



FULTON COUNTY CENTER FOR REGIONAL GROWTH

Fulton County Center for Regional Growth  
**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors**  
Friday – March 24, 2023 – 8:30 a.m.  
34 W Fulton St & Zoom Conference  
Gloversville, New York

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

Directors Absent: None

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

Other Attendees: Scott Horton – Chair, Fulton County Board of Supervisors; Jack Wilson – County Liaison; Vince DeSantis – Mayor of Gloversville; Greg Truckenmiller, FC IDA Board (video); Sue Collins – National Grid & Fulton County IDA Board; Anne Boles – Executive Director, Fulton-Montgomery Regional Chamber of Commerce; Travis Mitchell – Past CRG Board member; Mike Rossi – Auditor, West & Co.; Amy Pedrick – Auditor, West & Co., Heather Devitt – MVEDD; Lauren Mattia - MVEDD

***Public Session***

**Call to Order: 8:30 a.m.**

***I. Welcome and Call to Order***

- a. Grant Preston called the meeting to order at 8:30 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 February 24, 2023, 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.

### **IV. Announcements**

- a. Travis Mitchell was recognized for his many years of board service as one of CRG's directors. Ron Peters noted Travis' dedicated service on the board and his guidance in steering CRG through some rocky times. Travis thanked Ron Peters, the CRG staff and his fellow Board members. Ron presented Travis with a token of appreciation and noted that after a one-year hiatus, he would be eligible to be reappointed to CRG's Board of Directors.
- b. Heather Devitt from the Mohawk Valley Economic Development District (MVEDD) presented information on the upcoming Brownfields Developer Summit and on MVEDD.
  1. The Brownfield Developer Summit is being held on April 25 and 26 at Herkimer College. She noted the six-county, twelve-organization collaborative effort put forth on this event. Keynote speakers include Lisa Garcia, EPA Regional Director, NYS Lt. Governor Antonio Delgado, and Bruce Rasher with RACER Trust. Anyone wanting to register for the Summit can go to the MVEDD website.
  2. MVEDD (see handout) is an arm of the Economic Development Agency (EDA), currently has seven full-time and one part-time employee, and receives Federal and State funding to operate. They have a revolving loan fund, offer technical assistance with CFAs and ARPA funding, provide community development, and offer clean energy programs. It was noted that a million dollars has been invested in Fulton County.
- c. Lauren Mattia from MVEDD provided information on the broadband initiative.
  1. The goal is to spread broadband service to unserved and underserved areas.
  2. Fulton County has \$44,000 in broadband initiative money from a Norther Borders grant and the scope of work will include identification of digital assets throughout the County, what is present and where it is needed.
  3. A couple of counties in the Mohawk Valley have RFPs out for infrastructure builds and a few internet service providers have responded.
  4. It was requested that the board and guests participate in the NYS Listening Sessions either in person or virtually. They are put on by the broadband office of ESD that is concerned with internet digital equity and are looking for input. The state has 1.2 billion dollars for this effort and these sessions will be used to determine how this money will be directed.
  5. At the end of the \$44,000 grant, a plan needs to be devised by Fulton County and MVEDD that identifies where broadband is lacking coverage, what funds are needed and what funding is available, and what areas are identified for new infrastructure. Various funding sources can be utilized like USDA, CFA, Northern Borders, etc. in addition to state funding.
    - i. It was asked which organization would drive this initiative. The Planning Department typically provides input, but it may be necessary to form a committee or hire someone to provide support in obtaining the data.

## **V. Reports**

### **a. Chair Report – (Grant Preston)**

1. None.

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 Thursday, March 23, 2023.
- ii. Review of CRG's cash position showed operating expenses were as expected.
- iii. The money invested in CDs will be reviewed by the Finance Committee.

#### **4. Audit Committee**

- i. This committee met on Thursday, March 16, 2023, to review the audit with the auditors from West & Co.
- ii. Mike Rossi was in person to report on FCCRG's audit findings.
- iii. Amy Pedrick will be the lead auditor for next year's audit if CRG uses West & Co again.
- iv. The 2022 990 for CRG and the 2022 990 for EDC were provided to Ron Peters. The state tax filing is being handled differently this year by NYS. Two board members will receive emails requiring certification for the filing of the CHAR 500, due May 15. All tax documents were on hand for review by directors.
- v. The CRG Audit Committee will be making a recommendation on whether to accept the two audits as prepared later in the meeting.
- vi. One audit is titled Schedule of Investments. The ABO requires reporting of investments to review for permissibility. Anything government back is permissible. CRG is reported to have no investments. This report will be uploaded to PARIS to comply with ABO requirements.
  - The money market account and CDs are not viewed as investments but as cash equivalents as they can be cashed out in under a year.
- vii. The regular audit, titled Financial Statements, reported an Unmodified Opinion, the highest opinion by the auditing profession. The financial statements were reviewed in detail by the Audit Committee.
  - There were no issues with the books and records of CRG, they were in excellent shape.

- The balance sheet on page 3 reflects:
  - The majority of assets are in cash.
  - Property and Equipment is listed at \$275,000. Depreciation expense is reported against the 34 W. Fulton St. building each year, so it is down about \$10,000 from the previous year.
  - Liabilities total \$71,000.
  - Net assets without donor restrictions \$1,100,000 which is available to the CRG for projects.
- The Statement of Activities and Net Changes on page 4 reflects:
  - Income was \$896,000, up from \$882,000.
  - Expenses are up, more was spent on marketing and advertising.
  - The change in net assets was +\$70,000 for the year.
- Notes are relatively unchanged.
  - At the Audit Committee review, the amount of land listed was changed from 200+ acres to 250+ acres, which was more accurate.
- If the audit is accepted, the draft will be finalized and uploaded to PARIS by March 31, 2023.

Conclusion of Committee Reports.

### c. Membership & Marketing Report

**Ken Adameczyk:** (Report was included with board package)

1. Google Business: 27 new people visited CRG's website, Google blogs are just getting started again so no post numbers to report, and 327 people found CRG using the Google page.
2. A CRG Business Strategy is in development. A digital plan for marketing and advertising was sent to the County by the March 15 deadline. Palmar digital is being considered again and the *Initiatives Guide*, along with a trade industry magazine.
3. A new commercial was produced with WENT and Ken has an audio file if anyone would like to hear it.
4. The *Initiatives Guide to Fulton County* magazine is going to site selectors next week, about 40 copies, and it has been distributed to local businesses.
5. The second round of 2023 Microenterprise Grant business training classes begin in June. Montgomery County people will pay as individuals like Fulton County and a third county may also be participating via Zoom.
6. The Northville principal is working with the Expertise Project program, and it is going well.
7. A countywide workforce development meeting was held.
8. A ribbon cutting was held at the Royal Mountain Ski Area to unveil their new tube conveying equipment.
9. Northville Central School, Expertise Project and CRG were invited to speak at the NYATEP Conference for the Youth Forum. The case studies with the students were presented, not the Expertise program. Feedback was 82% positive with excellent comments.

10. A discussion on WFD took place with Dr Zisken (BOCES). Ken will be on the Workforce Development Committee going forward. Looking to connect the Chamber and the school's internship program with CRG's business contacts. Also, hoping to make connections for the Workforce Development Board with the "lost boys", 18–24-year-olds. There has been some energy and positive traction in work force development.
11. Facebook followers are up to 1,461. Engagement was a little slow last month. The big spike in the graph in September which followed a Lanzy post.
12. Membership income is \$13,000 with eighteen paid memberships which is ahead of this time last year.
  - i. The Board asked for the chart to be updated to add how we compare this year to the same time last year. They still want the goals and YE stats included.
13. Drawdown checks were handed out to Microgrant recipients for the CARES Act grant and the regular \$300,000 microenterprise grant will have drawdown checks ready to distribute next week. This round of the \$500,000 CARES Act is nearly ready for close out. The State has offered an additional \$250,000 in CARES Act grant funds and CRG will be submitting for approval on this soon. \$1.75 million in CARES Act grant funds will be the total handed out to local businesses. The Regular MEG will be at \$600,00 in the last year. Another regular MEG will be applied for in late spring of 2023.
  - i. At the EDC conference, a photo was taken with the HCR people. They commented that they were looking forward to seeing the next application since it is being used well.
  - ii. The Board commented that an awesome job is being done and this is a great program.

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. Facebook followers have increased by 400 since November and likes are up to 2,083.
  - i. Currently, an online photo contest is going on, original content gets the most interaction, and posts on the Palace Diner always result in a boost.
  - ii. Businesses now ask for their posts to be shared on the downtown Gloversville page.
  - iii. The downtown corridor has been cross promoted.
2. The DRI is a marathon not a sprint. Currently working on getting contracts in place with the state. Developer meetings are being held on DRI projects. They have homework to get prepared with financing sources. Every step takes time. It will be a couple of months before contracts are in place and then architects will begin planning. It will very likely be next spring before shovels are in the ground.
3. Another project going on in the Zone that is not part of the DRI is at 7 Elm St and St Thomas Square. A coordination meeting was held, and they are working together to blend in. This is an example of the energy behind the DRI that carries over to others.
4. Beyond the DRI is the BOA (Brownfield Opportunity Area) and the Daniel Mills property which is part of the Crescent. A meeting was held with property owners to discuss plans. A Phase I walk through with an environmental engineer was conducted.
5. Participated in Talk of the Town interview which had good coverage.

6. The photo contest was on the front page of the Leader Herald.
7. Networking opportunities include monthly downtown managers Zoom meeting which will be in person in downtown Syracuse next week, meeting the Gloversville Economic Development Corporation (Chamber administered loan fund) and attending the Economic Development Conference in March and will be attending the Economic Developer Academy in June. Also, audited the Microenterprise classes.
8. A monthly eblast has been going out to local businesses.
9. A Coffee Talk event was held, an open, informal meeting where downtown business owners participated in identifying concerns. Four to five participated in this first meeting and out of this exchange it was decided to host a Fulton County Small Business Symposium where experts will be gathered to answer questions and provide guidance to small businesses. This will take place in June.
10. The photo contest was planned to bring more positive light to downtown Gloversville, to get people involved and had the bonus of creating a collection of good photos. Thirteen people entered and Facebook voting is going on now. Some people submitted photos of their own business allowing them to get free publicity while participating in the contest. Cross-sharing is going on and social media involvement has increased.
11. A ribbon cutting ceremony was held at Cravings on March 2nd for their grand re-opening at the new location. It was a good event with press coverage and was well attended. CRG provided the owner with a rolling pin with CRG's logo on it so it could be included in their rolling pin wall mural. The GDDS was quoted in the Leader Herald in an article about Cravings.
12. Lt Governor Delgado was in town for a DRI tour, but bad weather pivoted into a presentation in the Glove Theatre. A copy of the *Initiatives Guide* was provided to him.
13. Upcoming events include the Small Business Symposium, Food Truck Fridays, beautification events in conjunction with MVEDD and the Chamber, and in June, NY State's Pathway Through History is promoting historical activities. A community historic walk in Gloversville is being considered as part of this and could include several DRI properties.
14. DDS goals include increasing social media followers by another 500 by year end, bringing in three or more Gloversville businesses to the Microenterprise class, increasing the Hometown Hero banners by another ten, increasing subscribers to the monthly e-newsletter, attending the Economic Developer Academy and keeping the DRI projects on track.
15. Ron Peters noted that CRG should be hearing within the next two weeks if the 52 Church St project, which is in the DRI, will obtain state funding enabling it to move forward. If the funding is approved, the existing abandoned buildings on the property could be demolished this summer. If he does not receive approval, he will apply again.

#### Conclusion of GDDS Report.

#### e. **Chamber Report** - (Anne Boles)

1. Reported that a primary goal of the Chamber was to maintain a strong relationship with the County, members, and partners.
  - i. Partnered with CRG on the governor's visit, ribbon cuttings, and the photo contest.

2. Events included March “Business After Hours” held at the Family Counseling Center with 60 people attending. Met with the SUNY chancellor at FMCC and BOCES to discuss PTEch and CTE. Nicole Walrath will continue to lead the work force development effort with them. Forty leaders attended the Career and Technical Education event. Available programs continue to expand and include culinary, graphic design, nursing and more.
3. Two email surveys are going on, one for employee skills and another for government affairs.
4. Upcoming events include ribbon cuttings, 3/25-26 Maple weekend, Annual Earth Day Initiative with press conference kickoff on 4/17 11am at Parkhurst field, Lunch and Learn on Medicare 101 on 4/19 at noon, and Earth Day kickoff at Veteran’s Park in Montgomery County with MVEDD on 4/22.
5. Working with the County on tourism and the 44Lakes website.

Conclusion of Chamber Report.

**f. Fulton County - (Jack Wilson)**

1. Noted that it was good to see various county organizations working together.
2. The Johnstown Town Board meeting approved two parcels of land for development.
  - i. Ron Peters explained that a zoning change request was made for the property on Route 30A to change R2 residential zoning on two parcels to M1 manufacturing and this was approved. The entire site is now zoned M1. The local residents had concerns about buffers, and this will be addressed during the planning phase.

Conclusion of County Report.

**g. Fulton County IDA - (Greg Truckenmiller)**

1. Report was sent to the CRG Board in advance.
2. The IDA Audit and Annual Report took up a good part of March.
3. Progress on key findings from the 2018 housing study was stopped during Covid and will now start up again. It is assumed that the issues identified remain and a unified County housing policy to address shortcomings in available housing is needed. The IDA will be working on this with the County and CRG going forward.

Conclusion of IDA Report.

**h. City Reports**

1. Gloversville (Mayor Vince DeSantis)
  - i. The DRI is moving ahead well relative to other DRIs, and Jenn Donovan is doing a great job with administration, so far, an additional administrative position is not needed. The project owners are feeding off the strong leadership. 4 public and 12 private projects are underway.
  - ii. The DRI dovetails well with the Brownfield development program that has identified key sites to be addressed with Phase Is and IIs using an EPA brownfield assessment grant that Gloversville was awarded.
  - iii. The Crescent area has a lot of industrial areas that are being assessed and Daniel Hays property in the center is in the DRI. This development work has piqued the interest of other nearby property owners that either want to sell or develop themselves now.
    - A challenge is the flood plain and the city has applied to the EPA for a Flood Mitigation Study for this location and two others.

- iv. The County has delegated to the City the authority to tax-foreclose on Comrie Inc. A Phase II will be completed, and a remediation plan formed. The goal is to have a hotel there to complement Parkhurst Field. Harrison St. will be improved over time to be more accommodating. The bridge is planned to be expanded to allow for bike lanes and sidewalks.
- v. In 2021, a pilot project purchased tax-foreclosed properties from the County, after they took title but before an auction. These were marketed by a property disposition committee to responsible owners that have 18 months to bring a property up to code. Only one of ten needed to be demolished. Plan to do more of these this year. This will be reviewed with the County and if successful, will become an annual project to eliminate substandard properties in a neighborhood.
- vi. Synergy in the city with all these projects is growing and exciting.
- 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 - A quorum was present for reviewing and voting on the resolutions being presented. Copies of the drafted resolutions were provided to the Board for review prior to the meeting.
  - i. **Resolution to approve a CRG membership.** The Chair introduced a resolution to approve Y-Not Dog Cookies, Jennifer Kuhn as a bronze level member of FCCRG.
    - Motion: Dr. Leslie Ford moved a motion to approve the resolution as stated and Timothy Beckett 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.
  - ii. **Resolution to acknowledge and accept the audit opinion provided by West & Co.** The Chair introduced a resolution to acknowledge and accept the audit opinion provided by West & Co. CPAs PC as recommended by the Audit Committee.
    - Motion: Denis Wilson 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.



## 2. Grant Requests

- i. The MEG programs were covered by Ken Adamczyk. CRG is now approaching 100 awarded microenterprise grants to small businesses.
- ii. CRG Countywide EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant
  - April 11 is tentatively set as the date for a public outreach meeting. Attendance is typically low, but it is expected to increase as specific sites are specified.
  - Phase Is are in process and workplan development is beginning on Phase IIs for two properties.
  - Gaining site control of zombie properties is always a stumbling block. CRG set up a meeting with the county, county attorney and the environmental professionals awarded the grant contract so the latter could explain how the county can take ownership of a property through foreclosure while limiting the risk of contamination cleanup liability.
    - A property in Broadalbin will be used as a test case and a group has been formed to review the process to move it from zombie state to developer ownership.
    - The EPA was asked if the grant could be used to cover the legal fees associated with this process and they approved it.
  - CRG is pushing to spend 70% of the grant funds so an application can be submitted for a second assessment grant later in the year.

## 3. Business Marketing

- i. One small Countywide Loan Fund loan was closed.
- ii. The Johnstown Loan Fund closed on a \$100,000 loan two and half weeks ago and still has \$75,000 available to loan out.
- iii. CRG is looking at another possible agriculture loan using the JDA loan fund which now covers seven counties.
- iv. The Brownfield Developers Summit is being held April 25-26 of 2023. The planning is moving along well, and it is great to have Lt. Governor Delgado as a keynote speaker on day one.

## 4. Business Inquiries/Business Leads

- i. A new tenant signed a one-year lease for suite 106 on the first floor.
- ii. Two RFPs looking for properties were received but could not be accommodated. One needed a rail line and other specifications and the other needed greater than 100 megawatts of power.
- iii. A meeting was set up with the County, County Planner, IDA, Johnstown Planner, Gloversville Planner, grant writer, CRG and a party from Houston, TX to review an RFP. It would be an IDA deal if it can be accommodated.

Conclusion of the President and CEO Report.

## ***VII. Adjournment to Executive Session***

A motion was needed to enter Executive Session to discuss pending litigation and proposed acquisition, sale, or lease of real property, as publicity would substantially affect the value thereof.

At 10:07 a.m., Timothy Beckett moved a motion to adjourn to executive session Dr. Leslie Ford seconded the motion, and it was passed by all present.

Warren Greene moved a motion to return from executive session, Timothy Beckett seconded the motion, and it was passed by all present. The Board returned from executive session at 10:32 a.m.

Action Taken:

None.

**VIII. *Wrap Up***

A photo of the Board was taken to post on the website.

**IX. *Adjourn Meeting***

At 10:32 a.m., Dr. Leslie Ford moved a **motion to adjourn** the meeting which was seconded by Terrie Easterly and passed by all present.

Respectfully Submitted,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Leslie Ford, Board Secretary

5-18-23  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date