



FULTON COUNTY CENTER FOR REGIONAL GROWTH

Fulton County Center for Regional Growth

Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors

Friday – December 17, 2021– ~8:45 a.m. immediately following the Annual Organizational Meeting
34 W Fulton St. and Zoom conference
Gloversville, New York

Directors Present: Timothy Beckett, Terri Easterly (video), Gregory Fagan, Dr. Leslie Ford, Kent Kirch (phone), Travis Mitchell, Geoffrey Peck, Grant Preston (phone), Bryan Taylor (phone)

Directors Absent: None

Staff Present: Ronald Peters, Ken Adamczyk, James Hannahs, Desirée Perham, Paul Davis

Other Attendees: Jack Wilson, Chair - Fulton County Board of Supervisors, Joe Semione, Chair - Fulton County IDA; Vern Jackson, Mayor - City of Johnstown; Vince DeSantis, Mayor - City of Gloversville; John Blackmon, Liaison - Fulton County Board of Supervisors, Denis Wilson, Director - Fulmont Community Action Agency

Public Session

Call to Order: 8:21 a.m.

I. Welcome and Call to Order

- a. The meeting was called to order at 8:21 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 November 19, 2021, Regular CRG Board Meeting Minutes. No changes were mentioned. Dr. Leslie Ford moved a motion to approve; Travis Mitchell seconded the motion, and the Board approved the minutes as presented.

IV. Announcements

- a. None

V. Reports

a. Chair Report

The Chair touted the CRG staff's amazing accomplishments in 2021 and throughout the pandemic. The pipeline of funding in the works for the County is remarkable.

He also reiterated that the two departing board members, Gregory Fagan and Geoffrey Peck, will be missed greatly as they were both reliable, active members and supportive of CRG's mission.

Conclusion of Chair Report

b. Committee Reports

- **Executive Committee**

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

- **Governance Committee**

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

- **Finance Committee – (Gregory Fagan)**

- i. The Finance Committee met on Wednesday, December 15th. The Finance Committee Chair noted that CRG's financials are in excellent condition and the loan pools are in good order. There were a couple of one-time influxes of cash which helped to keep the financials in the black. Similar income is anticipated next year based on the projects currently underway. The County increased the contribution to CRG to cover the Gazelle.ai marketing tool. Some components in the contract were realigned slightly. The County will be sending out a request for proposals for the tourism contract soon.

- **Audit Committee** – 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)

- Google is working great with the tie-in of the 2020-21 magazine articles using blog pages that Emery Designs sets up on the website. There were 36 new people visiting the site last month. Google posts had an extra 121 views and 361 people found CRG on Google. The analytics are being used to drive interest in the right direction and now more people are seeing CRG when they are doing different things.
- The Business Strategy is in the works, 40-50% complete, and will be available early next year. The Marketing Strategy is complete.
- The next Microenterprise Grant training is in January of 2022. There are ten additional people from Fulton County, a dozen from Montgomery County and a couple from Amsterdam specifically.
- The Gala was postponed due to covid numbers and now we will be looking to a May or April timeframe in 2022.
- Facebook followers increased by 2, up to 1107. Engagements are a little slow but on par.
- The Membership Campaign went well. CRG received over \$55,000, on par with last year and the total number of members is up three from last year. There are a couple of regular members that we still anticipate will join and contribute by the end of the year.
- The *2022 Initiatives Guide* magazine was shared on screen.
 - It is 99% complete and will be 68 pages long. The CRG team reviewed the magazine page-by-page on December 16 and noted a few minor changes.
 - Sponsorships went well with several major ones spaced throughout the magazine.
 - The layouts really pop. A new technique was used to pull the magazine together and it resulted in improved photos that coordinate well with the article content. The team worked efficiently together and produced a superior product.
 - The article style was also modified by using a theme and embedding multiple businesses or concepts within to support the topic. An example being the “All in the Family” article which includes information on three businesses all with family connections. Other categories include arts, history, Gloversville ecosystems, farm-to-table, tourism, the airport, workforce development, nano technology and more.
 - The magazine will go to print next week with fewer copies than last time as printing costs have increased. The plan is to use a more targeted distribution.
- The regular Microenterprise Grant program for \$300,000 is nearly complete and will be closed by the end of January. About 80% of the funds have been drawn down. Drawdowns one and two are complete, three will be submitted to the state before Christmas and the fourth to the County soon. An amazing effort was made by all involved to accelerate the two-year program to only 6 months from start to end. Ken commended everyone involved in making this possible; the businesses applying, the training program instructors, and the MEG Committee reviewing the applications.
- The Microenterprise CARES Act Grant has required a great deal of back and forth with the State as procedures are refined for this new program. Two templates developed by CRG are now being used by the State. CRG has three businesses with applications ready to be submitted and fifteen more in the queue. In January, there will be a push to move businesses through which should go smoother now that a system is in place.
- Ron Peters stated to the Board that CRG plans to go for another Microenterprise Grant as soon as possible since the program is so successful and the system in place is effective.

Conclusion of Marketing and Membership Report.

d. Gloversville Downtown Development Specialist Report

James Hannahs: (Report was included with board package)

- This is the fifth year the DDS office has been in place and priorities are expanding.
- The primary mission of the DDS is to attract, retain and expand businesses.
- One of the most beneficial programs for the downtown has been the Microenterprise Grants. The DDS has worked to link businesses with that program and has seen seven grants awarded out of eight applications for a total of \$100,000 since 2020. Half of those represented underserved markets.
- Many community surveys have been conducted, including town halls, for a better understanding of what businesses need and how those needs are evolving. The analytics of the surveys align well with the top priorities of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.
- Six new businesses have opened in Gloversville this year with help from CRG/DDS.
 - There is a ribbon cutting at noon today for Northstar Café, Books, Art.
- The DDS rebranded the office with the green and yellow DIG logo – Downtown Improvement of Gloversville. The rebranding will market new growth and positivity and can be used in a lot of different taglines.
- 1,850 copies of the *Downtown Gloversville* business guide have been distributed and more will be printed for distribution next year. They were placed in numerous locations: businesses throughout the city, the Chamber, the tourism center and at several NYS Thruway rest areas. The Mohawk Valley Welcome Center recently requested more guides.
- The NY Economic Development Council's annual meeting and the Innovation Summit were both attended. Participation aids in growing the professional network of downtown's services and people. The DDS is currently in discussion with a developer about a downtown property as a direct result of attending the conference.
- Another area of focus was in creating engaging programming and animating public spaces.
 - The Hometown Heroes program created a sense of pride and sixty-three banners have been put on display throughout the downtown.
 - Foodtruck Fridays was a direct response to a request for more food options by the community and was a success with over 300 people attending opening day despite nasty weather. There was a positive response from businesses as well. This program had strong support and involvement from Jenni Mazur, City Clerk and will take place again in the summer of 2022.
- In the area of asset and real estate development:
 - Forty-seven brownfield sites were identified in the Brownfield Opportunity Zone. Five of these were selected to focus on and additional details were developed that will enable the sites to be highlighted at the Brownfields Developer Summit April 12-13, 2022.
 - 52 Church St is the most notable development project underway. The DDS was involved in securing the site with fencing and assisting with a smooth permitting process; building permits have been obtained.
- The Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant (DRI) was announced and \$10 million was awarded to Gloversville.
 - The Local Planning Committee (LPC) is being assembled and will include community members and economic development professionals throughout the area.
 - There will be a meeting with the Department of State in January

- An open call for projects will take place in February
 - 18 were submitted in the DRI, but others will also be considered.
- Work with consultants will take place through May
- In May the City submits their final claim to the State and once approved, implementation can begin.
- James thanked the Board for their support throughout the year. Ron Peters noted that James did a great job with organizing the DRI presentation at the Glove Theatre and gave an excellent speech.

Conclusion of GDDS Report.

e. Chamber, Fulton County, IDA, and City Reports

The Chair requested reports from the City and County members present.

1. Chamber

- No in person report this month.

2. Fulton County (John Blackmon)

- It was noted that this has been a great year for the County and also that taxes have generally decreased except for one town and one city.

3. Fulton County IDA - (Joe Semione)

- No meeting was held by the IDA in December.
- Two vacant board seats have been filled and the board is looking forward to a productive year in 2022.
- The Winstanley Group is moving forward quickly with developing the Tryon site they recently purchased. Next year will be very active with those properties being filled.
- The IDA would like to thank CRG for the good relationship they have and hope to continue improving on it next year. There is a good working relationship between the board chairs and CRG's leadership is making good things happen in Fulton County.

4. City Reports

- Gloversville (Vince DeSantis)
 - The mayor of Gloversville noted that in addition to the DRI, doors are opening for cities. Funds are coming available to improve infrastructure which could be transformational for the area. Consistent funding mechanisms will allow for a 5–10-year plan to be developed.
 - Plans are being made to talk to the City Council about increasing staff to handle the projects in the pipeline. The future is looking very hopeful for the City of Gloversville.
- Johnstown (Vern Jackson)
 - Vern congratulated Vince on the DRI award.
 - He thanked CRG staff noting they are very responsive, and solution focused.
 - The CRG Board's efforts and support were also appreciated.
 - Vern noted that he was retiring and said farewell and thank you to all.

Conclusion of County and City Reports.

VI. President and CEO Report

Ronald Peters:

a. Business Update

1. Resolutions – None
2. Grant Requests
 - i. Brownfield assessment proposal packages for the EPA grant are due on December 27th. CRG will be forming a review committee to go through the submittals.
3. Business Inquiries-
 - i. CRG made the second cut on a large agricultural project site selection. More will be discussed in executive session.
 - ii. The west coast sewing operation is still looking at Gloversville as a place to relocate. They would hire fifteen employees initially and expand to twenty-five. A financial package is under review for them.
 - iii. After lots of discussion and review of options, SWANY finally relocated and freed up space for Taylor Made. Taylor Made assisted them with the move using their trucks.
 - iv. The MVEDD was not selected for the Build Back Better Competition. Sixty were chosen across the U.S., mostly larger groups. It is unknown if a second round will be offered.
4. Site Assessment Study
 - i. The final draft of the Site Assessment report is under review now. Elan Planning will be preparing a presentation on the final report and CRG will coordinate a meeting sometime in late January or early February.
5. 34 W. Fulton St.
 - i. Three showings of office space in the building took place this month. The first floor could be filled and possibly two other floors soon.
6. Other
 - i. Ron Peters noted that Jim Wallace is s stepping down as Chair of the Board for MVEDD and they have nominated Ron to replace him. This is a good opportunity. MVEDD is a great partner and has put over a million dollars into Fulton County in the last seven years.
 - ii. CRG is looking forward to an aggressive 2022. One part of the longer-term plan is to heavily market lower-tier, high-tech jobs as Fulton County is well positioned in the tech triangle to support the major companies in this growing industry.
 - iii. The *Initiatives Guide* is excellent and will be hard to beat next year.
 - iv. The CEO thanked the Board for their support and availability at all hours.
 - v. Ron congratulated Mayor DeSantis on the DRI award. The mayor in turn thanked James Hannahs for his great job in compiling the necessary documentation for the various projects.

- vi. It was noted that MVEDD is in the process of updating their five-year plan for the County. A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee has been formed and CRG has two members on it, Ken Adamczyk and Desirée Perham.

Conclusion of the President and CEO Report.

VII. Adjournment to Executive Session

At 9:07 a.m., Geoffrey Peck moved a **motion to adjourn** to executive session, Gregory Fagan seconded the motion, and it was passed by all present.

Geoffrey Peck moved a **motion to return** from executive session, Gregory Fagan seconded the motion, and it was passed by all present. The Board returned from executive session at 9:40 a.m.

Action Taken: None

VIII. Wrap Up

No additional comments were made.

IX. Adjourn Meeting

At 9:40 a.m., Geoffrey Peck moved a **motion to adjourn** the meeting which was seconded by Gregory Fagan and passed by all present.

Respectfully Submitted,



Kent Kirch, Board Secretary

2/11/22
Date

