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Meeting Notes
COLUMBIA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE
Thursday, August 5, 2021
One Hudson City Centre
Suite 301
Hudson, New York

A regularly scheduled meeting of Columbia Economic Development Corporation’s (CEDC) Workforce Development and Education Committee was held in person at One Hudson City Centre, Suite 301, Hudson, NY 12534 on August 5, 2021 at 8:31 am.

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived/ Departed
Ruth Adams	Committee Member	Present via Zoom	
David Fingar	Committee Member	Present	
Tish Finnegan	Committee Member	Excused	
Derek Grout	Committee Member	Excused	
James Lapenn	Committee Chair	Present	
John Lee	Committee Member	Excused	
Carlee Drummer	Board Member	Present Via Zoom	
F. Michael Tucker	President/CEO	Present	
Andy Howard	Counsel	Present	
Lauren Cranna	Business Development Partner	Excused	
Lisa Drahushuk	Administrative Supervisor	Present	
Martha Lane	Business Development Director	Present	
Cathy Lyden	Bookkeeper/Administrative Assistant	Present	

Mr. Tucker stated Dr. Drummer and Ms. Adams were joining the meeting via Zoom. He reminded the Committee that due to the fact they were not physically present at One Hudson City Centre, Suite 301, they would not count toward a quorum and would be unable to participate in a vote.

Mr. Lapenn noted there was no quorum present for the meeting, and called the meeting to order at 8:31am.

Strategic Project Discussion:

Career Jam:

Mr. Tucker noted the next event was scheduled for Spring 2022. He stated it was planned to be an in-person event. He noted students would be able to access the online version as well. Mr. Tucker stated due to the expansion of the program over a larger region, and the change to the business model, he was



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unsure which portions of their program the local area could afford. He explained the plan was to provide Columbia and Greene students with opportunities with local companies and provide the access to the virtual program.

Career Connection (Junior Career Leadership Institute):

Dr. Drummer stated upon reflection, it was decided to change the name to one more suited to the goals of the program. The program is now called Career Connections. She outlined the program, explaining the new structure would begin in the junior year and continue into the senior year. This would provide some continuity and would be beneficial when trying to place the outgoing juniors into internships before their senior year. She outlined the program which included workshops, career assessments projects, mentoring and a completion of a workplace credential.

Dr. Drummer stated they had applied for a grant from the Berkshire Taconic Foundation to assist in financing the program. She noted Columbia-Greene Community College would be contributing \$15,000 with CEDC matching that amount. She noted Greene County Cares fund would also be used to fund the program. She explained that if the Berkshire Taconic Foundation didn't approve the grant, she would be working through the Columbia-Greene Community College Foundation.

Job Fair:

Mr. Tucker stated this year the NYS Workforce office is partnering with CEDC, the Greene and Columbia County Chambers of Commerce for a virtual career fair on August 16th & 17th. The unemployment numbers in the County were reviewed.

Microbusiness Seminar:

Ms. Lane stated the class was scheduled to begin on September 28th, she was hopeful it would take place in person at the Chamber of Commerce. She noted she had received one application and three instructors had been confirmed.

Entrepreneurship For All:

Ms. Lane stated the principals of the organization had expressed their intention of locating a chapter in the City of Hudson. She stated they provided a year-long program focusing on entrepreneurs and focused on mentorship. She felt they provided a different product and would be focusing on mentorships. She noted their last meeting focused on Community Navigators who would reach out to the under-served residents wishing to start a new business. Mr. Tucker felt the partnerships were important, noting that the stand alones working together, complement one another.



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Focused Training Opportunities:

Hospitality, Clean Energy, Manufacturing, Coding:

Mr. Tucker stated he was trying to work with the other partners to identify the needs and frequency of the training programs as well as the target audience. He noted that Hudson Hall had done a training program and found a large range of needed skills. He stated an organization was needed to run the program, and CEDC was not able to fulfill that role.

Mr. Tucker stated he was working with the new owners of a downtown store who wished to provide professional kitchen training. He noted the Basilica was doing clean energy and historic restoration; manufacturing was discussed with Fuse Hub (Empire State Development) and the Center for Economic Growth. He reminded the Committee CEDC had sponsored two attendees to the Albany Can Code, resulting in one who had graduated and was still working in the field. He informed the Committee Hudson Development Corporation was interested in focusing on workforce training once they finalize the sale of the Kaz property. He stated he had been in preliminary discussions with them regarding options.

Apprenticeship, Mentoring:

Mr. Tucker stated he had discussed these with Columbia-Greene Community College. He noted SUNY has a sophisticated apprenticeship office. He felt it was important to make small businesses more comfortable with mentoring, apprenticeships and internships, namely, educating them on their obligations regarding the programs and purposes. He noted that in Columbia County, nearly 70% of businesses have less than 10 employees. He noted it was difficult for these small employers to take time needed to focus on these programs.

Mr. Tucker informed the Committee, the Governor had announced round three of the Workforce Development initiatives. He felt a multi-county request would be best, noting Columbia, Greene and Rensselaer shared QUESTAR III and each individually had chambers of commerce and economic development organizations. He noted they were discussing the amount of the request. He felt if Career Jam offered their program to the entire region, and funding could be obtained for that program, it would lessen the burden on CEDC.

Mr. Tucker addressed the strategic planning process. He reviewed the workforce pillar with the Committee. He felt there had been a great deal of progress on the goal. He stated work remained on leveraging the education to workplace pipeline, noting it may not be CEDC's role. He suggested as they went through the strategic planning process, this section needed to be reviewed understanding that CEDC has developed a stronger partnership with the two other counties, Columbia-Greene Community College, Questar III and the Workforce Board. Mr. Fingar felt CEDC didn't need to lead this any longer.



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Mr. Fingar asked that our partners in the workforce and education sector be part of the strategic planning process. Mr. Tucker stated Ms. O’Loughlin could have a brief interview with them. Mr. Howard suggested in the future this committee may decide to be re-branded to reflect the changing state of the County.

Mr. Tucker will determine if a less formal group could be formed and still meet under the NYS Authority Budget Office regulations. Mr. Lapenn stated he would like to see more depth on the Committee as in multiple skills. He asked if more CEDC informed staff could be involved in the Workforce Investment Board. Mr. Tucker stated he would leave this up to the Board and the Committee to determine through the strategic planning process. He stated this may fall under the Project Manager position.

Public Comment:

With no quorum or public present and no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 9:22am.

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Draushuk