**SeVEDS Agenda for February 19th Meeting | 2:00-4:00pm @ BDCC**

**In Attendance:  Adam Grinold, Ariel Brooks, Ann Andreasantos, Meg Streeter, Drew Richards, Bob Stevens, Konstantin VonKrusenstern, Peter Yost, Cynthia Stoddard, Dutch Walsh, Susan McMahon, Martin Langeveld, Laura Sibilia (via conference call), Jodi Clark  Regrets:  Lisa Sullivan, Patrick Moreland, Jeremy Haskins**

The Usual Business (30 min)

* Welcome and Gathering

Introductions for Meg Streeter, who is attending her first meeting.

* Approve Minutes

Moved and approved.

* Review and Approve Financials

Postponed until Jill able to join next month.

* Fundraising/Grant/Budget discussions
  + EDA – (Adam & Laura)

EDA came in with recommendation to increase the ask.  We were waiting for and received the funding from the State.  Patrick Leahy’s office got new language in for regions that have economic development initiatives where a nuclear power plant has been closed.  We were strongly encouraged to take advantage of this language.  What was originally $70,000 is now being recommended to be $250,000.  We have $170,000 from the State.  We are aiming for a close to 50/50 match.  We must have language from EDA which commits to the funding in order to receive the funds from the State.

Question: If there was a group who could raise $50,000, could we include them in?  Yes, but we have a significant time constraint for a March 12th deadline.  We want to be moving in May rather than waiting until August to implement the programming in support of the Green Building Cluster and Accelerator.

Question:  Is this one time funding or ongoing?  Answer:  We could do a bigger project if we had more time.  EDA would like a tri-region project. The Tri-Region is just getting going.  In order to ask for more money, we will need to do more tri-region work.  The grant is the Economic Adjustment.  It does not have money in the fund right now, but they are reviewing applications and giving out non-committal award letters, contingent on the EDA funding.

Question:  Tourism?   Answer:  It was in the first application, and was dropped out of the State application.  Laura is looking for another way to do this project.  (“I am going to get that project done.”)

* + WCEDP update (Adam)

Proposal for the new process from BDCC has been presented to the Governor and Pat Moulton.  We are hopeful that since this is a regional partnership proposal it will move forward.  There has been some town leadership conflict about our proposal.  However, we are still hopeful it will move forward.  We should hear within a week or so.  This has been a highly collaborative effort

Laura has submitted a bill in the event of the loss of a major employer, and the community has a CEDS in place, that the state will give deference to the regional entity who has created and been working on the regional CEDS.  Blasan closed in Bennington, a loss of 60 jobs.

Question:  What about a company that is purchased by an out of state company?  Would this bill cover that eventuality?

Answer:  Yes.

* + CEDF (Peter)

There were two proposals that were considered to be responsive, including the SEON proposal.  A recommendation has been made.  SEON has been asked to follow up on their proposal with an interview and further information. The other proposal had no local involvement whereas ours had robust local partnerships and involvement.

* + Towns – Town Meeting Day Assignments (Laura & Ariel)

Dutch is willing to go to Putney in addition to Bellows Falls.

One meeting has requested handouts for meetings.  Jodi will make a one-pager with the top 10 questions a community member might have about what SeVEDS has been doing that benefits them.

In Executive session, there was discussion of funding sources for SeVEDS.  What sources are secure, what do we still need to gather?  This will be the substantive discussion for the March Meeting.

CEDS and FY ‘15 Board Priority Area Updates (35  min)

* **General CEDS –**

* + Action steps for inviting CEDS committee to Board Meeting for May

Talk about rallying the CEDS committee for the May meeting in the March Meeting.

* + Status of “family tree”?

There is a draft one from Drew.  Jodi will print for the Board for March meeting for discussion whether this tree matches the actual functionality.

* **CEDS Objective 1: Act Regionally**

* + Board 2015 Priority: Communications Plan
    - Jodi update

Working on a full Communications strategies assessment and report to present to the board in March.  Jodi will present a comparative/competitive analysis of similar organizations as well as vital projects use of social media channels.  Jodi is also working on goals for the current channels. Jodi requests that board members who are on Facebook and Twitter in particular please go to the SeVEDS and BDCC pages/channels and “like” them as well as sharing content they find interesting or important.  Jodi also seeks feedback on which conversations SeVEDS should be participating in or even driving in order to garner more community-wide engagement and awareness of their work.

Included in the plan will also be in person meetings on CEDS implementation and information awareness sharing, and where to pitch stories of our work (newspapers, online, blogs, forums, radio, etc.)

* + - Tri-state CEDS Alignment

* **CEDS Objective 2: Create an entrepreneurial environment and culture to enhance existing business and grow new business.**

* + Board 2015 Priority: SoVT Business Accelerator
    - Martin and Jodi report

Been doing research on best practices for Accelerators.  There are two models, those with or without co-working spaces.  We are focusing our efforts on creating the virtual services rather than the physical space.  Jodi has contacted the [Global Accelerator Network](http://gan.co/the-network) and spoke with them about the model they support among their members:

1. **Short-Term**

*3-6 month long program*

1. **Mentorship-Driven**

*40-80 mentors*

1. **Small class size**

*max of 10-20 companies going through a program at a time*

1. **Accelerator funding**

*Each program has set aside funding & resources for multiple sessions*

1. **Terms are favorable to entrepreneurs**
   1. Companies are not charged to join the acclerator program
   2. A small equity stake (usually 6-8% in the U.S. and 8-10% non-U.S.)
   3. Space, internet and desk/chair provided to the entrepreneurs
2. **Strong management teams**

*(who are usually entrepreneurs themselves)*

1. **Have run at least 1 successful program.**

* + - Steering committee composition

An initial outreach has been sent to a broad sector group of regional leaders, business owners spanning different sectors.  There has already been interest from several of those contacted initially.  Jodi is continuing to make further outreach efforts and following up with those who received the email.  Jodi will send the board the list of the initial outreach and will take suggestions for additional individuals to be contacted for serving either on the Steering Committee for the Accelerator and/or eventually as a mentor.

* + - * Targeting

* **CEDS Objective 3: Improve wage parity with the surrounding laborshed**

* + Board 2015 Priority: Green Building
    - Jodi /Guy meetings update

Jodi has been regularly meeting with Guy Payne and Michael Bosworth to keep up to date on projects and events and assist with any cluster assessments or needs beyond what has already been happening.  One area Jodi is working on is a Social Media Needs Assessment.  The survey is developed and needs to go out to a targeted group of SEON members to determine what role Social Media will have in their marketing/growing target markets, collaboration/networking to colleagues, advancing any thought leadership in Green Building/Energy nationally or globally.

* **CEDS Objective 4: increase the size and quality of the workforce**

* + Board 2015 Priority: Workforce Development and Internship Program
    - WF Committee charge and leadership  (Dutch)

Talking about reducing that committee into a Steering committee to work specifically on CEDS objectives.  We spent time working with a small group of manufacturers doing a presentation from Whalen Engineering from Charlestown, NH.  Out of this has been an interest and momentum to see what the next steps are in potentially implementing the curriculum developed by Whalen and Charlestown.  There are a lot of trainings and education going on already that we were not already aware of.  What are we trying to do and make happen?  The conversations with the manufacturers are focusing on what do you need and how can we assist you in your efforts?  We want to bring all of the workforce training professionals together in order to have a much better sense of the landscape and have a sense of where the gaps may be.  We do have representation on the Healthcare committee.  The connections with trainers in the area, particularly the one on one conversations with manufacturers have been very productive.  We are building good relationships.  Adam attended the Vermont Climate Conference where workforce was a topic.  The same challenges we face are present in other areas.  The panel was mostly Burlington based tech representatives.  They mostly speak of how to keep college graduates in Vermont to then stay to work for them rather than growing the talent from our own community.  Who is going to be responsible for bridging the gap between the middle and high school students who are not hooked in to a career center or pathway?

Video project emerging to produce a video to feature the students who are currently working in Chroma and others.  (Another part of our communications strategy.)

Dutch’s leadership has really galvanized the direction forward motion of the committee’s work.

* + - WHEC
      * Testimony

Jan Coplan delivered compelling testimony to the House Commerce & Economic Development Committee about the Internship Program.  The testimony was very well received and conveyed the early successes of the program, including students who have been permanently employed at their internship sites post graduation.

* + - * Website

Jodi is now supervising the intern for this project.  An RFP went out to gather proposals from local web developers to act as the mentor to our intern to develop this website.  Proposals will be submitted to the WHEC for final approval by early next week.

* + - * McClure Grant

We are not going for this grant since it requires a 501c3 status.

* **CEDS Objective 5: Retain and attract younger talent through engagement linkages, lifestyle amenities, and meaningful career opportunities**

* + Board 2015 Priority: SoVT Recruiting and Marketing

Nothing to report specifically here.  Bill Colvin went to testify in Montpelier.

* **CEDS Objective 6: Develop immediate, VY-specific workforce and site impact mitigation strategies prior to its 2014 closure.**

Substantive Discussion Moving to Action Steps (40 min)

* CEDS Check In — Looks at the CEDS, where are we:
  + succeeding
  + failing
  + in need of more information

Board thoughts upon review of the CEDS:

Is there a visual way to track where we are at with our strategy implementation?  Good start last summer on pulling together the technical work group.  There will be a reconvening of this group in March.

There are some redundant listings/objectives.

It is really ambitious.  Some of the VY strategies are not going to be possible to really do.  Our hope had been to do more for the employees losing their jobs, but some of those employees have left the area already.  We are feeling like we are really out of touch on this particular part of the CEDS.

It feels like the quality of place items are not necessarily as critical right now for immediate action.  There are other more critical items which still need to be prioritized.  We are making some real headway with the collaboration between the colleges.  It does need to be revitalized.

Redevelopment projects is a huge issue here because we are running out of a particular kind of space for say any incubators.  The brownfield properties contribute to a feeling of “nothing happening” or not succeeding.

Workforce development has been a bright spot in the work.  However, if there isn’t any funding for it to continue, we need to address the gap in funding.

We have not really engaged in assisting the Windham Regional Commission’s efforts in regulartory and non-regulatory decommissioning activities.

We are making progress, but there some aspects that are not quite happening like the Young Professionals work.  The VY pieces are lacking due to a lack of information about what is exactly going on with the closure process.  We don’t have a direct link to VY.  We have a potential resource in the people who could stay if there are opportunities for them.

We need to look at the fundraising and the VY outreach strategies and put those up to the top of our list.  We don’t know enough about the VY workers to be strategic in helping them, such as in seeing where there are individuals with cross-over skills that could move into the Green Building Cluster.

We should acknowledge that we were really ambitious in our scope and we should note that we really can’t achieve all of these things.  We should prioritize which items are the most critical rather than working on everything.

Need to be careful about not crossing our own wires with some of the asks we are doing about the marketing campaign.  The 1.2.B $250,000 would come from the same businesses as the $5,000 a year contribution

Other Business / Announcements (15)

* NACo Membership Information (Dutch)

There are currently no Vermont members as we do not have County government structures.  NACo has services and people to assist with economic development networking.  The cost is $500.

Jodi will collect any other ideas on national organizations we should become members of to grow our resource and networking reach nationally.

* Board member bios

Only need one more and we will have a complete set.

Lt. Gov. Phil Scott has been convening Economic Development Pitch events around the state.  We (SeVEDS/BDCC)  are hosting one on March 9th.  15 Pitches max on Economic Development ideas to benefit our region and the state, not solely focused on individual businesses.  Emphasis on pitching actionable ideas, not simply airing grievances.  Location is likely in Vernon.  Jodi will send out event information as soon as it is confirmed.  ***(Confirmed date is Monday,  March 9th 4pm-6pm at Vernon Elementary School.  All are encouraged to put forward a pitch for the event or at least attend!)***