

FY23
BOARDS AND COMMITTEES ANNUAL REPORT
St. Johns County Industrial Development Authority

Date:

February 12, 2024

Committee Name:

St. Johns County Industrial Development Authority (IDA)

FY23 Board Members:

- Kevin Kennedy, Chair
- Chet Frith, Vice-Chair
- Geoffrey Litchney, Treasurer
- Viv Helwig, Secretary
- Melissa Churchwell, Assistant Secretary

IDA Support:

- Henry O'Connell, IDA CPA
- Mike McCabe, IDA Attorney

BCC Liaison:

- Christian Whitehurst, Commissioner

Staff Liaison:

- Savannah Rodgers, St. Johns County Economic Development Department

Brief Committee Overview:

The Industrial Development Authority (IDA) was created as a Florida public corporation in accordance with the Florida Authority Law, Part II of Chapter 159, Florida Statutes (1979), following the adoption of an approving ordinance (No. 80-9, dated January 22, 1980) by the Board of County Commissioners of St. Johns County, Florida. The members of the IDA board are appointed by the Board of County Commissioners of St. Johns County, Florida, and each member serves a four-year term. The primary purpose of the IDA is to issue tax-exempt bond financing for manufacturing facilities and other eligible capital projects being constructed within St. Johns County. This tax-exempt financing is intended to give St. Johns County a competitive advantage by improving the economic viability of eligible projects. Since its establishment in 1980, the IDA has approved more than \$1.3 billion in industrial revenue bonds to support local projects. The IDA is a five-member board that meets on the second Monday of every month at 3 p.m. in the St. Johns County Administration Building.

Mission Statement:

The purpose of the IDA is to stimulate economic and industrial development through the use of public financing, its own efforts and through support of outside organizations. The IDA is authorized to issue bonds to fulfill its corporate purpose in principal amounts specifically authorized and approved by the Board of County Commissioners of St. Johns County, Florida.

FY23 Major Achievements & Successes:

- Assisted in funding the brand development project for St. Johns County that launched in May 2023
- Funded tickets to THE PLAYERS Championship to assist with economic development networking efforts
- Invited key contacts within the community to share updates at meetings, including Robert Olson with the St. Johns County Airport Authority, Orville Dothage of Northrop Grumman, Brett Wiler with Thomas P. Miller & Associates, and Carlton DeVoight of Flagler Health+

FY24 Goals and Objectives:

- Evaluate all proposals presented to the IDA as to the benefit to the county and approve appropriate bond issues based on the criteria set forth in the Florida Statutes
- Support economic development efforts to attract targeted industries to St. Johns County
- Educate community stakeholders about the resources available through the IDA
- Deepen relationships in the community to help drive economic growth
- Build on the IDA's success experienced within the healthcare domain
- Enhance rapport with leading professionals who support bond issuances in the region
- Increase the rate of bond issuances by expanding the IDA's aperture to include new domains/industries interested in the type of funding provided

FY24 Board Members:

- Viv Helwig, Chair
- Kevin Kennedy, Vice Chair
- Melissa Churchwell, Treasurer
- Geoffrey Litchney, Secretary
- Orville Dothage, Assistant Secretary

Notes:

- At the November 14, 2022 IDA meeting, Geoffrey Dobson, the IDA's attorney, announced his retirement. Geoffrey had been the IDA's attorney since 2001. At the January 14, 2023 St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners meeting, Michael McCabe of McCabe Law Group, P.A. was approved as the new IDA attorney. Michael had worked for many years as the backup IDA attorney with Geoffrey.
- The terms expired for board members Chet Frith and Melissa Churchwell in October 2023. Melissa Churchwell was re-appointed and Orville Dothage was appointed for four-year terms.