



FULTON COUNTY CENTER FOR REGIONAL GROWTH

Fulton County Center for Regional Growth  
**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors**  
Friday – February 23, 2024 – 8:30 a.m.  
34 W Fulton St & Zoom Conference  
Gloversville, New York

Directors Present: Timothy Beckett, Dr. Leslie Ford, Warren Greene, Kent Kirch,  
Denis Wilson, Jack Wilson

Directors Absent: Terri Easterly, Geoffrey Peck

Staff Present: Ronald Peters, Ken Adamczyk, Desirée Perham

Other Attendees: John Blackmon, Chair – FC Board of Supervisors;  
Scott Henze, Planning Director – Fulton County;  
Susanne Collins, Vice Chair - Fulton County IDA Board;  
Anne Boles, Exec. Director – F/M Chamber of Commerce;  
Carla Kolbe, Tourism Director – Fulton County  
Michael W. Rossi, C.P.A., - West & Co.

### ***Public Session***

**Call to Order: 8:29 a.m.**

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

- A. Kent Kirch called the meeting to order at 8:29 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 January 26, 2024, CRG Regular Board Meeting Minutes. Timothy Beckett moved a motion to approve the minutes as drafted, and Dr. Leslie Ford 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 – (Kent Kirch)**

- 1. None.

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 (Kent Kirch)**

- a. This committee met on February 22, 2024
- b. It was reported that finances are in good shape without the building overhead.
- c. There were a few minor loan pool items discussed that are being addressed.

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

- a. This committee met on February 22, 2024.
- b. The Committee reviewed the results of the audit prepared by an outside accounting firm, West & Co. Mike Rossi, certified public accountant, and lead auditor, was on hand to present the results to the Committee.
- c. The Audit Committee recommended the CRG Board review and accept the audit report. The audit report is due for submission to the ABO by March 30<sup>th</sup>.
- d. Michael Rossi, C.P.A. handed out a folder containing the audit report to the CRG Board of Directors and reviewed the results.
  - i. The first report is the financial statements, the actual audit.
    - The audit opinion was unmodified, the highest opinion possible in the accounting profession. It was noted that CRG has great internal controls in place and commended the use of Phil Beckett, an outside certified public accountant, to enhance the internal day-to-day accounting.
  - ii. The Balance Sheet showed most assets are in cash since the sale of 34 W Fulton St. and the Leader Herald Properties. The one investment property is the 30A Johnstown Commerce Park site.
    - There is \$51,000 in current liabilities and 1.1 million in current assets, so liquidity is high.

- iii. What is typically an “income statement” is called a Statement of Activities for non-profits. CRG is functioning well within its mission.
  - It was noted that revenue was up from the previous year, \$1.24M versus \$896K. Expenses also increased (salaries, grant expenses, etc.) Overall, net assets increased by \$50,000.
- iv. The final piece is the Notes to the Financial Statements. These are unchanged from the year before.
- v. A Schedule of Investments is also attached and is an audit required by the ABO. CRG is considered to have no investments. The certificates of deposits are short term and considered a cash equivalent.
- vi. There were no findings and no management level items.
- vii. The 2023 990 draft was also available in the packet for board review which is a federal requirement. It is very similar to the content of the audit. It is due for Federal submission on May 15<sup>th</sup> so there is time for review and questions.
- viii. A point to note for the future, if CRG receives and spends over \$250,000 in federal money in one fiscal year, then a single audit will be required. This will be a compliance audit of the grant(s) on up to 40% of the expenditures.
- ix. The NY Charity Bureau also receives copies of the audit and 990 online.
- x. Next year, Amy Pendrick will be the lead auditor from West & Co as this rotates every five years.
- e. The board asked if the directors are listed in the 990. This is found on page 7 and Denis Wilson noted that his first name should be spelled with one “n”.
- f. The CEO noted a few minor changes will be recommended on page 2 that need to correspond to the notes. CRG will get these to West & Co.
- g. Resolutions for accepting the 990 and the Audit will be voted on at the CRG March 22 Board meeting to give the Board time to review the information.

#### **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 18 new people visited CRG’s website and 221 new people found CRG’s site using Google.
2. The Board had requested more press/marketing on CRG’s accomplishments. In January, a public service announcement (PSA) went out in the Leader Herald on the Microenterprise Grant Business Training. February’s PSA was on the Helping Hands event, also in the Leader Herald. Jenn Donovan assisted with these efforts.
3. The MEG Business Training is complete. Thirty people from Fulton County completed the training, one from Montgomery and twenty-three from Greene County. Columbia County has asked to participate in the next round which shows good recognition of the organization.

4. The MVREDC grant is moving along and will be run like the DRI grant so an application will need to be submitted to receive a grant from their grant. CRG is assisting with letters of support.
5. The *Fulton County Initiatives Guide* mailing went out to Site Selector Guild Members regionally, nationally, and internationally.
6. CRG and the DDS will join the Chamber at their March business event with an information table.
7. In March, Expertise Project will be touring Global Foundries with students and CRG will attend along with Sue Collins from National Grid and the IDA Board.
8. CRG attended the NYS Economic Development Council (EDC) Conference in Albany.
9. A CS Arch workforce development meeting was attended in Albany. The guest speaker was Denise Zieske, the Assistant Vice Chancellor of Workforce for SUNY. NYATEP was in attendance and the networking in general was excellent.
10. 2024 Marketing Plan Development for CRG's national and international marketing is underway. A contract is in place with *Area Development* magazine and *Business Facilities* magazine for throughout the year. Pamal Digital will have a national component and is looking into Canadian channels for the Montréal and Ontario markets in Canada and a contract should be in place soon.
11. Facebook followers are up nine from January, now at 1546. Post-reach and engagement levels are low.
12. Memberships are coming in after a membership drive letter went out to last year's members and a different format letter to previous members that did not pay last year.
  - a. Delaware Engineering may be a new member soon, awaiting paperwork.
  - b. Member numbers are similar to this time last year.

Conclusion of Marketing and Membership Report.

#### **D. Gloversville Downtown Development Specialist Report**

**Ken Adamczyk for Jenn Donovan:** (Report was included with board package)

1. Gloversville Business Break networking event was held at 44Lakes store. Thirty people attended. Next one is on March 6<sup>th</sup> at Mohawk Harvest at 8:00 a.m.
2. Food Truck Friday is being run by the DDS for this summer only. Food trucks will be operating about twice a month at lunch times and a couple of evenings during Glove Theatre events. Next year the City of Gloversville plans to do something different at the St Thomas Square Park and they will run the event.
3. Multiple networking events have taken place with the Chamber and Fulton County Tourism. Johnstown tourism group has all been tied in to coordinate activities.
4. Attended NYS Business Council event and spoke to the Governor about the DRI.
5. Meetings are being held with the many DRI project owners to provide help and to prod the businesses along.
6. Assisted with EPA4 Grant application outreach for the Crescent Area and another meeting is coming up in March for Harrison St.
7. Leap of Kindness donations have been coming into CRG for the Chamber-coordinated event. A photo op with CRG board members will be held after this meeting.

Conclusion of GDDS Report.

## **E. Chamber Report**

### **Anne Boles - Chair of the Chamber Board**

1. The Chamber noted the ongoing collaborations taking place with CRG, County Tourism and the IDA and the strong partnerships being developed.
2. The NY Business Council Day was attended with Jennifer Donovan. The evening was spent meeting and networking with legislators to discuss issues and concerns. The Work Force Committee update was also attended.
3. Leap of Kindness Day is next Thursday and lots of donations are rolling in both for Fulton and Montgomery Counties. There are still opportunities to donate to a variety of organizations at the Chamber or CRG.
4. The Chamber's Business Expo will be held at 4:00 p.m. on March 21<sup>st</sup> at HFM BOCES Conference Center, east entrance. Forty vendors are participating, and the Annual Member Awards will be presented at 5:30 p.m. See the Chamber Facebook page for a list of awardees.
5. The Gloversville DDS Business Break event was great, and the Chamber is looking forward to the next one.

### Conclusion of Chamber Report

## **F. Fulton County**

### **John Blackmon – Chair, Fulton County Board of Supervisors**

1. The CSEA union contracts have been settled after two years of negotiations and will be retroactive back to January 1st.
2. The County Board is now focusing on Economic Development and Tourism. The Board is stressing that the County does not have “expenses” but investments in the County.
3. The County Board has approved the funding for the Johnstown Commerce Park site and engineering study.
4. Meetings with the City mayors are planned for next week. The City of Johnstown is working more closely with the County now.
5. County Tourism is tied closely with the Chamber of Commerce. There are a couple of contracts in place with them, like for the 44 Lakes website, and lots of coordination for events.

### **Scott Henze – Fulton County Planning Dept.**

6. Four agreements were drafted for CRG regarding the Johnstown Commerce Park. Ron Peters will review and sign and then CRG can invoice the County for the funds.
7. Three Fulton County Development Strategy proposals were received as part of the \$100,000 capital project to update the strategy. The bids ranged from \$75,500 to \$202,900 and were received from two NY companies, McDonough and MRB Group, and one from Virginia, RKG Associates. The proposals will be reviewed on Tuesday.

### **Carla Kolbe - Tourism Department**

8. The Tourism Department is in the process of transitioning into summer marketing and coordinating procurement with Empire State Development (ESD). The final fourth quarter matching funds report was accepted by ESD.
9. Pamal Digital is being utilized for marketing needs along with other reps.
10. The Fulton County Five challenge is still being completed by some residents, patches and certificates are sent out.

11. The NPT 100 planning is underway for the Northville-Placid Trail one-hundred-year celebration. Lots of coordination is taking place between DEC, Adirondack Mountain Club and the Village of Northville. A ceremonial event will be held on June first which is National Trails Day.
12. Guides are being produced for summer outdoor activities including promoting Parkhurst Field and the Baseball Hall of Fame.
13. Several coordination meetings with various organizations that have tourism related events are being held. Many events are being attended in the area.

Conclusion of County Report.

### **G. Fulton County IDA**

**Sue Collins** – IDA Board of Directors

1. Six goals have been set for 2024: board training, find shovel ready sites, list part of the Crossroad Business Park property to commercial developers for housing, participate in the County Economic Development Strategy, utilize a grant writer to apply for project grants, and continue the joint meetings with the Chamber and CRG, now planned for early April.

Conclusion of IDA Report.

### **H. City Reports -**

1. Gloversville
  - a. No in person report this month.
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 - A quorum was present for reviewing and voting on two resolutions. Copies of the resolutions were provided to the Board for review prior to the meeting and shared during the meeting. The Chair, Kent Kirch, introduced the resolutions.
  - a. **Resolution to acknowledge and accept the CRG 2023 Audit.**  
Based on earlier discussions, it was decided to table this resolution so the Board has adequate time to review the audit and 990. A resolution to accept the audit and another to accept the 990 will be drafted for consideration at the March Board meeting.

- b. **Resolution to authorize signer modifications to Key Bank accounts.**  
Discussion: The Chair noted that this resolution was straightforward, and it is standard business to update the signers at the beginning of the year. The Chair stated that the draft resolution is to be amended to include Terri Easterly, Board Secretary as an additional signer along with Kent Kirch. Grant Preston, who is no longer on the Board, will be removed as a signer.  
Motion: Dr. Leslie Ford moved a **motion to approve** the resolution as written and Jack Wilson seconded the motion. There was no additional discussion.  
Vote: The motion passed unanimously by the members present.

## 2. Grant Programs

- a. The Community Project Funding Grant is ready to begin the closeout process, but HUD does not have a close-out procedure set-up yet, so we are in a holding pattern. CRG has received all funds and has completed the required reporting.
- b. The EPA has an Environmental Justice open-ended grant with a two hundred-million-dollar pool to be used for \$10M-\$20M projects, not small projects. CRG is meeting with the County to review possible projects. The Caroga Lake sewer line to Gloversville is a possibility, the sewer line from Mayfield to Northville, and removal of lead lines in Northville. Only ten to fifteen grants will be awarded across the nation, but it is worth a try.
  - i. The asbestos pipes in Tryon do not qualify.
  - ii. The Board brought up the possibility of including the Karg site in Johnstown, but Johnstown is not on the EPA map of distressed areas.
- c. The FAST NY grant announcement has been postponed but should be announced soon. CRG is hopeful that funding will be awarded for the Fashion Tanning engineering study.
  - i. The contract for Delaware Engineering to complete the study is in hand but cannot be signed until after the grant is approved in order to receive funding. The study will take 8-9 months.
  - ii. A second fast NY Grant will be applied for in 2025 to cover the costs of any deliverables that come out of the study.
- d. A FAST NY grant will be considered for Tryon as the grant is being funded again this year. One of the Tracks may be a fit.
- e. CRG was approached by Montgomery County property owners (farmers) near the Johnstown Commerce Park site wanting to know what was planned for the Montgomery County side. They were told that plans for Montgomery County have not been made yet. They were okay with the use of the Fulton County portion as an Advanced Manufacturing site. They were opposed to excessive truck traffic in the area.
- f. Upcoming grant opportunities include Northern Border and RESTORE NY. Northern Border grant application letters of intent are due in by March 15. RESTORE NY grant announcement opened yesterday with a smaller pool and a new requirement, a housing plan certified by the State will mean a better score. In the future, a certified housing plan may need to be in place in order to apply.

## 3. Business Marketing

- a. The loan pool has thirty-eight active loans. These were all reviewed internally and rated as red/yellow/green. Most are green with a few yellow. The yellows may require more handholding and reaching out to the business.

- i. These loan pools provide loans of last choice for businesses that cannot get conventional loans.
      - ii. A summons was received on one loan. The CGLF is in a good position with a first lien on the property. CRG is working with our lawyer and looking for the best outcome for the business and lenders.
    - b. During the EDC Conference, Ron Peters networked with a member of the Job Development Authority (JDA) and asked if a one-million-dollar grant was possible for the Countywide Loan Fund. They said they would get back to CRG next week.
    - c. The Brownfield Developer Summit is close – April 23 & 24. 110 are registered to date. Keynote speakers will be Hope Knight, ESD Commissioner and Patricia Spitzley, Deputy Director of RACER Trust.
    - d. Soil samples from Fashion Tanning site are being analyzed. Tim Beckett was thanked for his help in identifying drum contents.
    - e. CRG visited the Expertise Project office in NYC to look at the display room options.
    - f. CRG attended a high-end networking event by CS Arch last week. They are part of the NANO Loves NY team. CRG is looking for a redevelopment project tied to workforce development and the college or a city vacant building for some funding that may be available. This would be more long-term.
  - 4. Business Inquiries/Business Leads
    - a. One RFP was received and sent to Winstanley to submit Tryon as a site to the state.
    - b. CRG is working on capital stacking for two developers in two separate cities for housing developments.
    - c. CRG is in the initial meeting stage reviewing capital stacking options with another developer. New York State has a program that can reduce interest rates by two points with certain developer loans. Fulton County has not used this yet but will look into using it to improve interest rates slightly for developers.
    - d. The NANO Loves NY map was shared on screen. ESD hired consultants to identify Nanotech and advanced manufacturing assets in the state. CRG lobbied for two years to get Fulton County on the map and fill in the gap between the Capital District and Utica areas with success. Four sites were accepted by ESD:
      - i. Electrometrics that produces parts for wind and solar power systems (CRG brought CEG in to talk with them about advanced manufacturing parts capabilities).
      - ii. Johnstown Commerce Park as an advanced manufacturing site.
      - iii. Tryon as an asset for advanced manufacturing (National Grid's work to increase power capacity helped).
      - iv. FMCC with their workforce and advanced manufacturing programs. Greg Truckenmiller was very responsive when asked to complete the survey that was submitted to ESD.
      - v. FMCC is also listed under the R&D portion for their clean room on campus and training program.
- The Board was pleased with the speed and visibility of this marketing success.



5. Miscellaneous

- a. The Joint Meeting of Executive Committees has been limited in size due to quorum constraints. A meeting date should be in place soon. Sue Collins, IDA Board Vice Chair, was instrumental in encouraging the organizations to meet and keep the teamwork momentum going.
  - i. Objectives for this joint meeting are to continue to identify ways to collaborate that work better for the County and to identify a shared goal that all three organizations can work on together.
  - ii. Each organization will be expected to bring their top two to five priorities to share with the group and look for an overlap.
- b. The organizational goals will be reviewed for CRG and compared with Ron's goals to make sure they align.
- c. A goals document with a list of ten goals was sent out prior to the meeting in the Board package.
- d. The originator of each goal was asked to briefly explain what is meant by the goal they identified. The Board will have a chance to ask questions. Once all ten have been covered, a broader discussion will be held for any remaining comments or questions and then each director will be asked to rank their top three in order of priority.
- e. **Johnstown Commerce Park (JCP)** – Jack Wilson. Now that CRG has possession of the site it needs to be made shovel ready for development as quickly as possible. Water and sewer need to be brought over to the site and a plan needs to be in place to support this effort.
  - i. It was asked what shovel ready means. Ron Peters explained the use of NY State's Fast Track A standards for a shovel ready site. A developer will be able to identify development costs as unknowns have been clarified. The more improvements the County can make over time the better. It will take at least 24 months to get this site shovel ready.
  - ii. The *Initiatives Guide* magazine team will follow and document the progress on this site so it can be included in the next issue.
- f. **New Site Projects** – Tim Beckett. A pipeline of projects is needed. JCP took time to negotiate, obtain grants, options etc. Projects need to be lined up so one is always in the works and CRG always has a source of revenue. It can be industrial sites, old buildings, unused facilities, or vacant land.
- g. **Adaptive Reuse** – Kent Kirch for Geoff Peck. Identify existing buildings that can be adapted into a productive purpose.
- h. **Workforce Development** – Kent Kirch for Geoff Peck. CRG has a few WFD efforts underway. Currently, there is a generous amount of young workforce available, but they are undereducated and need to be engaged somehow. A pipeline of talent is needed.
- i. **Housing Shortage** – Kent Kirch for Geoff Peck. All County organizations identify with this issue. There is a shortage of affordable housing. Zoning needs to be reviewed and changed as needed.
  - i. Need to determine how far we want to go. A County owned site could be used as a demonstration site for a development using resources from County organizations, grants etc. to get it up and running.

- j. **Grant Applications** – Leslie Ford. The idea of this goal applies to the whole Mohawk Valley Region and suggested initiatives that focus on youth. There are several good components in place, but the educational system needs to be linked to development and business growth. The school systems are overwhelmed with post-covid reporting, regionalization, hiring effective teachers, transportation, and administration. They are not focused on a pathway for youth to be successful transitioning into the County and how connections can be made with County entities to facilitate this, but our three entities could work on this.
- k. **Power/Megawatt Issues** – Jack Wilson. County and local municipalities have an ongoing need for power. CRG needs to support growth and power improvements.
  - i. CRG can help by coordinating with Sue Collins, Community and Customer Manager - National Grid.
  - ii. Grid is currently working on the Upstate Upgrade – a 7-yr project. This requires preliminary studies, engineering, permitting... Letters of support for the project may be needed. Contract crews will be brought in and will need hotels/motels, food, etc. They should be shown what the area has to offer.
  - iii. CRG and others need to define what is needed and how it fits with planned upgrades. Problems exist with the aging transmission lines and infrastructure and power generation also need to be improved.
- l. **Office Location** -Tim Beckett. This has been discussed often since the building was sold and needs to have a priority/timeframe, making it a goal will put this in motion.
- m. **IDA/CRG/Chamber Relationships** -Kent Kirch. The plan is to have joint meetings once or twice a year and work toward the three organizations working better together.
- n. **2023 CRG Board Retreat Notes** - Tim Beckett. The thought was that goals should be developed and posted so visible. This is being completed here today. The retreat notes should be reviewed and incorporated if needed.
  - i. New sources of revenue are being worked on and this goal has been partly addressed.
  - ii. Leadership development is in the WFD category.
  - iii. Growth in smaller towns is a new idea and is about getting involved in other communities besides the two cities.
  - iv. NY Loves Nanotech was about bringing in advanced manufacturing and the JCP site which is included above.
  - v. One-off deals to raise capital is included above.
  - vi. Succession Planning for the CEO position and board succession planning to prepare as seats become open.
  - vii. Johnstown DDS was taken off the list, but CRG is still pursuing at a low level with conversations but may take some time.
- o. The chair requested any additional comments prior to voting on goals.
  - i. It was noted that there were short-term and long-term goals on the list. Initially the focus can be on near-term goals and later the Board can work on a three-year plan with longer-term goals.
  - ii. JCP is a longer-term project but very important. Quick hit projects that generate revenue are needed.

- iii. Youth and their understanding of advanced manufacturing jobs in the area is a need. WFD has many different aspects and focus would need to be identified.
- iv. Some of the goals identified can be combined. Some require collaboration with other organizations. CRG may not lead these but needs to be involved.
- v. It was pointed out that the EPA Brownfield grant program and BDS Summit were not listed but take up time.
- p. After discussion around combining goals the following emerged:
  - i. PROJECTS – will include JCP, New Site Projects, Adaptive Reuse, Growth in Smaller Towns, and One-off Deals.
  - ii. WORKFORCE – will include WFD, Grant Applications/pathway for youth, and Leadership Development.
  - iii. COLLABORATION- will include Housing Shortage, IDA/CRG/Chamber Relationships, Power Megawatt Issues, and NY Loves Nanotech.
  - iv. Only Office Location was not included. This just needs to happen and should be removed as a goal.
- q. It was stated that “revenue sources” is not really a goal, revenue should be looked for in everything CRG does as part of normal operation.
- r. Board succession planning and diversity can be removed from the list as this is a Board goal.
- s. NY Loves Nano should weave into most everything CRG does as a top priority so can be removed from the goals list.
- t. Projects should be the top priority in importance for the County, revenue, and potential for the future.
- u. The Board reviewed the above goals for alignment with Ron’s Annual Performance Goals sheet.
  - i. Revenue does not need to be its own category, but it should be baked into as many independent items as possible.
  - ii. NY Loves Nano can also be included within existing goals to be more visible.
- v. An area to consider is Farming in Fulton County and how can CRG assist farmers. A Farm Study is currently underway. CRG’s plan could include helping agriculture grow and prosper (commercial, organic, co-ops).
  - i. CRG does support the Farm to Table Tour.
  - ii. It could be included in the Collaboration goal.
  - iii. A countywide plan for a green belt needs to be discussed to save farmland.
- w. Next Board meeting the focus of each of the three areas can be discussed.
- x. The Board suggested adding Board Review of Goals to the agenda of every meeting to have ten to fifteen minutes of discussion around them.
  - i. It was suggested that rather than a separate item, the business update could flow using the goals format. This would eliminate repeating topics.
  - ii. A Gantt chart of short and long term goals over two to three years could be helpful for communicating visually.

Conclusion of the President and CEO Report.

**VII. Adjournment to Executive Session**

- A. An Executive Session was not required.

**VIII. Wrap Up**

- A. CRG stated that an FCCRG Projects, LLC meeting was not needed as there is no new news to report and the Board agreed it should be cancelled for February.

**IX. Adjourn Meeting**

At 10:23 a.m., Warren Greene moved a **motion to adjourn** the meeting which was seconded by Timothy Beckett and passed by all present.

Respectfully Submitted,

  
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Terri Easterly, Board Secretary

3/22/2024  
Date