



North Country Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee Meeting

MINUTES

March 10, 2017

North Country Council – Littleton, NH

- **In attendance:** Bill Andreas, Steve Knox, Ben Doyle, Mike Scala, Doug Arion, Gretta Johansson, Brian Bresnahan, Chuck Henderson, Beverly Mason, Roy Stever, Jo Lacaillade, Benoit Lamontagne
 - **Guest Speaker:** Benoit Lamontagne – North Country Resource Specialist
 - **NCC Staff:** B. Robinson, G. Coppelman, M. Moren-Grey
- **Meeting called to order** at 10:03am by Vice Chair Jo Lacaillade
- **Roundtable introductions** were made by attendees.
- **Guest Presentation:** Benoit Lamontagne – North Country Business Resource Specialist from NH Department of Resources and Economic Development gave an overview of the upcoming changes to the NH Department of Resources and Economic Development. Governor Sununu's plans to reorganize DRED. The plan includes creating Departments of Business and Economic Affairs and Natural and Cultural Resources. Business and Economic Affairs would include Economic Development, Travel and Tourism, International Commerce and Government Contracting in addition to Community Development Finance Authority (CDFA) and Business Finance Authority (BFA). The Department of Natural and Cultural Resources will include Parks and Recreation, and the Division of Forest and Lands. It is presumed that this department will be led by Director Jeffrey Rose while the other will seek a director. CDFA & BFA at this point will not be a State Agency and remain structured as they are.

Northern Border Regional Commission Program Manager at DRED is Mollie Kaylor

- **Acceptance of Minutes:** January 13, 2017 Minutes. Motion by Steve Knox to accept the Minutes as written, seconded by Beverly Mason. Passed unanimously.
- **CEDS Projects List:** Michelle Moren-Grey distributed the latest update to the CEDS Projects List. Glenn Coppelman & Michelle Moren-Grey pointed out the various updates to individual projects that had been noted based on feedback at the January meeting. The group then discussed any updates to projects including

progress on the EDA Groveton Mill Project, new contact needed for the Morrison, reaching out to Pam LaFlamme for Berlin Greenhouse Project and to PSU for the Lancaster project.

ACTION ITEM: Staff update list and contact Pam LaFlamme, Morrison and PSU for Lancaster Project.

- **CEDS Committee Work:** Michelle Moren-Grey presented attendees a draft timeline for the 2018 update.

Michelle also distributed a chart showing the makeup of the CEDS Committee by type of organization represented. The Committee discussed the need for a broader and more reflective representation of the region's sector composition. At present, the Committee's top 5 sectors are not in alignment with the regions composition especially in the private sector and retail representation. Bill Andreas commented that historically retail was a difficult member to capture and it would be well represented through invitation of chambers.

There was a question as to how members are placed onto the committee; Bill Andreas (long-time committee member) commented that there is no written procedure and members are recommended to the CEDS committed by NCC Staff or from Committee Members and voted on by a consensus vote.

- **Committee Roundtable Updates (info missing my apologies I was focused on getting Glenn's Surprise Cake to the table):**
 - Beverly Mason – within USDA there is a new acting director for VT and NH
 - Chuck Henderson – Senator is busing with the new administration and moving initiatives forward.
 - Brian Bresnahan – Congresswoman is also busy with the new administration and working hard on the opioid crisis.
 - Gretta Johansson – Amy Bassett is now the Maine District Director of SBA. SBA is currently in a hiring freeze and has also lost their lender relations staff in the end of 2016
 - Doug Arion – Working on partnerships with education, workforce and businesses.
 - Mike Scala – Have seen multiple loan applications and is seeing growth and opportunity.
 - Ben Doyle – USDA received threefold increase in RDBG applications. Also commented the importance of the CEDS process is to these potential projects and funders such as USDA-RD
 - Steve Knox – Future of county farm (Carroll) is unknown but a potential for regional economic engine.
 - Barbara Robinson – Thank you to staff and committee for working on CEDS.
 - Bill Andreas – Seeing a push for conservation land.
 - Jo Lacallade – Working toward bringing back the historic district. Woodsville despite working with Grafton County Economic Development Corporation is losing another main street business. Working hard to bring community back.

Motion by Steve Knox to adjourn meeting, seconded by Mike Scala. Passed unanimously

***Vice Chair Lacallade adjourned the meeting at 11:40pm.**

***** Next Full Committee meeting date, May 12, 2017 *****

***** Location: TBD *****

Respectfully submitted, Michelle Moren-Grey