



# Choose Columbia

Columbia Economic Development Corporation

**MINUTES**  
**COLUMBIA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**  
**Executive Committee**  
**Tuesday, December 7, 2022**  
**One Hudson City Centre, Suite 301**  
**Hudson, NY 12534**

A regular meeting of the Columbia Economic Development Corporation (CEDC) Executive Committee held in person and accessible to the public via Zoom on December 7, 2022. The meeting was called to order at 8:31am by David Fingar, Chair.

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived/ Departed
David Fingar	Chair	Present in person	
James Calvin	Vice-Chair	Present in person	
Tarah Gay	Treasurer	Present in person	
Sarah Sterling	Secretary	Present in person	
Richard Cummings	Committee Member	Present in person	
Andrew Howard, Esq	CEDC Counsel	Present in person	
F. Michael Tucker	President/CEO	Present in person	
Jessica Gabriel	Senior Economic Developer	Present in person	
Lisa Drahushuk	Administrative Supervisor	Present in person	
Martha Lane	Business Development Director	Present in person	
Cat Lyden	Bookkeeper	Present in person	
Riley Werner	Administrative Assistant	Present in person	

**Minutes, June 14, 2022:**

*Mr. Calvin made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cummings to approve the minutes from June 14, 2022. Carried.*

**2023 CEDC Agenda:**

Mr. Fingar stated he suggested at this last meeting of the year an informal discussion take place about where CEDC is and what the Executive Committee is thinking.

Mr. Fingar thought CEDC had done a wonderful job and Mike and the staff were incredible. He thought the Loan program was the envy of the surrounding area. He stated he also felt CEDC should be more independent. Ms. Sterling felt there was a fine line between keeping independence and assisting the County. Ms. Gay agreed she wondered about the majority of CEDC funding coming from the county. She felt CEDC needed to stay on track with it's goals. All admitted they had no answer to the current situation. Mr. Tucker noted the loan fund had grown to a size that reduced the dependence on the County, but it was still dependent upon Federal funds for the loan portfolio. He felt CEDC is as independent as possible. He felt the local businesses felt that by paying taxes, they were supporting CEDC through their tax payments. He suggested the reporting to the Board be reorganized to show the services provided to the private sector, the loan clients and to Columbia County.

Mr. Howard reviewed what had happened in the past, noting there had been changes including holding a strategic planning session which determined that broadband was needed. He stated broadband was driven by CEDC. He stated CEDC should be vigilant about pushed into taking certain positions that might not fit into the CEDC vision. He stated the Board of Supervisors have the confidence so they bring projects to CEDC.

Mr. Tucker addressed the Housing Coordinator position. He noted the county had expressed uncertainty about the long-term need for a Housing Coordinator. They suggested that CEDC host the position for several years in order to determine if this would become a permanent need. The Committee agreed that improving the message and marketing were important as was maintaining the balance of the organization. Mrs. Gabriel suggested other sources of revenue could be found as could other activities. Mr. Tucker stated they have been thinking about how to find other opportunities for services for fees. He noted interest has been increasing in 5G, increased cell service and additional shovel ready sites.

Mr. Calvin stated he felt the reason the balance of funding had become skewed was the pandemic, which brought unprecedented needs and funding streams. He expressed his uncertainty the funding would continue. He noted in the past it had been pointed out that the funding for CEDC belonged to the taxpayers. He noted that it was working. Mr. Fingar stated he saw no way out of the situation, but expressed concern that governmental oversight increased in general and was concerned for the future.

Mr. Cummings stated CEDC has a blend of income; County funding, membership and interest on loan money. CEDC can choose how to use the funds. He noted to date the Loan interest has been put back into loans, while the County Funding and membership has been used for the day to day operations. He stated the loan funds could be used in a different way, to reduce the dependence on the County. Ms. Sterling referred to the fundraising, noting that CEDC's membership levels were modest in comparison to others. Ms. Gay felt CEDC would need to explain the benefits of joining CEDC to the younger entrepreneurs. Mr. Tucker agreed education of potential members was important

Mr. Tucker asked the Committee enter into Executive Session under Section 105 1 f. of the Open Meeting law to discuss: the medical, financial, credit or employment history of a particular person or corporation, or matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person or corporation. *Mr. Calvin made a motion, seconded by Ms. Gay. Executive Session was entered into at 9:18am. Executive Session was exited at 9:30am on the motion of Mr. Calvin, which was seconded by Ms. Sterling. All present voted in favor.*

**Public Comment:**

*With no further business and no public comment the meeting was adjourned at 9:30am upon a motion by Ms. Gay and seconded by Ms. Sterling.*

*Respectfully submitted by Lisa Drachusfuk*