

Metro Hartford Future – Implementation Committee DRAFT Minutes

2/11/2021 at 9:00am

Via Zoom

Implementation Committee Members and Alternates in Attendance

David Griggs, MetroHartford Alliance (Co-Chair)
Jay Williams, Hartford Foundation for Public Giving (Co-Chair)
Jackie Mandyck, iQuilt Partnership
Alex Johnson, Capital Workforce Partners
Mark Contreras, Connecticut Public
Patrick McMahon, Connecticut Main Street
Duncan Harris, Capital Community College
Sean Bradbury, Connecticut State Colleges and Universities
Jen Widness, CT Conference of Independent Colleges
Chip Beckett, Town of Glastonbury
Marcia Leclerc, Mayor, Town of East Hartford
Paula Gilberto, United Way
Jim Horan, LISC
Jim Scannell, Travelers
Nicole Pac Bosco, City of New Britain

Additional Attendees

Lyle Wray, CRCOG
Tim Malone, CRCOG
Jack Antonich, member of the public
SB Chatterjee, member of the public

David Griggs and Jay Williams called the meeting to order at 9:03 AM

1) Public Comment

Supriyo B. Chatterjee made a comment regarding Innovation Places Hartford (now referred to as Launc[H]). The comment is included as an attachment to these minutes.

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A voluntary Council of Governments formed to initiate and implement regional programs of benefit to the towns and the region

Jack Antonich also provided a comment. He noted that in the indicators reported in the CEDS Annual Report, the comparison was made to 2016 data, which preceded the development of the CEDS. He did not think this was appropriate. He also asked if more details would be provided about what pivoting the CEDS to respond to COVID-19 meant, and what the study of five strategies to accelerate economic development would include and how it would differ from the CEDS.

2) Introductions

Co-Chairs David Griggs and Jay Williams welcomed people to the meeting and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

3) Minutes from May 28, 2020 (Action)

Chip Beckett moved to adopt the minutes as presented. It was seconded by Jackie Mandyck. The motion passed with one abstention from Sean Bradbury.

4) Presentation of the CEDS Annual Report

Tim Malone gave a presentation on the CEDS annual report. The presentation is posted to the CRCOG website.

The following comments were offered by members of the committee:

- On the dual-track strategy: a bulk of the participants in the programs are in secondary education. CWP, in partnership with the other workforce boards, was just awarded a \$10 million grant of H1B funding.
- Talent attraction/retention: the MetroHartford Alliance is also launching their All Hart program. This program is focused on attracting talent in general, in contrast to college retention programs being advanced by AdvanceCT. David Griggs noted that this program would complement and not compete with AdvanceCT's efforts. Jen Widness also noted that she had not been reached out to recently in regard to the college retention program and would appreciate an update on the effort.
- Transit-Oriented Development: Lyle Wray added that CRCOG's TOD efforts were being pursued in the context of a low-growth/high-cost region.
- Attraction and Retention of businesses: David Griggs noted that the key task in the early days of the program has been to get the word out about Hartford.
- Entrepreneurship: Chip Beckett asked about resources for regular small businesses and whether anyone is talking about how to encourage people to start main street small businesses. Supriyo B. Chatterjee noted that there are a lot of programs in the state. Lyle Wray noted that one thing that is needed is a small business "navigator" to help start-ups figure out which forms to fill out and how to do it. Jen Widness noted that the universities could help with matching businesses to resources from the university. Jackie Mandyck agreed that small businesses are critical and noted that formerly incarcerated people have a particularly difficult time and are often excluded from certain licensures.

5) COVID-19 Response and CEDS Update

Lyle Wray and Tim Malone presented information on a revised grant application to the EDA for COVID-19 recovery funding. They noted that one task in that grant application would be to update the CEDS to respond to the pandemic.

6) Next Steps

Tim Malone noted that the next steps would be dependent on getting the EDA grant award. One other task would be to conduct a study of five strategies to move the needle on economic development. One focus would be on moving people up the income ladder and over the Asset Limited Income Constrained Employed (ALICE) threshold. Paula Gilberto offered to send around the ALICE report. She also noted that current proposals to increase the minimum wage could have impacts on service providers as well. Increased funding for service providers should be considered at the same time. She hoped that this group could serve as thought leaders on the issue.

Chip Beckett noted that the big question is how to really move people up the income scale.

7) Other Business

8) Adjournment

The Meeting Adjourned at 10:00 AM