



**NYS Olympic Regional Development Authority  
Board Meeting Minutes  
September 22, 2023**

Present: Joe Martens, Chair  
Cliff Donaldson  
Frank Cardinale  
Steve Hunt, ESD  
Betty Little  
Arthur Lussi  
Diane Munro  
Andy Fyfe, OPRHP  
Joe Zalewski, DEC  
Elinor Tatum

Also Present: Michael Pratt, President & CEO  
Ashley Walden, President & CEO  
Michelle Crew, General Counsel

Introduction: Chair Joe Martens called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m. and welcomed everyone in attendance.

Joe Martens explained that the meeting was being videotaped and a link to the recording would be made available at [www.orda.org](http://www.orda.org).

Joe Martens then asked for a roll call, and confirmed a quorum was present.

Minutes: On a motion by Elinor Tatum, seconded by Cliff Donaldson, the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting held on August 21, 2023, were approved without changes.

Executive Committee: Joe Martens explained that the Executive Committee discussed the electricity and insurance agreements. He explained that both commodities have had cost increases due to lots of catastrophes around the country. There was a detailed description provided to Committee members, and the Committee recommends that the Board approve both associated resolutions as presented.

The Committee also reviewed the 2024/2025 Budget & 2023-2028 Financial Plan. Joe explained that it is required for the budget and financial plan to be advertised before being presented to the full Board in

December. The Committee did identify one small change that will be made before advertising and presentment to the full Board. The document will be advertised for thirty days, as required.

Governance  
Committee:

Joe Martens explained that the Governance Committee reviewed an expanded range of employees that will fall under a revised background check policy. This will primarily concern new staff, particularly those who work with technology, finances, or money.

The Committee also discussed the evaluation process of the new President & CEO. The next step will be to develop a draft document that will be discussed with the full Board and the President & CEO. This will be used over the course of the next year and annually thereafter.

The Committee also reviewed an amended resolution for the appointment of the new President & CEO. The start date was updated to September 14, 2023, and the committee also agreed on recommending a starting salary of \$195,000 and three weeks of vacation time during the first year.

President's Report:

Mike Pratt discussed some of the summer activities at the venues. Belleayre had a Friday night music series, nighttime movies at the beach, and some educational efforts promoting the rules of hiking. Gore and Whiteface both had some challenging summers with the weather. Gore had a successful music festival at the end of August, and Whiteface has been steady, but the numbers fluctuated with the weather. The Olympic Jumping Complex and Mt. Van Hoevenberg were also busy with summer bobsled rides, the learn to luge program, and the zipline at the Ski Jumps. The Olympic Center hosted the adult figure skating week, hockey tournaments, and curling.

Mike provided a summary of the summer revenue which showed that it was up by 17% and visits were up by 11%.

Ashley Walden discussed the upcoming fall festivals. Mt. Van Hoevenberg is hosting Keys to the Castle, Whiteface has their annual Oktoberfest, Gore and Belleayre are hosting fall festivals, the Flaming Leaves Festival will be returning to the Olympic Jumping Complex, and the Olympic Center is hosting Fancy Figure Skating.

Mike Pratt discussed some of the environmental initiatives and collaborations. There was an event hosted at Mt. Van Hoevenberg that included a lot of the environmental organizations that the Olympic Authority works with.

Mike discussed the removal of fuel tanks and explained that in the last six years, there have been 27 tanks removed from service. This is part of changing the building systems over to propane or electric to eliminate the use of diesel fuel. The Olympic Authority has also eliminated all diesel compressors that were used for snowmaking.

Mike discussed some of the construction that has been happening at the venues. Whiteface had a new lift installed called "The Notch", the conveyor lift at Bear Den is being moved for better egress to the Lodge, and they installed a secondary waterline to the summit, replacing a line that was unreliable. At the castle, the chimney has been removed and sealed.

At Belleayre there were improvements to the Pine Hill Pump House, pipes were replaced on the lower mountain, upgrades were done to lifts 6 and 8, and improvements were done to the old managers building.

Gore had a new beginner lift installed, upgrades to primary power, and snowmaking upgrades.

At the Olympic Jumping Complex there were improvements to the judges tower and they are constructing a maintenance garage.

At the Olympic Center they are installing a year-round operations building at the oval.

At Mt. Van Hoevenberg they are doing improvements to the bobsled track.

New Business:

Resolutions:

**#508** Resolution Amending Approval of the Appointment of the President & CEO

On a motion by Diane Munro, seconded by Elinor Tatum, Resolution # 508 as presented and amended to include a \$195,000 starting salary and three weeks of vacation in the first year.

10 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstained, Resolution #508 adopted.

**#509** Resolution Adopting Amendment to Background Check Policy

On a motion by Betty Little, seconded by Art Lussi.

10 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstained, Resolution #509 adopted.

**#510** Resolution Amending Board Resolution # 445 and Granting Approval for the President & CEO to Enter Into Amended Agreements for the Purchase and Installation of Commercial Prefabricated Restroom Systems at Belleayre Mountain, Mt. Van Hoevenberg, and Whiteface Mountain

On a motion by Frank Cardinale, seconded by Cliff Donaldson.

Mike Pratt explained that the project scope at Belleayre grew because the prints that were provided were not accurate and there was no waterline where the prints said there was. A new waterline had to be built, they had to adjust and modify the wastewater lines, and they hit ledge during the installation of the lines.

10 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstained, Resolution #510 adopted.

**#511** Resolution Amending Board Resolution # 487 and Granting Approval for the President & CEO to Enter Into Amended Agreements for Belleayre Trails Improvements Project

On a motion by Frank Cardinale, seconded by Diane Munro.

Mike Pratt explained that through the Unit Management Plan Amendment, there was a trail identified that would be a blue rated trail off the summit. There was more excavating than was anticipated because another switch back was added to maintain the lower-level pitch and make it as gentle a trail as possible. The new bridge to access the base of Lift 7 was going to be a multi plate arch culvert, but due to supply chain issues, it wasn't available, resulting in a more extensive project.

10 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstained, Resolution #511 adopted.

**#512** Resolution Committing Capital and Granting Approval for the President & CEO to Enter Into Agreements for the Purchase of Diesel Fuel

On a motion by Cliff Donaldson, seconded by Elinor Tatum.

Mike Pratt explained that the use of diesel fuel has been dramatically reduced. It's very likely that this purchase wouldn't need to have Board approval, but we are trying to be proactive and transparent. We will be looking at suppliers for Essex County facilities, Gore in Warren County, and Belleayre in Ulster County.

10 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstained, Resolution #512 adopted.

**#513** Resolution Committing Capital and Authorizing the President & CEO to Enter Into Electricity Supply Agreements for Belleayre Mountain, Gore Mountain, and Whiteface Mountain

On a motion by Diane Munro, seconded by Betty Little.

Mike Pratt explained that when prices are presented, they are only good for 12 to 24 hours, and this would provide the authority for the President & CEO to enter into a contract when the price is right.

10 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstained, Resolution #513 adopted.

**#514** Resolution Committing Capital and Authorizing the President & CEO to Enter Into Agreements for the Olympic Authority 2023-2024 Program of Insurance

On a motion by Betty Little, seconded by Frank Cardinale.

Mike Pratt explained that the value of assets continues to increase, the market is highly volatile, and there was a third-party evaluation of buildings to make sure they were assessed at the appropriate values.

10 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstained, Resolution #514 adopted.

Chair:

Joe Martens announced that the meeting's business had concluded.

Joe thanked Mike Pratt for his 37 years of service and all he accomplished during his time with the Olympic Authority.

Adjournment:

On a motion by Diane Munro, seconded by Cliff Donaldson, the meeting of the Olympic Regional Development Authority Board of Directors was adjourned at 2:25 p.m.