

FULTON COUNTY CENTER FOR REGIONAL GROWTH

Fulton County Center for Regional Growth
Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors
Friday – January 27, 2023 – 8:30 a.m.
34 W Fulton St & Zoom Conference
Gloversville, New York

Directors Present: Timothy Beckett, Dr. Leslie Ford, Warren Greene, Kent Kirch, Geoffrey Peck (video), Grant Preston

Directors Absent: Terri Easterly

Staff Present: Ronald Peters, Ken Adamczyk, Jennifer Donovan, Desirée Perham

Other Attendees: Scott Horton – Chair, Fulton County Board of Supervisors, Susanne Collins – Fulton County IDA Board; Denis Wilson, Director – Fulmont Community Action Agency; Anne Boles – Executive Director, Fulton-Montgomery Regional Chamber of Commerce

Public Session

Call to Order: 8:32 a.m.

I. Welcome and Call to Order

- a. Grant Preston called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m.

II. Roll Call

- a. Roll call was taken by Desirée Perham. A quorum was present.

III. Meeting Minutes

- a. The Chair asked the Board to review the December 16, 2022, CRG Regular Board Meeting Minutes. No corrections were needed. Kent Kirch moved a motion to approve the minutes as drafted, and Warren Greene seconded the motion. All present voted in favor and the motion passed.

- b. The Chair asked the Board to review the December 16, 2022, CRG Organizational Board Meeting Minutes. No corrections were needed. Dr. Leslie Ford moved a motion to approve the minutes as drafted, and Timothy Beckett seconded the motion. All present voted in favor and the motion passed.

IV. Announcements

- a. None.

V. Reports

a. Chair Report – (Grant Preston)

1. The Chair stated that he appreciated the Board putting their faith in him to lead for the next twelve months.
2. Resolutions – A quorum was present for reviewing and voting on the resolutions being presented. A copy of the drafted resolutions were provided to the Board for review prior to the meeting.
 - i. **Resolution to appoint Denis Wilson as an interim director to the Board of FCCRG, Inc.** The Chair introduced a resolution to appoint Denis Wilson as an interim Director on the FCCRG Board. Formal approval to a three-year term will be recommended to the Membership at the Annual Meeting in December.
 - Motion: Warren Greene moved a motion to approve the resolution as stated and Kent Kirch seconded the motion.
 - Discussion: The Chair noted that the recommendation had been considered by the Board the previous month. Denis Wilson has been attending the Board meetings as a guest regularly the past year. No further discussion was held.
 - Vote: All directors present voted in favor of approval and the motion passed.
 - ii. **Resolution to authorize a modification to signers approved for five corporate accounts held at Key Bank.** The Chair introduced a resolution to remove Bryan Taylor as a signer and add Geoffrey Peck as a signer on the five corporate accounts CRG holds at Key Bank.
 - Motion: Kent Kirch moved a motion to approve the resolution as stated and Dr. Leslie Ford seconded the motion.
 - Discussion: No discussion took place beyond the summary of the resolution content.
 - Vote: All directors present voted in favor of approval and the motion passed.

Conclusion of Chair Report

b. Committee Reports

1. Executive Committee

- i. This committee has not met since the last Board meeting.

2. Governance Committee

- i. This committee has not met since the last Board meeting.

3. Finance Committee – (Geoffrey Peck)

- i. The Finance Committee met on Wednesday, January 26, 2023.
- ii. Review of CRG's financial position showed the bank balances reflected little change from last month and were as expected.
- iii. Phil Beckett, CPA's packet with year-end entries were reviewed. There were a few tax bill entries for the Leader Herald properties that were still outstanding. Once Ron provides this information, the year-end close out will take place.
- iv. CRG is in a reasonable cash position but still has challenges with cash flow, more income is needed in 2023.
- v. The expenses of 34 W Fulton St were reviewed and preliminary discussions were held about dispersing insurance costs to tenants as it is part of the operational cost of the building.
- vi. Loans were reviewed and all are current. The businesses are doing well, and the program is operating as intended.
- vii. Paul Davis, CRG's Accounting Assistant, did not express any concerns with the Board regarding CRG finances.
- viii. There is grant money outstanding to be drawn down from fiscal year 2022.

4. Audit Committee

- i. This committee has not met since the last Board meeting.

Conclusion of Committee Reports.

c. Membership & Marketing Report

Ken Adamczyk: (Report was included with board package)

- 1. Google Business: 355 people found CRG using the Google page, 52 views of posts occurred, and 40 new people visited CRG's website.
- 2. Development of a Business Strategy is planned after goals are set by the Board.
- 3. Microenterprise Grant business training classes began on January 23. There are three attendees from Montgomery County and fourteen from Fulton County.
- 4. The *Initiatives Guide to Fulton County* magazine is complete but there were a few issues with the new printer and their responsiveness which have been addressed. The magazine is anticipated to arrive in two weeks. The digital version was posted prematurely on the website but has been removed until printed copies can be shared with the County Board of Supervisors.

5. The Expertise Project is rolling out well in the school systems of Northville, Mayfield and Gloversville. The plan is to review the program with Johnstown also. Expertise Project and CRG will be presenting at the NYATEP Conference in March. This is for the Youth Forum and will be held in Saratoga. The technology will be discussed as well as how it interacts with people and the benefits it offers.
6. A Work Force Development meeting is set for February 7, 2023 to discuss potential grant opportunities. An Expertise Project concept will be proposed with a tie-in to FMCC and the three work force development offices. The 3-D goggles would be available at the offices to look at job options virtually and a 3-D room would be installed at FMCC as a virtual career viewing center. This could also be used for science and technology classes as an educational tool. It needs to be determined if this is a fit for the grants available.
7. Facebook end-of-year transitions show a drop in followers but no one has left so this information is not accurate and will be investigated further. Posts and engagements had a fair month, more engagements in particular which is good and more important than reach.
8. One paid membership was received for 2023 from the IDA. Thanks went out to them for supporting CRG by being a member. Membership invoices will not be sent out this year like last year. Instead, letters will be sent out to current members requesting them to renew and continue supporting CRG's initiatives. They will have the option to adjust their membership level and a list of the levels will be included in the mailing. A different letter will be sent to previous members that did not renew and a third letter will be sent from Ken to the MEG recipients.
 - i. It was decided to maintain the 10% increase target as a goal.
9. Drawdown number one was submitted for the \$300,000 Microenterprise grant and it included five to six businesses. There will be four more ready soon for drawdown number two.
10. The CARES Act Microgrant has six applications in process, four are being checked by the Nick Zabawsky, grant writing consultant, and two will be ready for him on Monday.
11. CRG received an email of thanks for support and guidance received regarding a Department of Labor grant. This was a three-year process that came to fruition. The Mohawk Valley Hospice and Palliative Care Center received a \$100,000 grant for job training for nursing and care positions.

Conclusion of Marketing and Membership Report.

d. Gloversville Downtown Development Specialist Report

Jenn Donovan: (Report was included with board package)

Accomplishments three months into the DDS position were shared with the Board.

1. Several websites were found related to this job and will be funneled into the DowntwonGloversville.org site. There will be multiple pages for different aspects of interest, developers versus visitors, etc.
2. A blog with a folksier feel has been added to draw visitors to the site. This will also be posted on the Facebook page, Instagram, and Twitter. There was a significant initial spike in traffic from the blog postings. 1900 followers, up 300 from previous period. Facebook page reach was 32,352 versus 1,340 last year. The DDS has been sharing more posts about what other businesses are doing using an ad-type format which

- seems to receive more attention. Resharing posts results in a spidering-out of the information.
3. A Legislative Meet and Greet was held for the new legislators to get to know the economic development team and was very well received. Guests were invited and businesses that CRG assisted had tables for people to visit. The setting was casual, and networking was encouraged. Ron Peters presented on CRG's undertakings and future plans, and a couple of businesses were presented with grant checks in the form of oversized posters. Nearly 100 people attended, and feedback was very positive.
 4. The City Recreation Commission has taken over past events initiated by the DDS. Eight events are planned this year and the DDS offered their services to help coordinate the addition of new events and to support current ones.
 - i. The City of Gloversville made it known that they prefer the streets not be shut down for events as there is a large cost associated with this.
 - ii. Some ideas being considered: Spooktacular expansion (business to business trick or treating), Placemaking conference update, winter market, tree lighting day coordination improvements.
 5. The Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant (DRI) is making progress in spurts. The Governor was in town to announce the grant award officially. The awardees received their award letters from the Department of State. DOS assigned the DRI projects to various agencies to oversee the implementation. The NYS DOS and EDC will handle a portion of the City's projects and HCR will handle others.
 - i. Meetings started with awardees to connect them with the State agencies assigned to their particular project. Currently, budget updates are being completed and financing is being reviewed.
 - ii. This is a quiet period, but work is being completed in the background and awardees are contacted regularly for progress updates.
 6. The overall goal of the DDS is to bring new people and new businesses to downtown Gloversville to create an economic revitalization. Three sub goals: Network & Education, Life Beyond DRI, and Outreach & Communication.
 - i. Networking to promote Gloversville at events and with other organizations like the Chamber and County tourism.
 - ii. Involvement in the BOA and the Crescent Project. New community sessions and placemaking opportunities.
 - iii. Walking the district to meet business owners, a monthly e-newsletter, and updating contact lists for banks and developers, also a building vacancy list.

Conclusion of GDDS Report.

e. Chamber Report - (Anne Boles)

1. Moved into the Executive Director position in January. Nicole Walrath is now the Executive Vice President and also continues as the Director of Work Force Development.
2. Looking forward to ideas and initiatives being worked on for 2023.
3. Ken Adamczyk joined the Chamber Board of Directors.
4. Anne noted her appreciation for everyone's partnership and is looking forward to working together.
5. The Chamber will be working on developing goals with the County as they setup the 2023 plan incorporating the Visitor Center, website, and I Love NY funding.
6. Downtown businesses that are members have events shared on 44Lakes.com and the Chamber website.

7. The *Initiatives Guide* will be posted on the Chamber website once it is available.
8. There will be an HR Consortium focusing on Transportation and Mental Health Issues on February 9th at the FMCC Allen House at 8:30a.
9. The Walleye Challenge event is slated for February. Fulton County Emergency Management is working with the Chamber to make a safe determination of whether this event can be held due to the mild winter.

Conclusion of Chamber Report.

f. Fulton County - (Warren Greene)

1. The County Committee have not met yet, so a liaison has not been appointed to attend CRG Board meetings.
2. Scott Horton is the new chair of the Fulton County Board of Supervisors.

Conclusion of County Report.

g. Fulton County IDA - (Susanne Collins)

1. The IDA elects new officers every two years. For 2023 & 2024, Mike Fitzgerald is Chair, Sue Collins is Vice Chair, Todd Rulison is Treasurer and Joe Gillis is Secretary. Jim Mraz will continue as Executive Director and Carol Ellis as Chief Financial Officer. West & Co. was appointed as auditor.
2. The back-up generator has been delivered and set in place.
3. The membership to CRG was renewed as stated earlier.
4. The IDA noted that the Meet and Greet was very informative and well done.
5. The question of whether the Purchase Option was executed by Winstanley was asked. It was stated that Winstanley wanted to convert the current option into a 3-year option agreement with a \$100,000 non-refundable payment. It was believed that this was signed.

Conclusion of IDA Report.

h. City Reports

1. Gloversville
 - i. No in person report this month.
2. Johnstown
 - i. No in person report this month.

Conclusion of City Reports.

VI. *President and CEO Report*

Ronald Peters:

a. Business Update

1. Resolutions
 - i. Completed earlier in the meeting during Chair Report.
2. Grant Requests
 - i. The MEG programs are all going well and were reviewed earlier in the meeting. CRG has assisted local businesses in receiving nearly 100 grants since the

beginning of this program. CRG is hopeful that NY State will keep this successful program rolling.

- ii. The CRG Countywide EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant has identified about 47 sites as potential brownfields.
 - Public outreach meetings have been held quarterly.
 - Six sites have been prioritized and will have detailed assessments completed using grant funds.
 - CRG is coordinating a meeting with the county, county attorney and the environmental professionals awarded the grant contract so the latter can explain how the county can take ownership of a property through foreclosure while limiting the risk of contamination cleanup liability. The goal is for everyone to understand that it is possible to gain site control which is necessary to move forward on site assessment while reducing risks. The county attorney was provided with a lengthy document for review in advance.
 - There is a developer that is potentially interested in looking at these sites.
- iii. Dolgeville BOA team has submitted 16-18 sites to be considered by the State for studies under this program.
 - There are some buildings on the Fulton County portion of the BOA that could be developed.
 - The County Supervisor in Oppenheim has been sent a report to keep her informed on the process and status.
 - This process is a marathon and will take time to show results.
3. Business Marketing
 - i. A meeting was held with NYS Nano technology people to identify next steps for NY State.
 - CRG has asked an individual from SUNY Poly to make an in-person presentation on site requirements for advance manufacturing sites. This is an informational meeting that will provide an outside perspective on the power needs and other requirements for these type of sites.
 - ii. The Brownfield Developers Summit is being held in April 25-26 of 2023. All six counties in the Mohawk Valley are working together to coordinate this event. Board members were encouraged to attend.
 - iii. The Countywide Loan Fund program has two loans that will be closed in the next couple of weeks.
 - iv. A drawdown was submitted to NY State for the JDA Loan Fund and is due January 30. A \$200,000 loan will be closed that week once funds are received.
 - v. CRG signed an agreement with the City of Johnstown to manage their loan fund.
 - In the process of setting up the committee and signers on the account. CRG will have three representatives and Johnstown will have four. Kent Kirch and Timothy Beckett were identified as signers for CRG.
 - CRG is advising the City of Johnstown mayor, Amy Praught, on the loan pool process. The Committee will meet to review the program details and determine the level of due diligence and credit worthiness to be utilized in evaluating loan applications.
 - The Johnstown Loan Fund balance is around \$170,000. The City of Johnstown will determine what types of businesses they want to funnel through the loan application process.

4. Business Inquiries/Business Leads

- i. There is a new tenant in CRG's building, Samco Manufacturing. An owner from California recently bought out the company. The business's previous location had a pipe burst, forcing them to relocate quickly.
 - They have about fifteen employees that occupy an office space and a sewing operations room.
 - The hope is that their operation will expand into the basement of 34 W Fulton St.
- ii. CRG also has a new tenant with two employees leasing the second floor, south west office space that consists of a small glove sewing operation, T & M Manufacturing. They will be moving in soon.
- iii. CRG has received two RFPs from NY State, but has no sites qualified to fill them.
 - Three-megawatt minimum power is typically required.
 - One was a solar manufacturer and the other pharmaceutical. Last month a heavier manufacturer was seeking a site as well and Fulton County was unable to accommodate their needs.
 - Most site requests submitted are looking for three to five megawatts to start and some upward of fifteen megawatts.
 - The IDA stated that three megawatts should be serviceable by normal distribution and National Grid is obligated to provide this at the distribution level.
- iv. There is a project opportunity in Caroga Lake that is still being worked on. Currently waiting on a response from a third party.
- v. CRG, IDA, County and County Planning held their third meeting to review the site selection process. May have something to share at the March E&E meeting.
- vi. The CEO reiterated the success of the Meet and Greet event with legislators, complimenting the DDS on the organization and format.
- vii. Regarding the DRI, meetings are being held regularly to establish the coordination effort and keep everyone informed.
 - Meetings are being held with DRI applicants, the City of Gloversville contacts, as well as with lending sources.
 - Nick Zabawsky was appointed by the City as the DRI Coordinator.
- viii. CRG director, Kent Kirch, assembled a draft PowerPoint presentation for CRG that will be used to help audiences understand what CRG is, what it does, and where it is headed. It will be used at events such as the Meet & Greet and has a more contemporary look.
 - The draft was included in the board meeting package and the Board was asked to provide input to Kent Kirch or Ron Peters.
 - The Board noted that a larger screen was needed to share a presentation like this as the current flat screen is difficult to see from any distance away.
 - The visuals need to be easy to see with minimal detail.
 - The economic impact to Fulton County needs to be part of the presentation somehow even though CRG often works in partnership with other organizations.
 - Should try to show how CRG integrates with other agencies – team assets.
 - The Chamber suggested a flowchart or some other visual to boost the interconnectivity of organizations. Where do you go for various services, what else is there to do in the area?

- The Board noted that healthcare and education are two key aspects employers are looking for before moving into an area – key assets should be shared.
- The Board pointed out that workforce development and leadership training are becoming part of CRGs focus and should be a more visible aspect of the presentation.

Conclusion of the President and CEO Report.

VII. *Adjournment to Executive Session*

None needed.

VIII. *Wrap Up*

Ron Peters let the Board know that he will be on vacation from February 27 to March 3.


IX. *Adjourn Meeting*

At 9:32 a.m., Timothy Beckett moved a **motion to adjourn** the meeting which was seconded by Kent Kirch and passed by all present.

Respectfully Submitted,



Dr. Leslie Ford, Board Secretary



Date