

**Deferiet Redevelopment Corporation
Appointed Directors Board Meeting Minutes
November 6, 2025**

The Appointed Directors of the Deferiet Redevelopment Corporation held their board meeting on Thursday, November 6, 2025 in the board room at 800 Starbuck Avenue, Watertown, NY.

Present: John Condino, Lisa L’Huillier, Robert Aiken, William Johnson, David Converse
Zoom:

Excused: None

Absent: Joseph Cook, Paul Smith

Also Present: Marshall Weir, Jay Matteson, Dorena Kimball, Peggy Sampson, Robin Stephenson, Dr. Dawn Robinson, Ed Walldroff, Paul Warneck, Rob Aliasso, Lexi Bruening (7 News)
Zoom: Justin Miller, Esq. (Harris Beach), Sarah Bullock (Town of Wilna), Craig Fox (Watertown Daily Times)

- I. Call to Order:** Chairman Condino called the meeting to order at 9:40 a.m.
- II. Minutes:** Minutes of the meetings held on March 6, 2025, May 1, 2025, and October 10, 2025 were presented. A motion to approve the minutes as presented was made by Mr. Converse, seconded by Ms. L’Huillier. All in favor. Carried.
- III. Committee Reports:** None.
- IV. Unfinished Business:**
 - 1. Deferiet update** – Mr. Weir reported on the following:
Tour of the Deferiet facility –
 - An incredible amount of work has taken place at Deferiet, not without its challenges; continue to move through the Restore NY Grant and cleaning up the site.
 - A couple of issues have been found. The site is not going to be at grade and there are some really large ledges (approximately 20 to 30 feet in some spots) where it will need to be secured moving forward.
 - The cost of the remediation piece has been higher than anticipated. There will be ongoing costs including fencing of the site. It is not going to be a park because of the ledges and voids under the ground that will need to be filled in. Redevelopment of the site is going to be challenging.
 - The BOA encompasses the Village of Deferiet, not just the site.
 - There will be a number of parcels that could be developed as well as the site itself.
 - There have been conversations about how we do move forward and if we are able to get a project and where could we site it – we could potentially move the fence back to cover the parts that need to be secured. There are a couple of spots where we can foresee development happening.

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Chairman Condino said there are some things that need to be addressed that came out of the last meeting in terms of ongoing expenses. He said the objective is that once the remediation/demolition work was done, the property would be turned over from the County to the DRC.

Mr. Converse asked if the County will be dividing off the old post office site before DRC takes over. Mr. Weir said the post office is right outside the gate. He said it was falling down, and the Village was focused on getting that building torn down. He said it has since been torn down; it's graded and looks nice. The parcel could be sold to get it back on the tax rolls. Mr. Weir said they also talked with the Treasurer who expressed concern over potential loss of tax revenue (approximately \$24,000) moving forward. Mr. Piche believes the County's position would be very influenced by what the DRC would like, whether it is for future development or selling it off. Mr. Weir said it is a quarter of an acre and we would like to explore the options.

Chairman Condino asked Mr. Piche if there is an update on the project. Mr. Piche said Saber, (the County's contractor), said that at this point they are certain that this project is going to continue into next spring. He said they are continuing to knock things down and sort the debris and will haul in the spring. He said they have some quotes to put up fencing (one for under \$20k and another for \$65k). He said depending on where they are with the funds, the County has money and may be able to cover it. He said regarding the taxes, Legislator Dan McBride is concerned about it as well. The County has made the town, the village and the school district whole for that property for many years. He said they are going to receive less value because it is now a vacant site. Mr. Converse said at a minimum, the existing perimeter fence needs to be repaired. It is for 1,200 linear feet fencing along the canal and 600 linear feet on the right side near the ledge. Chairman Condino asked who will take the lead on the fencing. Mr. Piche said the County still owns the property.

Mr. Walldroff asked if the County will cover the gap between the final bill and the clean-up grant. Mr. Piche said the final bill will be what the grant covers and whatever is left is a separate project. He said county money has not been appropriated for it, so when it is done with Saber, they have nothing else planned at that point.

Mr. Piche said the site could be a great redevelopment opportunity and we have to get the RFI to the power authority for a potential nuclear site.

Mr. Weir said he talked to Brookfield and they are currently generating 8.6MW of power.

Mr. Piche said if DRC has some recommendations for the site, now would be the time to compile those.

Mr. Matteson asked if any site mapping has been done. He said it would be helpful to help plan for the site. He said he walked the site and believes there is opportunity there. Mr. Weir said there are a number of current maps that have been developed during the Restore NY Grant process.

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BOA update – Ms. Bullock said it is nearing the end of development of the plan. She said the consultants, EDR, are going to add into the plan the next steps for what is not done (what the Restore NY Grant didn't cover). She said the purpose of BOA was to work with the community for what they want to see in their municipality. In the end the goal is to get a designation as a BOA community to get ahead of others when applying for future funding. She said we were fortunate to do the BOA and the Restore NY Grant parallel. The draft nomination plan will need Department of State approval to get the designation so that we can move forward with phase two or the implementation of the ideas that we came up with in the BOA plan.

Mr. Matteson said the nice thing about the site is that it is about 10 miles from Interstate 81 with relatively easy access. He said the power plant is there and some of the land has potential. Mr. Weir said there are some spots on the parcel which are flat and in fairly good shape for redevelopment.

Chairman Condino suggested setting up a meeting to include a couple of the DRC members, Ms. Bullock and the EDR consultants to talk about the draft BOA before it gets finalized.

Mr. Converse said we need to find a funding source. He said a big thing is insurance and asked if the JCIDA umbrella policy covers the DRC D&O. Attorney Miller said the IDA is the sole member, so the IDA policy should pick up the DRC Board and Directors as an affiliate but said that we should check with our carrier.

Mr. Piche said the County anticipates turning over the property to the DRC in 2026 and suggested getting a quote for liability and casualty insurance. He said it is not unreasonable that the County turn over the property with some start-up funds and he would like to see the Town of Wilna put some skin in the game in terms of start-up costs and insurance.

Attorney Miller said if and when the property does change hands, the DRC does not have an automatic real property exemption so it makes sense to focus on filing the IRS application for 501(c)(3) recognition as a supporting organization of the County through the IDA, which can take up to 4 to 6 months.

Mr. Weir said the next step is to meet with the BOA folks and continue the 501(c)(3) process.

V. New Business: None.

VI. Adjournment: With no further business before the board, a motion to adjourn was made by Ms. L'Huillier, seconded by Mr. Aiken. All in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Sampson