

Board Members Present: Joe Lawrence, Jerry Haenlin, Herb Frost, Darlene Rowsam, Gagan Singh, McKenzie Lehman, Jessica Moser (8:18am), Candace Randall (8:27am)

Others Present: Eric Virkler (Lewis County), James Munn (Black River Valley Natural), Brittany Davis, Trish Michael, Cheyenne Steria, Kaylee Tabolt

I. Call to Order

- a. Chairman Joseph Lawrence called the meeting to order at 8:15am.
- b. Chairman Joseph Lawrence read the County of Lewis IDA Mission Statement.

II. Privilege of the Floor

- a. Joe Lawrence introduced James Munn, owner of Black River Valley Natural, to provide updates on his business. James Munn clarified that he is coming to the Board because his business is in a dire position – they are at imminent risk of closure. James Munn proposed the concept of “BRVN 2.0” to the Board, which is the outcome of a deep-dive clinic into his business and developing a sustainable path forward. James Munn noted his mindset shift from providing a specialty good to a community that does not want to pay a specialty price to providing a specialty consumer base. James Munn presented on “BRVN 2.0.” Gagan Singh questioned James Munn on the one thing that is a barrier to all others. James Munn responded that his debt is his greatest barrier. Joe Lawrence added that he was in the room with James Munn during his initial meeting with the Naturally Lewis Team; Joe Lawrence commends the work that James Munn and his family have worked tirelessly, and they have always had a community forward vision. Joe Lawrence added that local foods producers, including James Munn, have bailed out our community – taking on the North Star Food Hub, supporting schools during the milk carton shortage, and during the pandemic when local goods were the solution to supply chain challenges. Joe Lawrence added that at the inception of Black River Valley Natural all parties, including the IDA, were altruistic and not seeing from the business perspective. Jessica Moser questioned Cheyenne Steria on the history of the Installment Sale Agreement to Black River Valley Natural. Cheyenne Steria confirmed that the initial loan was \$22,000 and it is currently at \$16,000; there is perfect repayment history on this loan.

III. Minutes

- a. The previously distributed **December 2024 Regular Board Meeting Minutes** were reviewed by the Board.
 - i. A motion to approve of the **December 2024 Regular Board Meeting Minutes**, which includes the profit and loss statement, and the balance sheet.
 1. A motion to approve of the **Regular Board Meeting Minutes** was made by Jerry Haenlin and seconded by Herb Frost. All present were in favor and motion carried.

IV. Financial Reports

- a. Trish Michael discussed notables on the **November 2024 LCIDA Financial Report**, which includes the profit & loss statement and balance sheet. Staff clarified that "Other Assets" are mostly future PILOT fees.
 - i. A motion to approve of the LCIDA Financial Reports was made by McKenzie Lehman and seconded by Jerry Haenlin. All present were in favor and motion carried.

V. Items for Approval

- a. LCIDA & Naturally Lewis, Inc. Staff Services Agreement
 - i. Brittany Davis noted that Candace Randall has provided an updated **Staff Services Agreement**. Candace Randall noted revisions in this final draft.
 1. A motion to approve of the **Staff Services Agreement** was made by Jerry Haenlin and seconded by Jessica Moser. All present voted in favor and motion carried.
- b. Finance Committee
 - i. Cheyenne Steria noted the December Finance Committee meeting regarding the deferment request of the Black River Valley Natural Installment Sale payments and the potential Snow Ridge Installment Sale Agreement. Cheyenne Steria also noted that there is a Town of Lyonsdale Meeting where the approval of the McRez Meat Packing project Site Plan is on the table. The Board discussed the action of the IDA and Lewis County if the Town does not approve of the project
 - ii. Candace Randall noted that there are other similar projects in the community and this specific project not being approved feeling discriminatory at its face.
 - iii. Cheyenne Steria presented the terms and conditions of the proposed Snow Ridge Resort Installment Sale Agreement with the terms of purchasing a used 2019 groomer.

1. A motion to approve of the Snow Ridge Resort Installment Sale Jerry, Herb. All present voted in favor and motion carried.
2. A motion to defer payments on the Black River Valley Natural Installment Sale Agreement through December 31, 2025 was made by Gagan Singh and seconded by Jerry Haenlin. All present voted in favor and motion carried.
- iv. Herb Frost added that when Black River Valley Natural seeks an Installment Sale Agreement for new equipment, it may be better to purchase new. Jessica Moser agreed. Brittany Davis questioned Jessica Moser and Herb Frost on the developing Business Retention Fund by the LCDC and Lewis County and if from their Lewis County perspective, Jessica Moser and Herb Frost adamantly confirmed that this project, which is facing closure without assistance, is the ideal project for the Business Retention Fund.

VI. IDA Report

- a. Brittany Davis presented updates on
- b. Gagan Singh questioned if the IDA can build housing. The Board discussed if the IDA wants to take on housing projects or if they should incentivize others to do projects. Brittany Davis will
- c. Cheyenne will be holding a meeting with all ATJs to the Sugar Maple Solar Project to discuss what an IDA PILOT could look like and what Sugar Maple Solar has offered in other communities.

VII. Adjournment

- a. A motion to adjourn was made at 9:48am by Darlene Rowsam and seconded by Herb Frost. All present voted in favor and motion carried.