

PUBLIC HEARING SCRIPT

Big Heart Pet Brands, Inc. project and/or Individual(s), Affiliate(s), Subsidiary(ies), or Entity(ies) formed or to be formed on its behalf

Public Hearing to be held on March 31, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.,
at the Agency's offices, at 95 Perry Street, Suite 403, Buffalo, NY 14203

ATTENDANCE:

Beth O'Keefe – ECIDA

Brian Krygier – ECIDA

Gregory Bala – JM Smucker/Milk Bone/Big Heart Pet Foods

Ryan McGinnis – JM Smucker/Milk Bone/Big Heart Pet Foods

Kurt Wolfanger - JM Smucker/Milk Bone/Big Heart Pet Foods

Jeff Panza – LeChase Construction

Grant Dimpleby – Ernst & Young

☒ 1. WELCOME: Call to Order and Identity of Hearing Officer.

Hearing Officer: Welcome. This public hearing is now open; it is 9:00 a.m. My name is Grant Lesswing. I am the Director of Business Development for the Erie County Industrial Development Agency, and I have been designated by the Agency to be the hearing officer to conduct this public hearing. This public hearing is being live-streamed and made accessible on the Agency's website at ecidany.com.

☒ 2. PURPOSE: Purpose of the Hearing.

Hearing Officer: We are here to hold the public hearing on the Big Heart Pet Brands, Inc. project and/or Individual(s), Affiliate(s), Subsidiary(ies), or Entity(ies) formed or to be formed on its behalf. The transcript of this hearing will be reviewed and considered by the Agency in determination of this project. Notice of this hearing appeared in The Buffalo News on Wednesday, March 19, 2025.

☒ 3. PROJECT SUMMARY: Description of Project and Contemplated Agency Benefits.

Hearing Officer: The proposed project (the "Project") consists of: (i) the construction on the Land of an approximately 897+/- square-foot addition to the existing 550,000+/- square foot building for a Soft n' Chewy processing line to increase overall plant capacity (the "Improvements"), and (ii) the acquisition by the Company in and around the Improvements of certain

items of machinery, equipment and other tangible personal property (the “Equipment”; and, together with the Land, and the Improvements and the Existing Improvements, the “Facility”). The Facility will be initially owned and operated by the Company.

The proposed financial assistance contemplated by the Agency includes New York State and local sales and use tax exemption benefits (in compliance with Agency's uniform tax exemption policy).

4. FORMAT OF HEARING: Review the rules and manner in which the hearing will proceed.

Hearing Officer: All those in attendance are required to register by signing the sign-in sheet at the front of the room; you will not be permitted to speak unless you have registered. Everyone who has registered will be given an opportunity to make statements and/or comments on the Project.

If you have a written statement or comment to submit for the record, you may leave it at this public hearing, submit it on the Agency’s website or deliver it to the Agency at 95 Perry Street, Suite 403, Buffalo, New York 14203. The comment period closes at 4:00 p.m. on April 22, 2025. There are no limitations on written statements or comments.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT: Hearing Officer gives the Public an opportunity to speak.

Hearing Officer: If anyone is interested in making a statement or comment, please raise your hand, state your name and address; if you are representing a company, please identify the company. I request that speakers keep statements and/or comments to 5 minutes, and if possible, 3 minutes.

Gregory Bala, Plant Engineer, Buffalo Milk Bone Bakery. I’d like to say the facility has been part of the Buffalo community since the 1920s at our facility at 243 Urban Street where we produce our Milk-Bone products. Today, our 280 employees manufacture the most popular dog brand on the market, delivering on the needs of consumers and their pets across the country. To support our production, the Company spends approximately \$28 million annually with suppliers in Erie County and strives to use local suppliers whenever possible. In addition to being a leading employer and business, we are proud to support the local community and have numerous partnerships to help us deliver on the needs of area residents. This includes our work with organizations such as Go Bike Buffalo, the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library System, Re-Tree Western New York and Feed More WNY among many others. As we continue to invest in the growth of our business, workforce and community we are evaluating the potential expansion of our local manufacturing facility. Due to the age of the facility, the project would implement modern environmental and food safety advantages to help us deliver on consistently increasing consumer demand for our Soft n' Chewy product. This initiative would add a dedicated processing line and freezer to increase overall plant capacity. We expect this expansion and the subsequent work to create 17 new full-time jobs, retain existing 280

employees with an average employee salary well above the local market. Investment in the local economy of about \$50M.

As we consider plans to meet our capacity needs, we have evaluated alternative options. Notably, we are considering the potential for expansion of other existing facilities in Topeka, Kansas, and Decatur, Alabama, which currently manufacture products in support of our Pet business. Our Company has existing incentives from the State of Kansas for job creation and investment, and this potential expansion could spark new incentives to further offset costs. We are requesting financial assistance to justify the significant investment to coordinate this expansion in Buffalo given the high costs of construction and labor in Erie County. We appreciate the Board's consideration of financial assistance for this project and look forward to continuing to grow the positive impact we have on the local economy, the area residents that benefit from our consistent support and the consumers who count on our brand.

6. ADJOURNMENT:

As there are no further statements and/or comments, I will close the public hearing at 9:06 a.m.

**SIGN IN SHEET
PUBLIC HEARING**

March 31, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.
at the Agency’s offices, at 95 Perry Street, Suite 403, Buffalo, NY 14203, regarding:

**Big Heart Pet Brands, Inc. project and/or Individual(s), Affiliate(s),
Subsidiary(ies), or Entity(ies) formed or to be formed on its behalf**

Project Location: 243 Urban Street, Buffalo, New York 14211

Name	Company and/or Address	X box to speak/ comment
Beth O’Keefe	ECIDA 95 Perry Street, Suite 403 Buffalo, New York 14203	
Brian Krygier	ECIDA 95 Perry Street, Suite 403 Buffalo, New York 14203	
Gregory Bala	JM Smucker/Milk Bone/Big Heart Pet Foods 243 Urban Street Buffalo, New York 14211	X
Ryan McGinnis	JM Smucker/Milk Bone/Big Heart Pet Foods 243 Urban Street Buffalo, New York 14211	
Kurt Wolfanger	JM Smucker/Milk Bone/Big Heart Pet Foods 243 Urban Street Buffalo, New York 14211	
Jeff Panza	LeChase Construction 51 Elmwood Ave Suite 210, Buffalo, New York 14222	
Grant Dimbleby	Ernst & Young 10 Bausch and Lomb Place Rochester, NY 14604	