

# West Central Vermont CEDS – Strategy Committee

Friday, September 15, 2023 – 10 AM to 12 PM

Attendees: Taylor Newton, Tyler Richardson, Fred Kenney, Sam Andersen, Melissa Bounty, Alex Demoly, and Darren Schibler.

T. Newton started the meeting at 10:06 A.M. T. Richardson is leaving his position for a new job, but he will let the committee know when it can be formally announced.

## Agenda

### **1. Changes/adjustments to agenda**

None.

### **2. Minutes – August 25, 2023**

No changes. S. Andersen made a motion, seconded by F. Kenney, to accept the minutes as drafted. The motion passed 5-0.

### **3. Grant Closeout**

T. Newton reported that he has received materials he needs from ACCD for grant closeout, but he still needs to review them. He hopes to be able to close out the grant by the October meeting.

### **4. Economic Development District (EDD)**

#### a. MOUs

T. Newton asked for updates from members on approval of MOUs.

- F. Kenney: Addison County RDC has approved the MOU.
- T. Richardson is bringing it to the Rutland Chamber on Tuesday 9/19.
- S. Anderson won't be able to bring it to the GBIC board until October 4<sup>th</sup> due to a scheduling issue, but there is no issue with the content of the MOU.
- M. Bounty noted that CVEDC will review on Thursday 9/21.
- T. Newton is presenting it to the CCRPC Board on Wednesday 9/20.
- Central VT is the only one outstanding, and T. Newton will follow up with Christian Meyer for an update.

#### b. EDD Roles

This item was deferred since not all members were present.

#### c. Timeline

T. Newton suggested the following timeline:

- CCRPC will start working on the EDA application after CEDS grant closeout.
- EDD application will be submitted by November.
- F. Kenney had asked if there was a template for required letters of support and if not, he volunteered to draft one. T. Newton stated there is not specific content required, but letters should be submitted by those listed in the meeting packet (municipalities, congressional delegation, and major employers). Letters should be submitted by the middle of November. T. Newton suggested that not every municipality from each region needs to be included, but we

should reach out to those who are important for economic development – perhaps 3 municipalities and 5 major employers for each region.

- F. Kenney asked about how to handle the county resolutions for Action Request Letters, since we don't have county government- T. Newton will follow up with EDA about this. S. Andersen and T. Newton clarified that a letter from the Governor himself is required, but this has been lined up by Lindsey Kurrle.
- F. Kenney noted that the Chair of the District Organization would be the EDD chair, which hasn't been appointed yet. The governance structure will need to be set up before the application is submitted. The Committee suggested that Charlie Baker could fill this role initially.

## **5. EDA Planning & Technical Assistance Grant**

### a. Scope

Still considering this winter since we have time and capacity from Rutland RPC staff. Please submit ideas on scope and budget to T. Newton.

S. Andersen asked what the purpose of the grant would be. T. Newton responded that it would be implementing the CEDS, focusing on planning activities rather than on-the-ground activities (which would come through Public Works grants).

### b. UEI Numbers

T. Newton confirmed that CEDRR had a UEI so that they can receive EDA money, and asked T. Richardson to connect him with Lyle Jepson during Tyler's transition out.

F. Kenney noted that the RDCs are setting up a statewide technical assistance navigator / incubator program for small businesses, funded by the Legislature. T. Newton noted that if additional long-term funding is needed, EDA could be a good source. S. Andersen noted that the program currently has \$1.25 million statewide, and the average grant is about \$4,000 (which goes to the technical assistance provider, rather than the beneficiary business). If EDA funded staff time, more state money could be directed into the grants side of the program. It depends on the amount of EDA funding and match; F. Kenney suggested using the state money for the match, but it would need to be timed with the award of the EDA grant and would need continued support from the Legislature. S. Andersen stated that this is a very successful program that supports both the beneficiary businesses and the TA providers; T. Newton noted that it is particularly impactful for small businesses.

## **6. Upcoming Meetings –**

- a. October 20 – MOUs should be done, hopefully will be able to discuss EDA grant application.
- b. November 17
- c. December 15

F. Kenney made a motion to adjourn. M. Bounty seconded. Meeting adjourned at 10:27 am.