

MINUTES

DUTCHESS COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION BUSINESS SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, May 14, 2009, 7:45 a.m.
DCEDC, 3 Neptune Road, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601

Present: P. Calogerakis, J.C. Fouere, E. Griffin, S. Wesley, M. Tomkovitch (phone)
Absent: R. Akeley, J. Bonura, Jr., Dr. D. Conklin, A. DeDominicis, J. DeMarco, R. Higgins,
L. Holfelder, K. Libolt, T. McQuade, T. Petrillo, D. Ping, R. Savage, J. Tocharshewsky
Staff: J. MacEnroe, C. Maloney, & M. Byers

Chairman's Welcome

Paul Calogerakis called the regular meeting of the Dutchess County Economic Development Corporation Business Services Committee to order at 7:55 a.m.

Economic Stimulus Event Status:

- P. Calogerakis opened the meeting by asking C. Maloney how the plans were coming along for the “stimulus package” event. C. Maloney reported that we had a conference call with J. MacEnroe, C. Maloney, and M. Byers, with Arnaldo Schwerert of SBDC and Pat Courtney Strong, representative for NYSERDA. Cathy summarized the conversation, and what NYSERDA has to offer regarding available programs. It is possible to have one event around a NYSERDA topic, as we have previously done, and highlight the new information with the programs that are already in place. Cathy also stated that the SBDC reported that the regulations for administering the stimulus funds are not yet flushed out, and there is no new message to give. They (SBDC and SBA) will not know how to access the funds until end of June or first part of July. Cathy said that we have an upcoming meeting with Julie Chang of Ecology and Environment, a contact EDC made at the Green Workforce Summit held in Fishkill on April 29. They may be able to help us look at opportunities regarding the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, as they have broken it down on a spreadsheet, item by item. J. MacEnroe commented that the stimulus package was badly named; it’s not really new money – it is money that will go to existing programs, and might help to “close deals”, but not useful as advertised.
- J. MacEnroe also stated that we were talking about doing an “overarching” seminar, with breakout sessions, depending on the content that we can come up with from various sources. Possible ideas will focus on energy audits, weatherization, PV installations, etc. E. Griffin commented that the stimulus money went to social programs and NYSERDA, and they you have to apply for it with a structured loan program. J. MacEnroe stated that there are some grants available. J. MacEnroe interested in possibly building an entrepreneurial program, centered on training. J.C. Fouere commented that he is trying to get a grant for his business for the use of industrial gases sold to PV installers. He has checked with several agencies and Congressman Hall’s office, and information was given to him, which he passed on to Cathy. J.C. Fouere had difficulty with the information provided, and it was not straight forward. He suggested that we call the agencies directly to see if we could get any additional information for our use in a stimulus package event.
- P. Calogerakis was concerned that there may not be enough “meat on the bone” for an event at this time. Unless something changes or we receive “breaking information”, there is not a reason to hold an event this summer. J. MacEnroe commented that we could look at doing a NYSERDA event around new construction, the PONs (Program Opportunity Notices), get into the building trades, do an event exclusively for engineers/architects on how to access the particular funds for their trades. E. Griffin suggested that if we were to do an event on energy efficiency upgrades, it should be presented so that is shows cost efficiency to a business. That way, there is a hook, and businesses will want to do it. J. MacEnroe suggested reaching out to Charles Schumer instead of John Hall.

- Further discussion ensued as to the direction the event should go in based on the above. It was generally agreed upon by the committee that there should be more research into possible topics, with the idea of a main topic and breakout sessions, and to present the seminar(s) with the cost effective and energy efficient idea; find the balance; let us (DCEDC) be the “educational conduit”. A possible speaker can be Russell Urban Mead from Chazen Companies. E. Griffin stated that he is the “green” person for Chazen and is extremely knowledgeable regarding the trade-offs vs. costs. P. Calogerakis asked the committee to continue their progress in these areas and that a good time to have a seminar may be in September, with a focus on energy, with breakout sessions.

Health care Power Lunch:

- It was asked if C. Maloney was able to confirm the fourth speaker, and she reported that the representative from NYS Department of Insurance had dropped out. Discussion then ensued as to who to get, and it was decided that C. Maloney would try Sen. Kevin Cahill, and then Assemblyman Joel Miller.
- It was reported that Lillian Weigert, Esq. from Gellert and Klein, PC would be the moderator.

Angel Network – Regional Effort:

- C. Maloney reported that Orange County network has an effective plan. P. Calogerakis suggested that we reach out to our population of “angels” as a group, with a broadcast message via email. C. Maloney suggested a more personal approach by sending actual letters, with an invitation to respond. J. MacEnroe wants to make it Hudson Valley Angels, encompassing Dutchess, Orange and other counties under one name, and we (Dutchess) are the link. E. Griffin suggested that we promote it as Hudson Valley network and have a representative from Hudson Valley make the initial presentation. Discussion then ensued as to whether to have the event as a breakfast or a dinner event. P. Calogerakis then suggested to do the letter and follow up with an email and phone call, notifying the Hudson Valley group about the next stage and invite them to a meeting. E. Griffin will give Richard Chazen a “heads up” on this.

Green RLF project:

- C. Maloney reported that there are two applicants for the Revolving Loan Fund, and we are discussing the loan with the two companies: one is Capital Uniform in Beacon, to purchase commercial grade washers, and the other is Le Petit Chateau Restaurant in Poughkeepsie (Salt Point Turnpike), for reconstructive wetlands/filtration system on their property. J.C. Fouere strongly commented that, regarding the washers, the project must be energy efficient, or a “qualifying” upgrade, and he thought those were the guidelines needed to be more stringent to this regard. A discussion ensued regarding this, and M. Tomkovitch commented that we should not have fine regulations on this loan, but rather leave the policy broad and let the committee make final decisions as to who qualifies for the money. He would rather have more applicants than fewer applicants with restrictions. C. Maloney commented that we are looking to lend money to business in Dutchess County, and a small upgrade is better than nothing. J. MacEnroe commented that we could refer clients to NYSERDA if needed, if a larger loan is required or for a loan not covered by the RLF.

Business for the next meeting:

- P. Calogerakis stated that at the next meeting, he would like to refresh the committee on what the focus is, and would like to focus on what is important in the business community. There will be a note sent in this regard with next month’s meeting notice to all committee members.

The Next Meeting will be held on Thursday, June 4 at 7:45 a.m.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

