



# Choose Columbia

Columbia Economic Development Corporation

## COLUMBIA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

### Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, November 19, 2024

One Hudson City Centre, Suite 301

Hudson, NY 12534

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Columbia Economic Development Corporation (CEDC) Board of Directors was held in person at their office located at One Hudson City Centre, Suite 301, Hudson, NY 12534 on November 19, 2024. The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by James Calvin, Chair.

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived/ Departed
James Calvin	Chair	Present in person	
Richard Cummings	Board Member	Present in person	
Carlee Drummer	Board Member – Ex-Officio	Present via Zoom	
Tarah Gay	Treasurer	Present in person	
Justin Goldman	Board Member	Present in person	
Derek Grout	Board Member	Present in person	
Michael Johnston	Board Member	Absent	
Amanda Karch	Board member – Ex-Officio	Present in person	
Kenneth Leggett	Board Member	Absent	
Rachel Levine	Board Member	Present in person	
Christian Lopez	Board Member	Absent	
Bryan Mahoney	Board Member	Present in person	
Michael Molinski	Secretary	Present in person	
Richard Nesbitt	Board Member	Present in person	
Carmine Pierro	Board Member – Ex Officio	Absent	
Rachel Puckett	Board Member	Present in person	
Sean Sawyer	Board Member	Present in person	
Ryan Skoda	Board Member – Ex Officio	Present in person	
Andy Howard	CEDC Attorney	Present in person	
F. Michael Tucker	President/CEO	Present in person	
Chris Brown	Housing Coordinator	Present in person	
Martha Lane	Vice President Business Development	Present in person	
Stephen Vandenburg	Business Development Specialist	Present in person	
Alondra Isidro	Project Manager	Present in person	
Cathy Lyden	Bookkeeper	Present in person	
Riley Werner	Administrative Assistant	Present in person	
Lisa Drahushuk	Administrative Supervisor	Present in person	

### Call to Order:

Mr. Calvin called the meeting to order at 8:32am. He introduced Ryan Skoda, Supervisor from the Town of Taghkanic to the Board. He is the new Board of Supervisors representative on the CEDC Board.

**Committee Reports:****Governance & Nominating Committee:****Proposed Candidate:**

Ms. Levine gave a brief background of Christine Hinz. She stated the Committee interviewed her and recommended she be elected to the Board. With no further questions, *Mr. Cummings made a motion, noting the Committee was extremely impressed by Ms. Hinz. Mr. Molinski seconded the motion. Carried.*

**Governance & Nominating Committee Charter:**

Ms. Levine stated the Committee reviewed the Charter. Mr. Tucker reviewed the changes, which he noted were minimal, and made the documents clearer. *Mr. Sawyer made a motion, seconded by Mr. Grout to approve the document as presented. Carried.*

**Proposed Officers 2025:**

Ms. Levine reviewed the proposed officers for the upcoming year. Mr. Calvin – Chair; Ms. Gay – Vice – Chair; Mr. Mahoney – Treasurer; Mr. Molinski – Secretary and Ethics Officer, and Mr. Tucker as President/CEO. *Mr. Goldman made a motion to approve the slate as presented, seconded by Mr. Nesbitt. Carried.*

**Board Attendance:**

Ms. Levine noted that attendance was important because votes were needed in order to proceed with the organization's mission. She reminded the Board, votes needed to take place in person with the exception of certain extraordinary circumstances as outlined by NYS.

Mr. Calvin reviewed a report documenting board meeting attendance for the full board by individual members. *Mr. Cummings made a motion, seconded by Ms. Levine to approve the report as presented. Carried.*

**Loan Committee:****Portfolio Dashboard:**

Ms. Lane stated Loan Client D had made a payment, bringing them current on their loan. Loan Clients B & C had been in touch and payments are anticipated. Loan Client A was in default. She stated she was working with Freeman Howard who had sent a demand letter to Loan Client A. She stated a second letter would be sent next week. *Mr. Sawyer made a motion, seconded by Mr. Molinski to approve the report as presented. Carried.*

**Ooey Gooley Loan Request:**

Mr. Vandenburg stated the loan request from Ooey Gooley was for a \$10,000 SBA loan. He explained the business was a food truck and stated the terms were 48 months at an interest rate of 7.75%. The loan proceeds were to be used for equipment purchase and working capital. Collateral would consist of a lien on business assets and the personal guarantee of the principal. *Ms. Levine made a motion, seconded by Mr. Grout to approve the loan as presented. Carried.*

Mr. Vandenburg reviewed a handout outlining the CEDC revolving loan and SBA Microloan programs. The sheet outlined the number of loans, microbusiness graduates, writeoffs, interest income and other information. He stated the annual review had been successfully completed by the SBA during the past week. Mr. Tucker noted CEDC had the highest number of loans in the SBA Syracuse district for the 2023-2024 period.

**President/CEO Report:****Treasurer's Report:**

Mr. Tucker reviewed the Treasurer's Report. *Mr. Sawyer made a motion, seconded by Ms. Puckett to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. Carried.*

**President/CEO Report:**

Mr. Tucker reviewed the handout on the staff's monthly activities.



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## **Board Discussion:**

Mr. Calvin welcomed Supervisor Ryan Skoda and asked him to discuss the significance of agriculture in the economy of Columbia County. Mr. Skoda stated he was the owner of Triple Creek Farm and Hudson Valley Fresh. He stated agriculture was one of the largest employers in the State, as well as the county, stating it was important to support entry-level farmers.

Mr. Calvin asked how he saw agriculture changing. Mr. Skoda stated Columbia County was nearby to one of the largest markets in the world. He noted the Buy Local, Know Your Farmer movement has taken off, and anticipated the movement would spread nationwide. He felt that anything CEDC can do to support the local farmers and to market their products locally will help.

Mr. Calvin asked the biggest challenge facing farmers. Mr. Skoda stated property taxes and finding employees are large challenges. He stated Triple Creek Farm was founded in 1922 and passed down through the family. He stated it was a dairy farm, supported by 1200 acres of a mixture of feed crops. He stated the crops and dairy were processed on site.

Mr. Grout asked how many farms Hudson Valley Fresh worked with. Mr. Skoda stated there were 9 farms. He stated there was a strong local market, but most product went to NYC. He stated they were the exclusive provider for the Culinary Institute of America and most of the local school districts.

Mr. Tucker thanked Mr. Skoda and the Columbia County Board of Supervisors for their support. Ms. Karch stated there were resources available through her organization the Columbia-Greene Workforce Development Board that might be helpful regarding staffing. Mr. Sawyer stated that the next phase of the Olana masterplan was to recreate the farm that once existed on the property.

Mr. Tucker introduced the newest member of the CEDC staff, Alondra Isidro.

## **Minutes October 22 2024:**

*Ms. Gay made a motion seconded by Mr. Cummings, to approve the October 22, 2024 minutes as presented,. Carried.*

*With no further business to be conducted and no public comments, Mr. Cummings made a motion, seconded by Mr. Grout to adjourn the meeting. Carried. The meeting was adjourned at 9:10am.*

*Respectfully submitted by Lisa Drahusiuk*