

**Niagara Falls Tourism Target Zone Fund
Committee Meeting Minutes
May 3, 2019**

1.0 Meeting Called to Order

The regular meeting of the Niagara Falls Tourism Target Zone Fund Committee was called to order by Chairman Brady at 9 a.m.

2.0 Roll Call

Senator Robert G. Ortt, 62 nd District, NYS	Present
Assemblyman Angelo Morinello, 145 th District, NYS	Present
Paul Brown, President, Niagara County Buffalo Building & Construction Trades Council	Present
Stephen Brady, NCIDA Chairman	Present
Mark Onesi, NCIDA Member	Present
William Ross, NCIDA Member	Present
Susan C. Langdon, Executive Director	Present

NCIDA Staff Present:

Andrea Klyczek, Assistant Director
Dmitri Liadski, Economic Developer
Michael S. Dudley, Finance Manager
Caroline Caruso, Accounting Associate
Barbara A. Gill, Recording Secretary

3.0 Introduction of Guests

Eamon Weber, Delegate for Assemblyman Morinello
Richard Soluri, Center for Tourism
Paul Grenga, Center for Tourism

4.0 Approval of Meeting Minutes

4.1 October 18, 2018

*Mr. Onesi made a motion to approve the meeting minutes: Ross seconded the motion.
The motion passed.*

**Niagara Falls Tourism Target Zone Fund
Committee Meeting Minutes
May 3, 2019**

5.0 Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business at this time.

6.0 New Business

Included in the agenda packet was a summary of the background of the fund, eligibility criteria for projects, and a revised and condensed version of the original application for the reimbursable grants.

The funds were allocated from New York State to the NCIDA, and the Agency established the grant fund for the purpose of fostering economic development in the downtown core of the City of Niagara Falls. There are some general use statements, along with specific restrictions, but the use of money is truly at the discretion of the NCIDA. The decision was made to use the money as "Reimbursable Grant Funds" whereas funds will not be released until the project is completed and proof of expenditures are prepared.

6.1 Renaming of Fund

The committee members discussed shortening the name of the fund from the "Niagara Falls Tourism Target Zone Fund" to the "Cataract Tourism Fund."

Mr. Onesi motioned to approve the new name; Mr. Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed.

6.2 Amendment of Grant Terms for For-Profit Businesses

Eligible projects are investments that support increased tourism traffic in Downtown Niagara Falls. The program will be focused on projects located within a one-mile radius of the casino outside the Seneca Niagara Casino footprint. Projects may also be considered that lie within a two-mile radius of the casino.

Project applicants must submit a program application which then goes on the Committee's Meeting Agenda before a recommendation is made to the full NCIDA Board at the monthly Board Meeting.

There was a cap amount for each project, amounting up to 10% of the total project investment for for-profit companies. At this time, Assemblyman Morinello suggested that the cap be raised to up to 15% of total project costs for for-profit companies. For not-for-profits, the award may be up to 20% of total project costs. Grants will be pro rata to the amount of investment made.

Mr. Brady motioned to amend the grant terms for for-profit businesses; Senator Ortt seconded the motion. The motion passed.

**Niagara Falls Tourism Target Zone Fund
Committee Meeting Minutes
May 3, 2019**

6.0 New Business Continued

6.2 Amendment of Grant Terms Continued

The question of the amendment of the grant terms raising the percent for for-profits to up to 15% going forward was duly put to a vote on roll call, which resulted as follows:

	<u>Yea</u>	<u>Nay</u>	<u>Abstain</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Senator Ortt	[X]	[]	[]	[]
Assemblyman Morinello	[X]	[]	[]	[]
Mr. Brady	[X]	[]	[]	[]
Mr. Onesi	[X]	[]	[]	[]
Mr. Brown	[X]	[]	[]	[]
Mr. Ross	[X]	[]	[]	[]
Ms. Langdon	[X]	[]	[]	[]

The grant terms were thereupon duly adopted and will not be retroactive.

6.3 Adoption of New Marketing Sheet and Application

Mr. Onesi motioned to adopt the new marketing sheet and application; Mr. Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed.

6.4 Reimbursable Grant Requests

6.4.1 Niagara Falls Center for Tourism

The company is requesting a \$1,000,000 reimbursable grant from the fund to be used toward a family entertainment center, a rope course, and an arcade. There will also be improvements and additions to outdoor tourism, retail and food and beverage facilities, improved landscape and pedestrian and parking facilities. Currently there are 20 full time jobs, 8 part-time, with plans on hiring 13 more within 2 years.

Paul Grena gave a brief summarization of the project, and the company representatives subsequently left the meeting. Total project costs are approximately \$14,400,000 and the estimated completion date is May 2021.

After further discussion, Mr. Brown made a motion to approve the grant request of \$1,000,000; Mr. Ross seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Niagara Falls Tourism Target Zone Fund
Committee Meeting Minutes
May 3, 2019**

6.0 New Business Continued

6.4 Reimbursable Grant Requests Continued

6.4.1 NF Center for Tourism Continued

The question of the approval of the grant request was duly put to a vote on roll call, which resulted as follows:

	<u>Yea</u>	<u>Nay</u>	<u>Abstain</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Senator Ortt	[X]	[]	[]	[]
Assemblyman Morinello	[]	[]	[X]	[]
Mr. Brady	[X]	[]	[]	[]
Mr. Onesi	[X]	[]	[]	[]
Mr. Brown	[X]	[]	[]	[]
Mr. Ross	[X]	[]	[]	[]
Ms. Langdon	[X]	[]	[]	[]

The grant request was duly approved.

7.0 Any Other Matters the Board Wishes to Discuss

7.1 Grant Balance Report

Chairman Brady referred to a spreadsheet that reflects the funds that are available.

8.0 Adjournment

Mr. Brown made a motion to adjourn; Mr. Ross seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 9:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Reviewed by:

Barbara A. Gill
Recording Secretary

Stephen F. Brady
Committee Chairman