



FULTON COUNTY CENTER FOR REGIONAL GROWTH

Fulton County Center for Regional Growth

Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors

Friday – December 15, 2023 ~ 8:45 a.m. (immediately following the Membership Mtg.)

**34 W Fulton St & Zoom Conference
Gloversville, New York**

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

Directors Absent: None

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

Other Attendees: Vincent DeSantis, Mayor – City of Gloversville;
Michael Albanese, Esq. – Legal Counsel;
Anne Boles, Exec. Director – FM Chamber of Commerce;
Mike Fitzgerald, Chair - Fulton County IDA Board;
Dr. Greg Truckenmiller, Fulton County IDA Board;
Christina VanValkenburg, County Supervisor - Town of Johnstown;
Jeff Persch, Building Inspector – Town of Johnstown

Public Session

Call to Order: 8:20 a.m.

I. Welcome and Call to Order

A. Grant Preston called the meeting to order at 8:20 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 17, 2023, CRG Regular Board Meeting Minutes. Terri Easterly moved a motion to approve the minutes as drafted, and Warren Greene seconded the motion. No changes were suggested. All present voted in favor and the motion passed.

IV. Announcements

- A. None

V. Reports

A. Chair Report – (Grant Preston)

- 1. The Chair thanked everyone again for the nine years spent working with CRG and the Board.

Conclusion of Chair Report

B. Committee Reports

1. Executive Committee

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

2. Governance Committee

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

3. Finance Committee

- a. The Finance Committee did not have a quorum for the December 14th meeting and the meeting was not held.

4. Audit Committee

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

5. Membership Committee (ad hoc) (Kent Kirch)

- a. This committee did not have a meeting this month.

Conclusion of Committee Reports.

C. Membership & Marketing Report

Ken Adamczyk: (Report was included with board package)

1. Google My Business showed 17 new people visited CRG's website and 159 people found CRG's site using Google which are average numbers.
2. Over thirty people have signed up for the next Microgrant Business Training in January 2024, a few are from Green County who does not offer business training yet.
3. The Smart Growth in the Adirondack Park grant options were shared with the Northville Village Board.
4. Students toured NY Creates as part of Expertise Project program last month and recently, NY Creates received a \$10 billion grant to expand. The students on the tour heard about the grant and made the connection that it was the for the location they toured.
 - a. A school guidance counselor, principal, and teacher visited the Beech-Nut human resource department to arrange an Expertise Project tour, so they are now taking initiative on the program.
 - b. CRG met with Johnstown High School guidance counselor and principal. They hope to join the program next year. A potential donor may be lined up to cover the costs.
5. The *Initiatives Guide* team makes the final product possible. There are also significant sponsors that are crucial to covering publication costs. The positive comments were greatly appreciated. The magazine had a nice range of articles covering business, development and also human interest and community.
6. Membership information was included in the board package.
7. The CEO noted that CRG's relationship with NY Creates is significant. CRG is now part of the NY nanotech team which took years to develop by attending meetings and getting involved in building contacts.

Conclusion of Marketing and Membership Report.

D. Gloversville Downtown Development Specialist Report

Jenn Donovan: (Report was included with board package)

1. Small Business Saturday was a success overall. Email blasts, social media and a press release were used to promote the event. The Gazette, Mohawk Valley Today and the Adirondack Almanac all provided promotional coverage.
 - a. Business response was mixed, some had good traffic while others were quiet.
 - b. The Small Business Selfie Contest winner was announced, Brenda Anich won the drawing and received a \$50 gift card to the downtown business of her choice. She selected 44 Lakes Customized Gifts & Designs.
2. Ribbon cuttings were held for Nibbles & Bites food truck and EmpowHERing Designs on December 2nd, the same day as the Gloversville Christmas parade and tree lighting ceremony.
3. Golden Garden Parties store will be opening in the old Apothecary location soon. They are a seasonal event, party, photo place that is now offering items for all four seasons. They also have stores in Saratoga Springs.
4. Gloversville has a considerable number of activities taking place so, to help promote the city, a blog is used to repackage all of the event and activity notices that are

- available. The notices have appeared on radio and in print as well as online. Community participation has been strong.
5. There has been some developer interest in downtown properties. The GDDS assisted the mayor with tours on buildings and prepared personalized packets to market Gloversville that included CRG's *Initiatives Guide* magazine as well.
 6. The CEO noted that the GDDS has had a very good year and the Board agreed.

Conclusion of GDDS Report.

E. Chamber Report (Anne Boles)

1. Noted the great partnerships on initiatives this year like with dual ribbon cuttings.
2. Thanked CRG for their support during the transition year, looking forward to 2024.

Conclusion of Chamber Report

F. Fulton County - (Jack Wilson)

1. The Board of Supervisors thanks CRG for the work being completed in the County and the new environment in the locale.
2. Jack Wilson noted that he will be leaving the Board after this year and that he was proud to have served and proud to have been part of the improvements, the future looks bright for CRG and the region.
3. Warren Greene is also coming off the board, along with Rick Argotsinger. He noted his time serving on the board was great and it was good to see the board grow and broaden its vision over the years.
4. It was stated that the County Board of Supervisors will have a large turnover this year, eight of twenty, and it is hoped that the new people will bring new ideas to help the Board of Supervisors evolve and continue to improve to assist all communities.
5. Both Jack and Warren are respected, knowledgeable members of the Board and were thanked for their service.

Conclusion of County Report.

G. Fulton County IDA - (Mike Fitzgerald)

1. It was noted that Todd Rulison will be leaving the IDA Board.
2. In 2024, the IDA will be searching for the best available shovel ready sites, none are perfect.
3. The RFP for the new Development Strategy is being prepared with the County. The Three main areas of focus will be Economic Development, Housing and Tourism.
4. Marketing of the Tryon properties will continue with Winstanley. In 2023, they responded to six RFPs, but were not selected.
5. Work will continue with Vireo health and Goodness Growth Holdings to complete the 324,000 sq.ft. building and commence startup of the operation. Financing to complete the project was received. Viero continues to work on their sale to another company.
6. The Crossroad Business Park will be marketed for housing. The zoning was changed to allow for residential in the park. A ten-acre location in the park is being eyed for housing development. The IDA has site control.

Conclusion of IDA Report.

H. City Reports - (Mayor Vince DeSantis)

1. Gloversville

- a. The second EPA Brownfields Assessment grant is wrapping up. \$800,000 in grants was used to identify and assess sites. A remediation grant is being applied for to work on identified sites next year. Underutilized and abandoned buildings have held the city back for decades but we are heading in a good direction now.
- b. Developer interest in the City is increasing and tours are taking place weekly. Not only for mixed use interest but also manufacturing.
- c. The City has been partnering with the County Board of Supervisors in acquiring derelict properties. The City buys foreclosed properties from the County, pays back taxes, and then either sells to qualified buyers or has them demolished.
 - i. Soon the City DPW will be able to demolish homes, saving considerable money.
 - ii. Vacant properties with over a year of delinquent taxes can also be obtained using Chapter 19 of general municipal law.
 - iii. This is a good initiative and can be used to develop entire neighborhoods.
- d. Jennifer Donovan and Nick Zabawsky have been doing a fantastic job with the DRI. Developer interest is a collateral benefit of this program. A developer that purchased the Zimmer Glove building is looking at two more properties.
- e. The mayor expressed thanks for the cooperation between the City, County, and CRG and the synergy it creates to move things forward.
- f. The City took title to Comrie Inc which will begin the cleanup of the Harrison St corridor. The City should know by February if they will receive a grant.

2. Johnstown

- a. No in person report this month.

Conclusion of City Reports.

VI. *President and CEO Report*

Ronald Peters:

A. Business Update

1. Resolutions - None
2. Grant Programs
 - a. The Micro grant program was covered earlier in the meeting.
 - b. The countywide EPA Brownfield Assessment grant is progressing well. CRG should know in April if the second EPA Brownfield Assessment grant is approved.
 - c. A FAST NY grant is in the system and CRG should know more about the status by the end of the year. If this grant is received, all engineering costs for the Johnstown Commerce Park site will be covered.
 - i. The County approved in their budget to upfront funds if needed for grants with backend financing. This cooperation is greatly appreciated.

- d. CRG is ahead of HUDs requirements on the EDI-CPF grant. The drawdown should be able to move ahead by the end of the year. The seller is onboard with the process and the plan is to close by the end of January.
3. Business Marketing
- a. Loan funds are in good shape. Negotiations underway with a few borrowers are moving along.
 - b. The Mohawk Valley Brownfields Developer Summit is in the planning stage. There is a small team putting forth a solid effort to assemble all the pieces.
 - c. Great strides are being made in workforce development. A grant has been applied for through MVREDC which will help show high school students what career options are available in Fulton County if approved. The goal is to fill the workforce pipeline by reaching young people earlier and exposing them to job opportunities locally.
 - i. Touring NY Creates is an example of this effort.
 - d. The CEO stressed the importance of building relationships with outside organizations like the nanotech team, CEG (capital region), MVEDD (six-county region) and more to have support and to make things happen.
 - i. CRG arranged a meeting with a local advanced manufacturer and CEG to possibly develop a secondary supplier relationship for the business for solar farm components.
 - e. National Apprenticeship Week was well done, good participation and teamwork to make it happen. Ken Adameczyk noted that there is a greater variety of groups actively involved to create more opportunities in workforce development than people realize. The FMCC team is creative and responsive to meet the counties workforce needs and their support is appreciated.
4. Business Inquiries/Business Leads
- a. The County/Planning/CRG/IDA meeting will be starting up next week.
5. Miscellaneous
- a. Ron Peters acknowledged the advice provided by CRG's legal counsel, Mike Albanese, throughout the year. His input is appreciated.
 - b. CRG was integral in providing input for the MVREDC 2023 Strategic Plan at their request. CRG gathered input from partners and shared it with MVREDC.
 - i. Gloversville may be the only city identified on the high-tech advanced manufacturing regional map. There was a process to be admitted and CRG pushed to make this happen.
 - ii. Similarly, CRG worked to have Fulton County on a map displayed nationally at Semi-Con events.
 - c. There has been some interest in the Johnstown Commerce Park. The power available there has piqued interest.
 - d. The IDA stated that developing power is a priority and they have been discussing the need with National Grid at the regional level. They stated that a new hub is needed at a cost of \$10 million and would take five years to implement. There is currently a two-year lead for transformers if you can find a supplier that has any to sell.
 - i. It was noted that NYC is working with Canada to bring power through the state to the city. Fulton County may need to get creative with finding power as well.

- ii. If a Canadian line is running through Saratoga County, CRG should look into options to tap into it.
- iii. CRG is also talking with MVEDD about doing a study to look into other energy sources for Fulton County - water, wind, solar, nuclear etc.
- e. CRG is providing input from the CRG Board to Scott Henze in Planning for the Fulton County Development Strategy.
- f. The Board noted that the work CRG is doing with the Apprenticeship Program and the Expertise Project is excellent. The kids are receiving it enthusiastically and it will help build the base for filling the pipeline for the workforce.
- g. It was asked if parents are looped into the Apprenticeship Program as they influence their children in where to look for career opportunities. CRG stated that parents are connected at college prep events and through guidance counselors. Career Fairs also have parental information sessions. Parental attendance isn't always optimal. Email is a common communication method. Parent Square is an app that is used. Perhaps a billboard could be considered.

Conclusion of the President and CEO Report.

VII. Adjournment to Executive Session

None needed.

VIII. Wrap Up

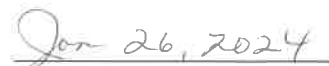
As part of the modifications to the membership drive, a one-page flyer of CRG results was created to include in a January mailing. A high-level review by the Board was requested. The target audience is business owners, and the format needs to be an easy-to-read format with stats that jump off the page. It is currently text heavy. A revised version will be routed soon.

IX. Adjourn Meeting

At 9:12 a.m., Jack Wilson moved a **motion to adjourn** the meeting which was seconded by Terri Easterly and passed by all present.

Respectfully Submitted,


Terri Easterly, Board Secretary


Date

