



**DRAFT**

**Central Connecticut Economic Development Alliance Meeting Minutes**

Noon; Monday; December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2011; CCRPA Offices, Suite 304; 225 North Main Street, Bristol, CT

**I. Call to order, introductions; determination of quorum**(representatives from 4 different municipalities) the meeting was called to order at 12:15pm with the following members in attendance, except as noted:

**A. Municipality Representatives**

Berlin	Jim Mahoney - Econ. Dev – AB	Bill Millerick – Chamber – AB	
Bristol	Art Ward – Mayor – AB	Steven Schiller - Ec. Dev.	
	Jonathan Rosenthal (Chair) - Ec. Dev.	Plainville	Robert E. Lee – Manager – AB
	Mike Nicasro - Chamber (com. org's.)		Mark DeVoe - Ec. Dev.
Burlington	Rich Stocker – Econ. Dev – AB	Plymouth	Khara Dodds - Ec. Dev.
	Mike Scheidel – Chamber – AB	Southington	Louis Perillo - Ec. Dev. – AB
New Britain	Vacant – AB		

**B. Non-municipal Representatives**

Julie Geyer - CWP (Un/underemployed)	Peggy Sokol - Bristol Senior Center (aged/women) –AB
Bruce Lydem (Organized Labor) – AB	Rosita Forte-Dobson - CT Small Business Center (Professionals/women/minorities) – AB
Byron Treado (Finance) – AB	Rick Mullins - CCSU ITBD – AB
Janet Serra - NW CT CVB (tourism/women) – AB	Victor Mitchell - Tunxis CC – AB
John O'Toole - Northeast Utilities (utilities) – AB	Dwight Harris – Agriculture – AB
John Tricarico - CCRPA Paratransit (Disabilities) – AB	CERC – N.A.
Lynn Abrahamson - Bristol/Burlington Public Health District (Health) - AB	

Also present were David Elder (Town of Burlington), Kristin Thomas (CCRPA), Francis Pickering (CCRPA), Abigail St. Peter (CCRPA), and Timothy Malone (CCRPA)

**II. Approval of September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2011 minutes**

**MOTION** – Mike Nicasro moved to approve the September 19<sup>th</sup> minutes as presented; seconded by Mark DeVoe

**PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**III. Regional marketing/GIS website planning**

Jonathan Rosenthal discussed the regional marketing website that was proposed in the 2011 updated CEDS. He explained that, while each municipality would still be doing its own marketing and attempting to lure companies to its own borders, that the next most beneficial occurrence would be to have companies locate nearby. Jonathan suggested that a regional website with updated demographic, housing, and employment data would be beneficial. He also suggested that showing data within a radius from the region give a picture of the larger region. Mark DeVoe cautioned against including too many other towns in the larger region as it begins to alter the regional demographics.

Tim Malone suggested that the purpose of the website should be to tell a story about the region and its diversity, from fairly large cities to bucolic rural areas.

Mike Nicastro mentioned that the regional chamber provides much of this information as well. It was determined that the Alliance should coordinate with them to avoid duplicating effort.

Tim Malone also mentioned that CCRPA is putting together an application for a regional GIS web portal. This could be used to assist site selectors with finding vacant or for-sale properties in each of the towns. He suggested that the two sites could be integrated in some way.

Mike Nicastro also suggested that the region may want to investigate using social media, such as Facebook. He reported that the chamber has had great success with their efforts.

#### **IV. Vacancies**

Before discussing the vacancies, Dave Elder from the Town of Burlington introduced himself. He was sitting in for Rich Stocker, who was unable to attend. Dave Elder is the part-time planner for Burlington. Tim Malone noted that Burlington currently has a vacancy on the Alliance that Dave could fill. Dave said he would ask the first selectman about it.

##### **A. Vice Chair**

Tim Malone reported that Timothy Stewart would no longer be serving as Vice Chair of the Alliance as he did not seek to be reelected Mayor of New Britain. The group discussed what the bylaws require and Tim reported that an election would be required. It was also suggested that the bylaws be changed to remove the requirement for annual elections. Tim said he would look into it.

**MOTION** – Mark DeVoe moved to hold officer elections during the next meeting in March; seconded by Steve Schiller.

**PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

##### **B. People with disabilities**

Tim Malone reported that the Alliance currently lacks a representative for people with disabilities. He noted that CCRPA has an Americans with Disabilities Act committee and that he could reach out to its membership for a new representative.

#### **V. EDA Grant Announcement**

Tim Malone reported that the funding cycle schedule for EDA grants has been announced. The first deadline was December 15<sup>th</sup> and the next is March 9<sup>th</sup>. He reported that the region's CEDS had still not been approved by the EDA, but that he was trying to get a status update. After some discussion of the application process, it was determined that none of the towns were ready yet to submit an application. Tim offered to assist with any prep work that might be required.

#### **VI. Other Matters**

Dave Elder asked about EDD designation, noting that the Burlington Town Council had shown interest in it. He expressed the town's desire to choose its own destiny and not be forced to join a region it has nothing in common with. The other members concurred.

Tim Malone reported that, on the advice of DECD, he had informally discussed the CEDS/EDD process with a representative from the Middlesex Chamber of Commerce. He reported that they expressed no desire to form a CEDS region of their own and did not seem interested in EDD designation.

Mike Nicastro suggested that it may be time to be more proactive about designation. The region would be better served if it could ensure that it was not broken up or absorbed by another region without its input.

Tim agreed to call the EDA again to get a status update, and, if that failed, to begin talking to congressional representatives. He noted that, while the state had issued guidance indicating that EDDs should have at least 15 towns, that the legislation did not require it. He also noted that the guidance was issued under a previous administration and that things may have changed.

**VII. Adjournment was declared at approximately 1:40pm.**