



CENTRAL CONNECTICUT REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY

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DRAFT

Central Connecticut Economic Development Alliance Meeting Minutes

Noon; Monday; March 19th, 2012; 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	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 Nicastro - Chamber (com. orgs.) – AB	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) – AB	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)	Rick Mullins - CCSU ITBD
Janet Serra - NW CT CVB (tourism/women) – AB	Victor Mitchell - Tunxis CC – AB
John O'Toole - Northeast Utilities (utilities) – AB	Dwight Harris – Agriculture
People with disabilities – Vacant	CERC – N.A.
Lynn Abrahamson - Bristol/Burlington Public Health District (Health) - AB	

Also present were David Elder (Town of Burlington), CCRPA), Francis Pickering (CCRPA), and Timothy Malone (CCRPA)

- II. Approval of December 19th, 2011 minutes**

MOTION –Mark DeVoe moved to approve the December 19th minutes as presented; seconded by Steve Schiller

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

- III. Chair and Vice Chair Elections**

At the September 19th meeting Tim Malone mentioned that because Mayor Stewart is no longer the mayor of New Britain, the Vice Chair position of the Alliance is now vacant. It was decided that new elections would be held in March. Jonathan Rosenthal asked if any nominations had been received. Tim reported that the only nomination received was to re-elect Jonathan as Chair.

MOTION –Mark DeVoe moved to nominate Jonathan Rosenthal as Chair of the Alliance; seconded by Jim Mahoney

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Alliance meetings are held quarterly on the third Monday of the month at noon in the CCRPA Offices. Please mark your calendars for the next meeting on June 18th, 2012.

MOTION –Jonathan Rosenthal moved to nominate Mark DeVoe as Vice Chair; seconded by Jim Mahoney

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

IV. CCSU/ITBD University Center Project

Richard Mullins described the history of the CCSU/ITBD University Center Project. He said that five years ago CCSU had applied for an EDA grant for a University Center but lost out to UConn. This past year the project was submitted again as a joint project with UConn. This project was endorsed by the Alliance and was highly ranked in the project ratings for the 5-year CEDS update. The EDA determined that no new or expanded projects would be funded and thus only gave money to continue UConn's work, leaving CCSU out. Richard had already secured funding from the Connecticut Development Authority (CDA) and was encouraged to continue the project. DECD had also committed funding but pulled out. As it stands, CCSU/ITBD has \$18,500 of funding secured from Connecticut Light & Power (CL&P) and CDA. CCSU/ITBD is also in talks to secure \$10,000 of funding for five years from TD Bank.

The project would provide consulting, advisement, and assessments for small business that are either going through, or have gone through a local business incubator program. This is currently a gap in the business support network in the area. The project would provide services such as business plan writing, Quick Books setup, and financing. There are currently two incubators in the region, located in New Britain, with a third in the planning stages in Bristol.

CCSU/ITBD is looking for a commitment of \$1,000 per year for five years from the CCRPA region. Tim Malone reported that, because the Alliance does not control any money directly, it can only make a recommendation to the Agency Board. Tim suggested that the Alliance make the recommendation to either fund or not fund, then CCRPA staff would bring it up at the next board meeting in April. Francis Pickering suggested that it would be difficult to add the money to existing town dues. He suggested that the Alliance go to the towns directly since it is a small amount of money.

Mark DeVoe and Jim Mahoney were concerned that the timing was poor since many town budgets have either just been passed or were close to being passed. They suggested that if a recommendation/request is going to be made that it be made as soon as possible. Jonathan Rosenthal suggested that a recommendation could be made to fund the project starting in FY12/13. Jim Mahoney recommended that we go ahead with the five-year recommendation since it was such a small amount of money. If that doesn't work, a four-year recommendation could be made later.

Mark DeVoe suggested that when the request is sent out, it should be accompanied with a list of firms that have been helped by CCSU/ITBD. Richard agreed to provide this.

MOTION – Jim Mahoney moved that the Alliance recommend that the seven towns fund the CCSU/ITBD project at \$1,000 per year, apportioned using the same formula as is used for CCRPA dues; seconded by Byron Treado

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

V. CEDS/EDD update

Tim Malone reported that the 5-year CEDS updated has been approved by the EDA. The region is now eligible to apply for EDA grants for infrastructure and public works projects. He also reported that the CEDS has been sent to the Office of Policy and Management and the Department of Economic and Community Development for review. They have 60 days to review the document and make comments. Following this 60 day period, Tim will submit the CEDS along with a letter requesting Economic Development District designation to DECD.

Jonathan Rosenthal asked for a refresher on the requirements for such designation. Tim said that the only current legal requirement is that there only be eight EDDs in the state. Currently there are four or five, with a few more planned. Metro Hartford is just beginning to update their CEDS. DECD released guidance that said that EDDs should have at least 15 towns (the region has seven). Francis Pickering brought up the recently passed Senate transportation bill. The bill, if also passed by the house, would eliminate many of the state's RPOs, opening the possibility of adding more towns to the region. One of the RPOs that would disappear would be Midstate; DECD had previously suggested that Central Connecticut merge with them. Midstate, however, has unofficially expressed no interest in being involved in the CEDS/EDD process.

Tim Malone noted that the guidance was issued under a previous administration and that priorities may have changed. He noted that DECD is currently busy dealing with the jobs bill and first five program. He suggested that the Alliance's application may encounter less opposition than they have previously anticipated.

VI. Other Matters

Mark DeVoe mentioned that he had requested information regarding necessary infrastructure improvements for the Cancer Center project in New Britain and Plainville. He will get back to everyone when he has the information. This information is required before any grants can be sought.

Jim Mahoney reported that DECD is providing money for brownfields in Berlin.

Jonathan Rosenthal reported that he had a discussion with a member of the Litchfield Hills tourism district. The state is considering further consolidation of tourism districts. Consolidation would threaten to sever ties formed by employees at the local offices and tour bus operators. It would mean less effective marketing of unique attributes of the state's various regions. He suggested that members of the Alliance talk to their legislators about this issue.

VII. Adjournment was declared at approximately 1:18pm