

AGREEMENT INKED FOR \$10 MILLION IN FUNDING BY N.Y. POWER AUTHORITY FOR GROWING HIGH-TECH JOBS IN ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY

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POTSDAM--The Seaway Private Equity Corporation's (SPEC) Board of Directors has unanimously approved an agreement with the New York Power Authority (NYPA) that puts in place a matching grant program to help invest in start-up technology companies in St. Lawrence County.

The agreement provides for up to \$10 million in funding by NYPA for promoting job development and attracting new high-tech businesses engaged in work related to energy independence and environmental sustainability. The funding is intended to be used as part of a grant program that will require private investors to provide matching funds of \$2 for every \$1 from NYPA.

“This agreement sets the stage for start-up companies and growing jobs in St. Lawrence County, along with the tax base,” said Clarkson University President Anthony G. Collins, who proposed the framework for leveraging NYPA financial support for creating new businesses and jobs in the county. “I anticipate several announcements about new companies in the near future and I am thrilled by this progress in creating opportunities for more of our region’s students to remain in or return to St. Lawrence County.”

Sen. James Wright said, “With this agreement, our region is clearly at the national forefront of creating new jobs and advancing energy research by utilizing resources from a public-private equity fund. The cooperation among government, business and university partners in this venture is a model that will spark further energy research and other economic development opportunities for St. Lawrence County and the North Country.”

“The Seaway Private Equity Corp. can now proceed with reviewing funding proposals by venture capitalists and entering into agreements with them,” said Sen. Raymond Meier. “There are early indications of developments on this front fairly soon, as our vision for creating new high-tech jobs in St. Lawrence County begins to take shape.”

“The agreement with the Seaway Private Equity Corp. follows through on the Power Authority trustees’ previous authorization of the \$10 million for investment in technology companies for St. Lawrence County,” said Frank S. McCullough, Jr., NYPA vice chairman and one of SPEC’s board members. “I think we have every reason to be confident that this agreement, which has Governor Pataki’s full support, will be a catalyst for new jobs here, augmenting the major role the Power Authority plays for the area’s economy from the low-cost power generated at our St. Lawrence-Franklin D. Roosevelt Project.”

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In addition to Collins and McCullough, the other SPEC board members are Raymond Fountain, Administrative Director of the St. Lawrence County Industrial Development Authority; John B. Johnson, Jr., Editor & Co-Publisher of the Watertown Daily Times; Richard Maginn, Owner of Heritage Homes; Ron McDougall, President of Jefferson, Lewis & St. Lawrence Counties Central Trades and Labor Council; Thomas Nichols, Chair of the St. Lawrence County Board of Legislators; Karen St. Hilaire, Executive Director of the St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce; Michael Santarcangelo, Director of Energy Policy for the Empire State Development Corporation; and Tom Scozzafava, CFO of WiseBuys Stores, Inc.

SPEC is a local development corporation formed under New York's not-for-profit corporation law for the principal purpose of receiving funds from NYPA for creating new technology companies in St. Lawrence County. The equity corporation will invest the money, as opportunities arise, in a Potsdam fund management firm, Golden Technology Management, which will raise the additional matching capital to launch the start-up companies.

“In the weeks and months ahead, we’ll be meeting with the SPEC board to review possible investments for creating new high-tech businesses in St. Lawrence County,” said John P. Gaus, president, Golden Technology Management. “The public- and private-sector partnership that has been established here holds great promise of achieving the results that we all want for the area’s economy.”

Gaus noted that Golden Technology, which has been instrumental in the start-up of a number of technology companies in St. Lawrence County, will participate in the management of the new high-tech companies.

The \$10 million that the Power Authority has set aside for investment in the start-up companies is part of \$26 million it has committed for tourism and economic development in the North Country.

For additional information, please contact SPEC’s Administrative Coordinator Tom Plastino by email at plastino@citec.org or by phone at 315-268-3778 ext. 24.

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