

SEVEDS Agenda ANNUAL Meeting Minutes, July 30, 2015 | 2pm-4pm at Marlboro Graduate Center

In Attendance: Ariel Brooks, Laura Sibilia, Jill James, Bob Stevens, Bill Colvin (via conference call), Martin Langeveld, Adam Grinold, Peter Yost, Jodi Clark, Luke Stafford, Avery Schwenk, Ann Andreosatos, Patrick Moreland, Susan McMahon, Jan Coplan, Alex Beck

Regrets: Konstantin von Krusenstiern, Meg Streeter, Drew Richards, Dutch Walsh

Acronym Guide:

ACCD: Agency of Commerce and Community Development (State of VT)

BDCC: Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation

CCV: Community College of Vermont

CEDS: Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies

EDA: Economic Development Administration (Federal)

SWRPC: Southwest Regional Planning Commission (Cheshire County, NH)

WRC: Windham Regional Commission

YP: Young Professionals

Call to order by BDCC: Called at 2:15pm

- Election of Officers for FY2016 *VOTE NEEDED (introduced by Adam)*

Moved by Bob Stevens, Seconded by Jill James: Approved Unanimously

Officer Slate:

Ariel Brooks, President

Peter Yost, Vice President

Meg Streeter, Secretary

Jill James, Treasurer

Elect new board members:

- Board Membership 3 year term: Luke Stafford *VOTE NEEDED*
- Board Membership 3 year term: Avery Schwenk *VOTE NEEDED*

Moved by Jill and Seconded by Bob, Approved Unanimously

Approve FY 16 Workplan:

- Review and Approve Work plan for FY2016 *VOTE NEEDED*

-Laura highlighted items which were changed since the draft was given to the board at the June meeting.

-Changes include additions to the Young Professionals, Workforce Development segment.

-Question regarding the \$250,000 fundraising goal from private sector fundraising.

Laura indicated that there is a plan which was developed to enact this goal. Board would typically take the lead on such a project. Is there a way to fund a development position to raise this money? Or should we (the board) make a strong push as a whole, supporting the staff to committing to raising these funds? Or should we change the number? Whose role would it be on Staff? SeVEDS and BDCC staff roles have been shifting to ensure our priority work areas are covered and that staff are working on projects which match their strengths. We have not yet had sufficient capacity to do large fundraising efforts beyond the municipalities/town meetings. Discussion regarding the pros and cons of fundraising as a board/group activity vs. a staff dedicated to this work.

Proposed change: “. . .goal of raising a substantial amount to be identified by September 2015”

The board has been supportive of the idea of going out to ask for donations. Board can also craft what the pitch is/value statement it is likely that a board committee would need to be formed to take this on.

Suggestion: Bring someone to an upcoming board meeting to speak to how to approach taking on a fundraising effort with the board.

Workplan approved by the Board with changed language to the fundraising segment.

Approve FY 16 Budget and Funds Request:

- Review and Approve Financials for June 2015 *VOTE NEEDED*

-Concern about the reduction in the municipality fund contributions. Jill expressed the hope for the amount to increase again in the next FY.

-Discussion of the ACCD Grant receipt, timeline, and the status of our current funds.

Moved and Seconded, Financials Approved

- Fundraising/Grant/Budget: Led by Jill - Approval of FY2016 Budget *VOTE NEEDED*

Discussion about the municipality donation and expectation. The staff and board coordination from this year was not well executed due to unforeseen/unavoidable transition gaps in staffing.

We will speak about the per capita ask by the November meeting at the latest. Susan volunteered to contribute how WRC goes about their municipality ask. The discussion may occur in the August or September meeting instead.

Much of our current streams of funding will be concluded by FY17. FY18 is more of a concern, as some of the funds from FY16 will carry over into FY17.

Moved and seconded, Unanimously accepted.

- SoVT Economic development coordination and capacity program: Motion to approve BDCC Executive Director authorization to sign USDA RCDI Grant application for Southern VT Economic Development Zone (Laura) **Motion: to authorize Adam Grinold, Executive Director, to submit the USDA Grant on behalf of SeVEDS no later than Thursday, August 13, 2016 in hard copy form. VOTE NEEDED**

-USDA has a capacity grant program which we are seeking to build on the Southern VT Economic Development Zone legislation. Additionally, there has been conversation with EDA about exploring creating an Economic Development Zone at the Federal level. In order to pursue this, additional capacity, in the form of a staff position, would be needed to start building the networking, inventory the programs that are currently existing both locally as well as regionally, and laying the groundwork for a possible Southern VT CEDS. This grant would specifically fund the creation of this staff position in support of the Zone development across the counties. Rockingham, Readsboro, and Bennington as well as Jamaica are eligible for consideration under economic distress criteria. The beneficiaries of the trainings which would be provided by the staff person would be these communities. Jen Stromsten is assisting with the writing of this grant. The intermediary for this grant needs to be SeVEDS rather than BDCC. The grant will allow for us to assess what all of the organizations who are doing economic development are doing across the region and help assess where there are opportunities for collaboration, efficiencies, and innovations to support stronger regional collaboration.

Question: What would the Federally recognized district be?

The economic development district is a federally recognized geographic area which would receive funding on a yearly basis to do economic development. Previously, SeVEDS had been advised that this was not a designation we could apply for. The district would have its own CEDS.

Question: Would this be duplicative of what we already have?

The hope would be to integrate what is already existing rather than duplicating. This could open up further opportunities which we don't currently have access to. Also, the goal is to avoid duplication and reduce any duplication which is currently occurring.

Moved and Seconded, Approved Unanimously

ADDED: Board Approval of Laura and Jodi sending in the CEDS progress report to EDA. The draft is behind schedule, but in the process of completion. Laura and Jodi will submit a final draft to the board by early next week for review prior to sending to EDA.

Moved, Seconded and Unanimously approved

ADDED: Approval of June Board Meeting Minutes

Moved, Seconded and Unanimously approved

CEDS and FY '16 Board Priority Area Updates

- **General CEDS -**
 - **CEDS Objective 1: Act Regionally**
 - Report on Selectboard Meetings (Laura)

Staff have been charged with creating a rotating schedule of attending selectboard meetings across the region.

- Moving our meetings around the region (Ariel)

Chroma or town offices of Rockingham will host in August.

For September, move the meeting to Friday, September 18th to be followed by Soup Stroll and Wine Festival. Meeting will start at 4pm and end at 6pm. Exact location TBA

- **CEDS Objective 2: Create an entrepreneurial environment and culture to enhance existing business and grow new business.**
 - Board 2016 Priority: SoVT Business Accelerator

Jodi reported that while no programming efforts have been launched, she is continuing to conduct best practice/model research and beginning to frame more of what the Steering committee for the Accelerator would do. She is connecting with Catherine Collins of Vermont Center of Emerging Technologies on a regular basis for thought partnering on design and resource connections/networking in the New England Accelerator community. Jodi will be visiting a [Valley Venture Mentors](#) event in Greenfield on August 6th.

- Road Pitch Event (Martin)

Everyone is invited to attend. Brattleboro is the first stop on the road tour these venture capitalists are taking around VT. Tuesday, August 4th 10am-2pm at the River Garden.

Update on Coworking: Bob has been working with a small group in the final organization and formation of a Brattleboro Coworking space, most likely to be located in the Brooks House. The development will happen over the next six months and a public announcement is in the works.

- **CEDS Objective 3: Improve wage parity with the surrounding laborshed**
 - Board 2016 Priority: Green Building, Healthcare, Tech Driven Manufacturing

- Updates from June 26th Green Building Meeting with Frank Knott (Jodi/Laura/Peter)

The sector is very ready to launch, the private sector is seeking to launch. The Windham Wood Heat is moving forward. The steps that will occur once the money is in place will be the hypothesis for testing and select which ones will be worked on first. The EDA grant has entered a second phase of high level review, beyond the regional office. The next communication about the status of our application should come over the next two weeks.

- Healthcare Cluster conversation forming

The second meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 6th at CCV Brooks House campus. The attendee list is slightly different from the first meeting. The first group had prioritized exploring workforce development as the number one topic. SeVEDS will be sharing their work thus far on the Workforce Continuum and the available resources for all sectors. The three higher ed. institutions with Healthcare track programs will be present to hear from the provider institutions. SeVEDS will also present the cluster model and framework, with all of the potential goals that a cluster could explore as they form, including entrepreneurial/innovation development within the sector. There is a strong desire to keep this conversation alive within the board, as our healthcare institutions are the largest employers in the region.

- **CEDS Objective 4: increase the size and quality of the workforce**
 - Board 2016 Priority: Workforce Development and Internship Program
 - Introducing Alex Beck in his new role, Workforce Development project distribution (Laura, Dutch)

-Six College Collaborative: Jan Coplan reported that the internship program has placed 37 interns to date. There are 41 internships posted currently, representing a wide range of sectors and spreading across the region. There are 12 interns that are currently serving in the region. Last year this time, there was 1. Manufacturing, nonprofit, small business, healthcare, tourism and other sectors are represented. There are interns from both Keene State and Greenfield Community College, both are schools we are interested in engaging more officially into the Six College Collaborative. The Six College Collaborative work is also going well, with a planning effort for the first ever Collaborative hosted event in the fall.

-Workforce & Education Specialist: Alex Beck reported on a connection he has cultivated with Congressman Welch in conjunction with the Brattleboro Film Festival, which the YP group is sponsoring. The Congressman is producing a video welcome which contains many well known

quotations from films. Alex stated that this video could have “virality”. Alex is also participating in two statewide YP events. The Rutland YP is organizing a state summit on September 12th. He is also participating in Bennington, Wake Up VT is a statewide steering committee which he is involved in to discuss broadband, housing, and other topics at the state level. Alex is also forming a steering committee to support the YP efforts which will increase reach and leverage the resources we have.

Alex is also picking up supporting Southern VT Recruitment, the School/Employer Work Group and supporting Jan’s programming with the colleges.

- **CEDS Objective 5: Retain and attract younger talent through engagement linkages, lifestyle amenities, and meaningful career opportunities**
 - Board 2016 Priority: SoVT Recruiting
 - Next YP event
 - Southern VT Economic Development Zone: Adam, Laura

The first meeting of the group for this is convening next week, representing both counties. The committee will be meeting until November and reporting in December. The Windham Region committee consists of Tom Cain of Against the Grain, Lisa Sullivan of Bartleby’s Books, Adam Grinold,

- **CEDS Objective 6: Refine and implement VY-specific workforce and site impact mitigation strategies related to it’s closure**
 - Tri State CEDS alignment (Adam/Laura)

Other Business / Announcements (as needed)

First Impressions Program (Ariel) *rescheduled from last meeting*

A first meeting of trainees for this program on September 21st. This is a group that constructs a first impression of your community. Ariel will send out times board members could meet with this group.

Substantive Discussion topics for upcoming meetings:

Funding discussion

Hypotheses for the Green Building/Services and Healthcare Cluster development

-Adam would like to get a small group from SeVEDS and BDCC to plan the joint BDCC/SeVEDS Annual meeting.

Join us for celebrating our year of work together at Whetstone Station immediately following our meeting!

Next Regular Board Meeting will be on Thursday, August 20th. Location in Rockingham TBA

**PLEASE NOTE: September Meeting will be in Wilmington on Friday, September 18th at 4pm to accommodate attendance at Soup Stroll alongside the YP group
Location in Wilmington TBA**