that generated a lot of feedback, and it was set up so the political folks could listen to issues that manufacturers are facing. He said there was also a benefit of the political folks telling the manufacturers what is on the table for potential legislation that could affect them. Mr. Walldroff said that he expected to see more manufacturers in attendance. Mr. Weir said there were 43 people, which included agency people as well as the manufacturers. Mr. Matteson said it was not a lack of effort by our office and we see that across every sector of the economy.

Other –

Mr. Matteson announced that Amanda Freund, a Connecticut dairy farmer and entrepreneur that created CowPots and appeared on Shark Tank, will speak at the Jefferson County Farm Bureau three county annual meeting that will be held on October 16th in Rodman, NY.

VIII. Unfinished Business:

- 1. ARPA Fund Reports (Round One and Two)** – Updated spreadsheets showing the grant fund activities were provided in the board packet. Ms. Stephenson said she is reaching out to grant recipients and noted that one recipient completed their project last month.

IX. Counsel: None.

X. New Business:

- 1. ARPA Food Resiliency Grant Recommendation** – A grant request of \$10,000 to increase their value-added production of maple syrup confections. Mr. Matteson said they plan to do more business with local schools. The total project cost is \$11,598.94. A motion was made by Ms. L'Huillier, seconded by Dr. Robinson. All in favor. Carried.

XI. Adjournment: With no further business before the board, a motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Condino, seconded by Mr. Converse. All in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:24 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Sampson