



# Choose Columbia

Columbia Economic Development Corporation

**MINUTES**  
**COLUMBIA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**  
**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE**  
**Tuesday November 15, 2022**  
**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 on November 15, 2022 at 8:30 am.

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived/ Departed
Ruth Adams	Committee Member	Present	
David Fingar	Committee Member	Present	
Derek Grout	Committee Member	Absent	
Carlee Drummer	Committee Member	Present	
Sean Sawyer	Committee Member	Absent	
Tarah Gay	Board Member	Present	
Michael Molinski	Board Member	Present	
F. Michael Tucker	President/CEO	Present	
Andy Howard	Counsel	Present	
Jessica Gabriel	Senior Economic Developer	Present	
Lisa Drahushuk	Administrative Supervisor	Present	
Martha Lane	Business Development Director	Present	
Cathy Lyden	Bookkeeper	Present	
Riley Werner	Administrative Assistant	Present	

**Election of Temporary Chair:**

*Ms. Sterling made a motion, seconded by Dr. Drummer to elect Ruth Adams as temporary Chair. Carried.*

**Minutes:**

*Ms. Sterling made a motion, seconded by Ms. Adams to approve the minutes from March 3, 2022. Carried.*



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## **Committee Membership and Scheduling:**

Mr. Tucker suggested that the Committee remain the same for present and see who expresses an interest in serving on the committee. Mr. Fingar stated the committee would be looking to have members from outside the CEDC Board to serve on the Committee as well.

## **Strategic Project Discussion:**

Mary Ellen O'Loughlin asked the attendees to introduce themselves. Mr. Tucker asked Ms. O'Loughlin to have a brief overview of the data gathered then a discussion of where CEDC wished to go.

Ms. O'Loughlin reviewed the data on labor shortage gathered from the US Chamber of Commerce. She noted NYS had enough people to fill the jobs, but do those people have the appropriate skills or are they interested in the available jobs? Reasons why people aren't working are for women: lack of access to child care; earning more on unemployment than if they were in the workforce; altered lifestyles due to the pandemic; increase in new businesses (not necessarily the same fields as the displaced workers); Low pay, no opportunity for advancement, flexibility in hours and where people work (remote work).

Ms. Gabriel stated issues from the employer's perspective were: workforce housing, childcare, debt and demographics. Current workforce needed are in: healthcare, food service, tourism and construction trades. She asked what would be appropriate for CEDC to do regarding the misalignment. She asked the Committee to think about how they felt CEDC could address or if they could address those misalignments between what employers need and what employees are seeking. She asked the committee to consider the role of CEDC, where should they begin to address the issue.

Ms. O'Loughlin noted the misalignment was a big problem. She reviewed the desires of the employees and solutions to consider for the issues. She then addressed how to move forward, which included: What is the role CEDC can play, what organizations are needed to move forward in a structured way over the next 12 months.

Mr. Tucker stated CEDC knows their partners. He felt there would be a balance between what the employers are able to offer and maintain their efficiency and how CEDC would be able to assist. He felt CEDC would be the facilitator between the businesses and the employees. Ms. Adams asked if the role CEDC was currently filling with housing could be a template for this issue. She felt the discussion should include all parties. The Committee agreed that the differences existed and the two parties needed to be brought together, for better understanding on both sides. Mr. Tucker suggested doing small groups and in regional groups. He noted some towns currently had business groups that could be utilized. Mr. Tucker suggested CEDC put the plan together with the Chamber of Commerce.



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Ms. Gabriel, felt the businesses needed to be brought together for information and brainstorming on ways to make the businesses more attractive to the potential employees.

The committee discussed gathering a group of small businesses together and discussing issues and challenges. He felt once the structure of this event was determined it could be adapted for others. Ms. O'Loughlin suggested that CEDC's role might transform into a facilitator and to pull small businesses together and to brainstorm ideas that could be used. Mr. Tucker suggested it needed to be determine how to attract workers to the County.

The Committee discussed CEDC's role in education. Dr. Drummer stated the college can't offer a program unless there is a pipeline to a job. Mr. Tucker asked what CEDC could do to be helpful. Dr. Drummer stated employers are always asking for assistance with soft-skills and now digital programs ie. Excel. She suggested that going to the towns and having conversations would be a good start. Ms. Adams felt it was important to broaden perspectives beyond CEDC, including youth and someone with the business community in order to share their perspectives. She clarified she meant people who were either working with youths or recent graduates, and business people who were hands on in their businesses. Mr. Tucker suggested inviting members of the recently named 40 under 40 in the City of Hudson to participate with the group.

Ms. Adams stated the group would need a structure and goals with a timeframe. Ms. Gabriel suggested specific tasks for the participants be outlined, in order to relate it to the Strategic Plan. Mr. Howard suggested if there were some county wide job site to be used for businesses. Mr. Tucker suggested the Chamber of Commerce job site be the local hub. Ms. Adams suggested a website where job seekers post and employers can access the site.

December 14<sup>th</sup> as 8:30am was selected for a follow-up meeting.

## **Public Comment:**

*With no public present and no further comments, Mr. Fingar made a motion, seconded by Ms. Adams, to adjourn the meeting at 9:30am.*

*Respectfully submitted by Lisa Draushuk*