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Public hearing held pursuant to general municipal law section 859-a to seek public comment on an application for financial assistance submitted by Tioga Downs Racetrack, LLC.

HELD ON: October 21st, 2015

HELD AT: NICHOLS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
139 Roki Boulevard
Nichols, New York 13813

BEFORE: RALPH E. KELSEY, Chairman
KEVIN DOUGHERTY, Vice Chairman
AARON GOWAN, Treasurer
KEVIN GILLETTE, Member
JAN A. NOLIS, Member

APPEARANCES:
RUTH FIATO, Executive Administrator Tioga County
IDA
LEEANN TINNEY, Director of Tioga County Economic
Development & Planning

REPORTED BY: Caitlyn A. Shaylor
COURT REPORTER

1 MR. KELSEY: Good evening.

2 Afternoon, I guess we're getting close to
3 evening, so. My name is Ralph Kelsey. I'm
4 the -- I'm chair of the Tioga County IDA.
5 And the agency is conducting this hearing
6 pursuant to general municipal law 859-a and
7 we're here to seek public comment on the
8 application for financial assistance and
9 associated state environmental quality
10 review issues. And so as a result of that
11 we're here assessing that assessment
12 submitted by Tioga Downs Racetrack.

13 The acceptance of the filing by the
14 agency does not infer any position on the
15 approval or the disapproval of the
16 financial assistance requested. No
17 position will be taken by the agency until
18 all the public hearings and comments are
19 concluded. And a copy of the cost benefit
20 analysis provided by the Department of
21 Economic Development and Planning is
22 available here. Just see LeeAnn. It's
23 available here in the front of the room for
24 review.

1 The notice of this hearing was
2 published on October 10th, 2015 in the
3 Press & Sun Bulletin. Each person wishing
4 to speak shall state his or her name and if
5 you are speaking on behalf of any
6 organization or entity please identify that
7 organization or entity. Each speaker will
8 be given five minutes and this hearing
9 shall remain open until 6:00 or longer if
10 public comment warrants.

11 I want to remind you that the purpose
12 of this hearing is to afford you an
13 opportunity to make statements and comments
14 on the application and project, the plan of
15 the IDA. Your comments will be considered
16 by the IDA making its decision. This is
17 not a question and answer session. So
18 please remember to identify yourself and
19 the organization or entity that you are
20 speaking on behalf of prior to your
21 comments.

22 First, I'd like to ask and introduce
23 LeeAnn Tinney and ask her as director of
24 Economic Development and Planning to

1 explain the tax benefits requested by Tioga
2 downs

3 MS. TINNEY: Hello. I'm LeeAnn
4 Tinney, director of Economic Development
5 and Planning for Tioga County. This
6 project is associated with the Tioga Downs
7 Racetrack request for assistance with the
8 construction and equipping of the proposed
9 expansion to the existing facility located
10 at 2384 West River Road, Town of Nichols.

11 Tioga Downs Racetrack has been
12 recommended by the gaming siting board to
13 the gaming commission for the fourth
14 license to be issue in New York State.

15 The request for application made by
16 Tioga Downs Racetrack calls for a \$191,219
17 square foot expansion to include a 161 room
18 hotel, amenities building, casino floor
19 expansion, restaurant and outdoor concert
20 venue. The projected investment for the
21 construction and equipment is anticipated
22 to be \$134,825,000. Construction is
23 planned to begin in October of this year.

24 The project will create an

1 anticipated direct new workforce in Tioga
2 County of 150 employees in the first two
3 years of operation with an associated
4 annual payroll of over \$6,250,000. The
5 impact of the annual payroll over the term
6 of a PILOT equals \$476 million in earnings.
7 This includes anticipated new and retained
8 direct and indirect earnings. In addition,
9 there will be 550 construction jobs, 319
10 indirect jobs associated with the expansion
11 build out.

12 The Department of Economic
13 Development and Planning staff took a very
14 close look at the nature of this project
15 and the opportunity that has been presented
16 to the Town of Nichols and Tioga County.
17 Several important factors to consider
18 include between the direct new jobs,
19 indirect new jobs, retained existing jobs
20 and retained indirect jobs, the overall
21 impact to jobs in the Southern Tier will
22 exceed 1,000. The project will bring a
23 \$134 million investment to Tioga County.
24 The project will add to the real property

1 tax base. The company will bring increased
2 gaming revenue to the county and town. The
3 expansion will bring increased hotel, motel
4 tax revenue to Tioga County. The expansion
5 will open new opportunities to develop the
6 tourism industry in Tioga County. The
7 company has an extremely strong track
8 record of community support and the Tioga
9 County Legislature and the Tioga Central
10 School Board have indicated their support
11 of the project and this request.

12 Therefore, based on these facts, it is the
13 Department of Economic Development and
14 Planning's recommendation to the IDA board
15 is to allow the sales tax exemption,
16 mortgage recording tax exemption and the
17 real property tax abatement for the Tioga
18 Downs Racetrack project.

19 MR. KELSEY: Thank you, LeeAnn. And
20 based on her comments and what has been
21 read would Rebecca come forward.

22 MS. MAFFEI: Yes. Hi. My name is
23 Rebecca Maffei and I'm the director of
24 Tioga County Tourism. I want to thank you

1 for this opportunity to voice the support
2 of my office and my personal support as a
3 long-time Tioga County resident for
4 approval of Tioga Downs's application for
5 financial assistance.

6 The expansion of Tioga Downs is a
7 tremendous opportunity to increase outside
8 visitation to Tioga County. As many of you
9 -- as you may know New York State has been
10 investing in the tourism economy more
11 aggressively over the past several --
12 several years and in 2014 saw over 100
13 billion in economic impact throughout the
14 state. Unfortunately due to past flooding,
15 having smaller attractions and limited
16 resources, Tioga County was not able to
17 take advantage of major economic tourism
18 drivers such as group travel and targeted
19 tourism marketing.

20 The Tioga Downs expansion will be a
21 beacon for new visitors to Tioga County and
22 therefore new revenue for its -- for its
23 residents. To maximum the potential for
24 spending throughout the county our office

1 and Tioga Downs are investing our time and
2 resources to look for opportunities to
3 spread the wealth and bring customers to
4 businesses in Tioga County. Many of these
5 businesses as well as municipalities
6 recognize the potential for a lucrative
7 return in the future and are also investing
8 resources. And I encourage the Tioga
9 County IDA to also invest in the project
10 alongside various other agencies and
11 entrepreneurs in Tioga County by granting
12 their application for financial assistance.
13 Thank you.

14 MR. KELSEY: Thank you. At this time
15 next on the list is Gwen, Tioga County
16 Chamber of Commerce.

17 MS. KANIA: I'm Gwen Kania, president
18 of the Tioga County Chamber of Commerce.
19 I'm here say that we believe the financial
20 assistance for Tioga Downs Racetrack should
21 be accepted. Mr. Gural and Tioga Downs has
22 proven time and time again that they are
23 committed to this county.

24 Tioga Downs is not a fly-by-night

1 operation and they're tireless work to
2 receive the location approval is an
3 indication of that. The license and
4 expansion is almost given at this point, so
5 how sad would it be if this county has --
6 which has the most to gain from having a
7 casino is not able to give some concessions
8 to one of its greatest benefactors.

9 The incomes from the jobs retained
10 and created revenues from the gaming and
11 the revenues from the additional tourism
12 would more than offset any of the costs
13 incurred by the county.

14 I believe that the givers gain and
15 this time the IDA should be the giver.

16 MR. KELSEY: Thank you. Dr. Baust?

17 DR. BAUST: Can I sit?

18 MR. KELSEY: If you can talk loud,
19 you -- you may sit and remain there.

20 DR. BAUST: I will try. I didn't
21 come with a prepared statement, but I'd
22 like to speak in support of -- of the
23 request for a PILOT program. This county
24 and much of the Southern Tier has been

1 suffering a decline in jobs, revenue and so
2 forth actually since the early '80s when
3 IBM began their relocation process and
4 we've had a number of setbacks with the
5 recession, with the flood and so forth.
6 And I -- I think this is a good step and
7 other steps like it are good because they
8 will help, again, improve the employment
9 opportunities, they will make the county
10 more attractive. I think it will stimulate
11 other parts of the county also to think
12 creatively on how to develop some economic
13 activities. So while there's -- there's,
14 you know, a perception long-term revenue
15 shortfall with respect to taxes, that's
16 really not real in a sense. I mean, there
17 will be increased taxes paid by this and
18 the other organizations and I think it'll
19 work for the betterment to the community,
20 so --

21 MR. KELSEY: Thank you. Thank you
22 very much. At this point seeing that we do
23 have time is there anyone else that would
24 like to make a comment about the project?

1 Well, if not we will -- I guess we adjourn
2 this until 6:00 to see if anyone else might
3 arrive that has comments regarding this --
4 this project so we'll go into adjournment.
5 Feel free to stick around.

6 (RECESS TAKEN.)

7 MR. KELSEY: The time -- the time is
8 now 6:00 p.m. Is there anyone else here
9 who would like to make a comment? If not
10 then I would conclude that this hearing is
11 done. Thank you one and all and please
12 feel free to hang around for 15 minutes
13 until the next one starts, so --

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C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I hereby certify that the proceedings and evidence are contained fully and accurately in the notes taken by me on the above cause and that this is a correct copy of the same to the best of my ability.

Caitlyn A Shaylor

CAITLYN A. SHAYLOR