

## Capitol Region Council of Governments

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### CRCOG FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

CRCOG, 241 Main Street, Hartford, CT  
Wednesday, September 7, 2016

#### **Attendees**

John Adams  
Hedy Ayers  
John Carson  
Doug Fisher  
Brian Heavren  
Robert E. Lee  
Diane Smith  
Lyle Wray  
Dave Kilbon  
Lisa Pellegrini  
Marcia Leclerc  
Bill Austin  
Mary Ellen Kowalewski  
Cheryl Assis  
Shannon King  
Mary Glassman

#### **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 12:15 by Vice President Kilbon.

#### **Adoption of Minutes: June 17, 2016 Annual Meeting**

John Adams made and Brian Heavren seconded a motion to accept the June 17, 2016 Annual Meeting minutes as presented. All voted in favor of the motion.

#### **Next Generation Economic Development in Connecticut Workshop Series**

##### **Anchor Institutions Program Recap:**

Hedy Ayers reported out on the June 17<sup>th</sup> program, which drew nearly 100 attendees. Panelists included: Genie Birch, Co-Director of Penn's Institute for Urban Research, Michael Kelly, Executive Director of the Baltimore Metropolitan Council, Jane Baird, Board Chair for SINA and Michael Morand of Yale's Office of Public Affairs and Communications. Key takeaways of the morning program included:

- Transit and density matter

- Identify your region's competitive advantage—highlight assets instead of overplaying challenges
- Successful community development efforts focus on a shared destiny and strategic partnerships between corporate leadership, government, philanthropy and neighborhoods
- Anchor institutions can be instrumental in supporting the local economy through procurement and employment opportunities as well as direct capital and neighborhood investments

Joint Debriefing Session with Hartford Foundation for Public Giving (November 2016):

Ms. Ayers reported that she and Executive Director Wray met with Scott Gaul from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving to discuss co-hosting a joint debriefing session to follow up on the three Progress Points Forums and our three Next Generation Economic Development workshops. It is envisioned that we will host a two-hour session in November to review what we have learned to date, reflect on what we are missing and determine where we go from here. Table top exercises and the use of a facilitator are planned; one goal of the session is to recruit an action team.

Upcoming Sessions:

A session focusing on Industry 4.0—Challenges and Opportunities for CT—will be hosted by CRCOG and the German Consulate General Boston. A 2017 date is planned to ensure the Governor's participation.

Also planned is a workshop on attracting and retaining millennials. Dr. Wray and Ms. Ayers already met with CRCOG Foundation President Cassano to brainstorm ideas and discussed the possibility of: creating some millennially-based focus groups to help inform the workshop planning process, involving students and college presidents, making site visits to other successful cities and partnering with various organizations and companies, like HYPE, YES, Electric Boat and Pratt. A report that came out last fall entitled Key Insights into Talent Attraction and Retention Efforts in Philadelphia was distributed to the Board.

There was extensive discussion about other communities that we might want to research/visit, including Providence, Worcester, Northampton, and Burlington. Dr. Wray cited best practice examples where low-cost activities are planned for returning college students to help bring them back to town permanently. Questions were raised concerning what HR departments from large corporations are doing to entice millennials to stay, whether we are adequately aligning with our schools, and if UCONN specifically is partnering with large employers in the state. John Carson indicated that any university's strategic plan includes partnerships, and that university alumni networks could be useful. It was recommended that staff: check with the UCONN MPA program to see if there are stats on how many graduates stay (and to look more broadly at retention discrepancies between 2 year colleges and 4 year institutions, including public versus private); look into what specific professional associations are doing (real estate, finance, engineering, environmental); and watch for possible public policy initiatives at the state level

that might include loan forgiveness as a vehicle to retain students. Robert, Lisa, Marcia and John Adams all volunteered to serve on a working group to help plan the workshop.

### **Grant and Program Updates**

Mary Ellen Kowalewski provided an update on the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving's anchor institutions grant. CRCOG staff have reviewed and provided comments on a first draft of the resulting report on Best Practices in Engaging Anchor Institutions and Neighborhoods to Build Corridors of Opportunity, which was prepared by HR&A Advisors. This study will identify national best practices on this topic which may be applicable to the CT *fastrak* corridor. Convenings with selected anchors are planned for October to facilitate a dialogue about what they see as their role. There was some discussion concerning how expansive our definition of anchor institutions is/should be—does it go beyond the traditional eds and meds? CRCOG has taken a broader view—asserting that those who can make investments should be included. There was also discussion about: how important it is to locate key facilities near transit (like high schools and state office buildings) to provide access to jobs and supply chain opportunities; and how our antiquated property tax structure provides an additional layer of complication as communities compete against each other for resources/investments. It was agreed that the final report would be shared back with the Foundation Board.

### **Video Testimonial Project Update and Next Steps**

The Board expressed its support for moving forward with a video testimonial project that was originally conceived last year when Skip Thomas retired from the board and made an impassioned speech about how much has been accomplished in the public safety arena thanks to CRCOG's efforts and regional cooperation. The University of Hartford has donated video production services to the project. It is envisioned that several 90 second to three minute videos will be produced.

Lots of ideas and questions were shared about the initiative, including:

- Do we focus on what has already been accomplished or where we want to go?
- Who is the target audience? (Possibly towns and the general public. These videos might be useful when there is a change in municipal leadership to help justify participation in CRCOG activities. Can also communicate who you should call if you have a similar problem in your community.)
- Should we include a call to action?
- Can we tie this to millennials to showcase what makes CT or the region a great place be?
- Use case studies to tell our story and the value of partnerships. (One example cited was brownfields—showing before and after photos.)
- Describe a cooperative exercise that CRCOG can help you think through.
- Highlight what is most impactful about what CRCOG does.

Lisa, Dave and Diane all agreed to serve on a subcommittee to provide general direction to the project.

**Other Business**

It was announced that a free transportation event will be held at the LOB on September 15<sup>th</sup> from 8:30 to 12:00 highlighting the benefits of investing in transportation—specifically, what transportation investment has done for economic development.

**Adjournment**

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned.