

The Board of Directors of the Portage County Port Authority met in a special session for the purpose of discussing The Gateway Group contract for the Ravenna Learning Center project. The special session was held in the Portage Development Board/Portage County Port Authority office located at 217 S. Chestnut Street in Ravenna, Ohio on Monday, January 11, 2016 at 10:00 AM with the following members present:

David Dix
Jack Kohl II

Dominic Bellino
James Wyatt, Jr.

John Ryan
Neil Mann Jr.

Absent: T.N. Bhargava

Also present: Tom Chema and Bill Mason, The Gateway Group; Brad Ehrhart, Portage Development Board; Diana Fierle, Secretary/Treasurer

Chairman Jack Kohl called the January 11, 2016 special session to order approximately 10:05 AM and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Chairman Kohl introduced and Mr. Chema and asked him to discuss the project. Chairman Kohl stated that we are all very excited to get started with the project.

Mr. Chema began the meeting with discussing the terms of the contract. He said the key to the contract is getting higher education involved and tie down MOU's for those institutions that want to co-locate here in Ravenna. The time period should be for the next month and a half. Mr. Chema stated if we can get the MOU's that is good and we move on. If not, the Port Authority needs to decide where to go from there. Mr. Chema believes we need to focus initially on getting one or two community colleges and one or two vocational programs to get started. If we can get these signed up then Mr. Chema believes the balance of higher education entities will come on board. Mr. Chema believes if he gets these signed on and he believes he will, then we will start looking at the architectural program. Scoping out size of building and what we want in the building. Take the plans to the partners who have signed on to make sure they are on board with the plans. Then we can develop a real game plan to decide how to finance the construction of the facility. We need to have the anchor tenant signed on before we start to build the building.

Mr. Chema stated that he met with Chris Burnham last week. Mr. Burnham is very interesting in helping with project in Portage County and especially in Ravenna. Mr. Chema spoke of the New Market Tax Credits that Mr. Burnham is able to use for projects. Mr. Chema explained the New Market Tax Credit program. Mr. Burnham is expecting a new round of tax credits to be awarded to the Development Finance Authority of Summit County again in 2016. The Ravenna Learning Center site is in the NMTC geographic area. Mr. Chema stated this would be a huge plus for this project. NMTC's don't work with housing.

Mr. Chema stated the first step is to contact entities for their MOU's and bring them back to the port. If he can't get them, then we discuss where to go next with the property. Mr. Dix asked if the MOU's would bind them to the project. Mr. Chema stated that it won't be legally binding it's basically saying if we build the facility, they will come and participate. They will need x amount square feet and have so many courses. Mr. Kohl stated it's a letter of intent. Mr. Chema stated we need serious interest and on a quick time table. Mr. Kohl asked if we were trying to involve vocational schools with this. Mr. Chema stated that we don't want to cannibalize the other schools. We want to work with them and build on what they already have. We want to work with the gaps in education that have already been identified. For instance adults that need training for CNC and machinists, coating, welding etc. Mr. Bellino asked if we are going to look at the support from corporations in the area or just schools? Mr. Chema stated that first he is looking for one or two anchor schools and then expand from there to include corporations. Mr. Bellino asked about

robotics. Mr. Chema stated he sees robotics as being very important here.

Mr. Ehrhart spoke of the industrial maintenance program that just started at Maplewood Career Center. Mr. Chema stated that he will need to talk with Maplewood because he doesn't want to be tripping over them and duplicating what they are already doing. We want to see how to supplement what others are doing. Mr. Bellino stated that he sees this as Maplewood feeding students into our programs. Once they are done at Maplewood they can move on to our programs. This is the next level. Mr. Chema stated you would come to our programs for an associates and bachelors degrees.

Mr. Bellino asked the terms of the MOU's. Mr. Chema stated he'd love to have them for five to seven years. He stated we probably won't get that, but we need commitments for at least three to four years. He said when we turn the MOU's into a lease, we will try to get five to seven years.

Mr. Chema stated that if we can get two to three anchor tenants and building this building, it will begin to take on a life of its' own. It will be easier to get additional tenants once we have the anchors.

Mr. Ryan stated how Lissa from Delta Systems was the driver for getting the industrial maintenance program started at Maplewood. Mr. Ehrhart explained how it all happened.

Chairman Kohl asked for any other questions from the directors and other comments from Mr. Chema. Mr. Chema stated he would get started on this and have a report back to us around the first week of March and hopefully have a yes or no to the port authority by then. Mr. Kohl stated the next scheduled meeting is March 1st but he has a problem with that. The meeting is being changed to March 8th.

Chairman Kohl stated to Mr. Chema that he is so excited about this project and he can't think of anyone else more uniquely qualified to take on this project. Between his university experience, development experience and his state experience. Mr. Bellino stated knowing the history is a plus.

Mr. Dix wondered if Mr. Tressel at Youngstown State would be interested. He thought it might be worth talking with him. Mr. Chema stated absolutely that our targets would initially be Stark State, Youngstown State, Lorain and Lakeland. Then some proprietary institutions would be approached. Mr. Mann stated that Stark State is in Barberton.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the special session of January 11, 2016 adjourned at 10:45 AM.

Absent

T.N. Bhargava

John Ryan

Dominic Bellino
Vice-Chairman

Jack Kohl II
Chairman

Neil Mann, Jr.

David Dix

James A. Wyatt, Jr.

Diana Fierle
Secretary-Treasurer