

Chamber and Economic Development of the Rutland Region Board of Directors Meeting Tuesday, January 18th, 2022 | 8:00 a.m.

Via Zoom:

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82083109940?pwd=WCtTTmJhV2t3MG5kdFhHWFZ0NnR1Zz09

<u>Agenda</u>

Call to Order
 John Casella II, President

Approval of Minutes from November 16th, 2021 (pages 2-3)
 John Casella II, President

Executive Director's Report

Staff updates

TIFs: Killington and Rutland

Zion Growers

Airport Committee

Grant writing: Industrial park, The HUB

Committee Reports

Real Estate (see attached materials, page 4)

Marketing (see attached materials, pages 5-6)

■ Finance (see attached materials, pages 7-8)

Events (see attached materials, pages 9-12)

Business Development (see attached materials, pages 13-14)

Policy (see attached materials, pages 15-18)

DEI Committee (see attached materials, pages 19-42)

DEI Strategy Presentation scheduled for 8:30 a.m.

Nicole Kesselring, Chair

MaryAnn Goulette, Co-Chair

Karen Garrow, Chair

Eric Mallette, Chair

Lyle Jepson

Russ Marsan, Chair

Tyler Richardson

Shana Louiselle, Co-Chair

- Old Business
- New Business
- Adjournment

Upcoming Meetings and Events:

Real Estate Committee – Wednesday, February 2nd, 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

Marketing Committee – Thursday, February 3rd, 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Finance Committee – Tuesday, February 8th, 8:15 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.

Business Development Committee – Wednesday, February 9th, 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

Events Committee – Thursday, February 10th, 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

CEDRR Legislative Breakfast – Monday, February 14th, 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

Board of Directors – Tuesday, February 15th, 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.



Board of Directors Minutes – November 16, 2021 RRPC

Members Present: John Casella II, Brennan Duffy, Karen Garrow, Rolf Hirschmann, Nicole Kesselring, Eric Mallette, John Russell III, Cam Schaefer, Jonathan Spiro, Fran Sun

Staff Present: Penny Inglee, Lyle Jepson, Tyler Richardson, Kim Rupe

Guest: Rick Gile

Introductions: John Casella asked that everyone introduce themselves since the meeting was in person for the first time.

Call to order: The meeting was called to order at 8:09am.

Approval of minutes: Rolf Hirschmann made a motion to accept the minutes of the October 19, 2021 Board of Directors meeting. The motion was seconded by Nicole Kesselring and passed unanimously.

Committee Reports

Real Estate Committee - Nicole Kesselring

Nothing to report beyond the minutes provided in the Board Packet.

Marketing Committee – Lyle Jepson

- Lyle gave an overview of the proposal to bring the Regional Marketing Initiative in house and not reengage with Lyft. The plan was provided in the Board Packet.
- John Russell III made a motion to bring the Regional Marketing Initiative in house, the motion was seconded by John Casella II. Discussion took place regarding adding the work to staff. It was noted that Lyz Tomsuden will do the graphic design and Greg Youkov of FiveFire Media will do the back-end work on the website. Bethany Sprague has been brought on part-time to handle the concierge calls and Kim Rupe will do media buys and manage the program. The current contract with Lyft ends December 31, 2021. The motion passed unanimously.

Finance Committee – Karen Garrow

- The committee reviewed the October financials.
- The loan that was behind is now current.
- The fourth quarter financial statements were included in the packet.
- There has been some interest in loans, but no actual applications.

Events Committee - Eric Mallette

- Minutes are provided.
- Members of the committee discussed the Annual Meeting and how to move forward since it has been held as a drive in the last couple of years due to COVID.
- Membership and Events Manager has been hired Chrispin White will start December 1st.

DEI Committee – Lyle Jepson

• The committee is now developing a strategic plan.

Policy Committee - Tyler Richardson

• The committee met with Downs Rachlin Martin to talk about the upcoming Legislative Session.

Old Business: There was not old business to come before the Board of Directors.

New Business: There was no new business to bring before the Board of Directors.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:22am. Board members then toured The Hub.

Respectfully submitted,

Henry I. Ingle

Penny J. Inglee

Members Services | Events | Office Manger



Real Estate Committee Meeting Minutes | Wednesday, January 5th, 2022 | Via Zoom

Present: Nicole Kesselring, Andy Paluch, Matt Suchodolski, Lyle Jepson, Tyler Richardson, Chrispin White

The meeting was called to order at 8:02 a.m. Approval of the previous meeting minutes was tabled due to a lack of quorum. The members welcomed Matthew to the committee and introduced themselves.

112 Quality Lane Update

As part of our work with the grant from Efficiency Vermont, we have received our lighting fixtures for our full building upgrade with installation tentatively planned within the next few weeks. We are planning on paving the south parking lot this year, and Tyler will reach out to Wilk Paving to get it scheduled.

Vermont Farmer's Food Center Update

Businesses located in the VFFC have had to vacate due to air quality issues and we've been working with them to relocate. The Farmer's Market intends to remain at the VFFC. Phase II is pending completion, which should be soon. Part of our work with VFFC was looking at repurposinig the Lynda Lee building for use by the VFFC as well as CEDRR for manufacturing space, but the building is not feasible for our purposes – we continue to look for ways to develop the manufacturing/warehouse properties we're seeing a demand for.

Rutland Airport Business Park Phase II

In our pursuit to meet the needs of area businesses for manufacturing/warehouse space, we've begun again to look at the options for developing Phase II of the Airport Business Park, which is currently without the necessary infrastructure for water. The committee invited Matthew Suchodolski from the EDA to discuss programs to help fund infrastructure projects that result in business development. Matthew gave an overview of EDA's Public Works program as well as a Technical Assistance program that would pay for a feasibility study of potential economic development opportunities and environmental constraints that may be presented by development of Phase II – this might be a good launch point and lead to implementation funding. Any funding would require a 1:1 match, and the Park Association has put together a fund over the last several years as a match for funding to develop Phase II. The committee reviewed the layout of the park and the available parcels, and there would need to be a clear value proposition for property owners to participate in this process. Matthew reported State funding and Northern Borders Regional Commission funding can act as a match, as well as ARPA funding. Matthew encouraged us to develop a relationship with VTRANS around this topic. The committee agreed we should bring the Airport Business Park Association officers together to continue the discussion, and Tyler will follow up with David Loseby (President of the Park Association) and Andy will follow up with Kara Soulia (Vice President of the Park Association) to begin the discussion.

Old/New Business

None.

Adjournment at 9:08 a.m.

Marketing Committee Meeting Minutes Thursday, January 6, 2022 | Via Zoom

Present: Bill Ackerman, Steve Costello, Brennan Duffy, Lyle Jepson, Nikki Hindman, Polly Mikula, Traci Moore, Kelley Robinson, Kim Rupe, Jordan Spear, Bethany Sprague, Michael Talbott, Chrispin White

The meeting was called to order at 11:32 a.m.

Lyle started the meeting by introducing Chrispin White who is the new Member Services & Events Manager as well as Bethany Sprague who has been working part-time the last few months as the Real Rutland Concierge Coordinator to help funnel all incoming leads. Chrispin and Bethany both shared a few words on their roles.

Lyle shared that staff met with LIFT this week for the final meeting to discuss asset transition and other access to accounts. Kim has already started working with Greg and Lyz and are moving forward with the transition smoothly.

Kim updated the committee on the grant that CEDRR applied for with the VT Department of Tourism & Marketing for Real Rutland to host a YP Weekend in August 2022. CEDRR did not receive approval for this grant request. Lyle and Kim drafted a new plan for Real Rutland for 2022 that does not include this event and includes additional campaigns instead.

Kim gave a presentation to the committee that outlined a tentative plan for the year for campaigns, specifically of project timelines. The presentation is attached to these minutes for review.

Lyle and Kim made several requests to the committee for support:

- Sponsorship support for Weekend Getaway
- Planning support for Weekend Getaway
- Additional fundraising
- Recommendations for individuals/families for personal stories
- Concierge volunteer recommendations

Following this meeting, staff will provide a list of current sponsors, towns currently represented through the concierge program, and a link to review the current commercial running on Killington TV. The next meeting will include brainstorming for the Weekend Getaway.

The meeting adjourned at 12:06 p.m.

Tentative Meeting Agenda Thursday, February 3, 2022

One Month In Update - Kim

Brainstorming of Weekend Getaway Plans

Corporate Fundraising

Other



Finance Committee Meeting Minutes | Tuesday, January 11th, 2022 | Via Zoom

Present: Karen Garrow, Scott Dikeman, Mark Foley, Jr., Scott Gregg, Rolf Hirschmann, Chris Keyser, Russ Marsan, Deb Quirk, Lyle Jepson, Tyler Richardson, Chrispin White, Elizabeth Karle, Heather Strarzynski

The meeting was called to order at 8:17 a.m.

Motion: Mark moved to accept the minutes from November 9th, 2021. The motion was seconded by Rolf and passed unanimously.

CEDRR Internal Financials

The committee reviewed the financial reports including the CEDRR P&L, balance sheet, and regional marketing activity. Line item numbers and the current annual budget were included on the reports as requested by the committee. Although we have incurred significant expenses for the puzzle project, we have sold enough at this point to break even, so any puzzle we sell from here forward will be all profit. Staff and committee discussed current fundraising efforts around the Regional Marketing Initiative.

Revolving Loan Fund

All loan clients are current on payments. The committee discussed loan #108-01-01 and the ballooning of the loan schedulued for March – Tyler will work with the lenders on the committee to develop a letter with a plan/timeline for exiting this loan in cooperation with the other lenders. We continue to see interest in the loan fund, but no applications have come through.

Auditor Proposals

The committee reviewed the two proposals from Davis & Hodgdon and O'Brien Shortle Reynolds and Sobatka. After much discussion, the committee recommended to the board approval of the Davis & Hodgon proposal pending Tyler following up with Andrew and Norm from the committee to get further insights into the proposals. Once Tyler has this meeting, he will reach back out to the committee for a final recommendation to the board.

NeighborWorks of Western Vermont

Lyle introduced Heather and Elizabeth from NeighborWorks of Western Vermont, who presented on the history and current work of their organization. Starting in 1986, the organization works to provide safe, efficient, and affordable housing through education, technical assistance, and financial services. Their lending services offer housing down payment assistance, home and energy loans, home and rental repairs, among others. Through the VHIP program, they can provide up to \$30,000 in grant assistance with a 20% match for property owners to bring inadequate rental units back online, but this program mostly targets the homeless population. As we encounter more and more the need for market-rate rental units and the barrier the lack of this stock creates in increasing our population, how do we create a program to incentivize the rehabilitation of rental stock to target the needs of newcomers? Although mainly focused on homeownership, NeighborWorks supports the development of rental units as a necessary part of the housing spectrum. Having a housing strategy for the county is paramount to bring together effectively the necessary partners. They are hoping to engage further with CEDRR and the membership more, and the committee thanked them for their partnership and information.

Old Business

None.

New Business



We were able to connect 18 Rutland County businesses to the Efficiency Vermont/RDC Enhanced Incentive Program, helping to save the businesses signicant money to make cost-saving efficiency upgrades.

Adjournment at 9:17 a.m.



Events Committee Minutes December 9, 2021 – 8am via Zoom

Attending: Jessica Anderson, Sarah Furman, Penny Inglee, Lyle Jepson, Amy Laramie, Eric Mallette, Russ Marsan, Kathleen Taft, Chrispin White

Introduction of Chrispin White – Chrispin was introduced to the group as the new Member Services & Events Manager. Chrispin is excited about being part of the team and engaging with the business community. He wants to bring value and support to the community.

Real Rutland Feud – February 26, 2022

- Teams Set match ups
 - Housing Trust of Rutland County vs NeighborWorks of Western Vermont
 - Castleton University vs Community College of Vermont
 - Rutland City Police Department vs Rutland City Fire Department (pending)
- Teams Not matched
 - Rutland County Solid Waste District
 - Intrinsic Property Management
 - The Pines
- Action Items:
 - Sarah will follow up with The Mentor Connector and Vermont Sport & Fitness
 - Chrispin will reach out to New England Federal Credit Union for Minute To Win It Sponsorship.
 - Eric will follow up on playbill printing cost.
 - Penny will reach out to photographers.
 - Penny will collect names of team members and remind them of the team meeting on January 6th.

Business Show – April 12, 2022

- Cape Air has agreed to sponsor the event.
- Rutland Recreation Center has been booked.
- Exhibitor recruitment will begin in January

- Maybe add additional food possibly from Farmer's Market and elements of Winter In August.
- Try to add new aspects like artists, music and possible speakers.

Puzzle Update

- CEDRR has pre-sold 63 puzzles.
- Puzzles are in transit from China.

Mixers

- Possible February re-start of mixers.
- The committee discussed the reasons for not holding mixers. Concerns include close contact in small spaces and shared food. Possible solutions include having the mixers at the back room of Southside Steakhouse, side room at Roots or another large space if the mixer host location is small. Also, that food be more controlled or served by servers.
- Possibility of smaller venues with RSVP only.

Parade of Heroes and Rutland Whoopie Pie Fest – June 18, 2022

- In January Penny, Lyle and Chrispin will get things going again.
- Green Street Challenge and human foosball are a possibility.

Young Professionals Weekend – August

- CEDRR has written a grant for the Regional Marketing Initiative to hold a Young
 Professionals weekend in August. The weekend would include fun things to do to show
 why this is a great place to live.
- The goal is to have around 100 young professionals visit that weekend.
- CEDRR will ask Rutland Young Professionals to work with us on this weekend when we know if the grant has been awarded to us.

Old/New Business

- Come Alive Outside: Come Alive Outside has been awarded a Bowse Trust Grant for their new passport app. Another \$40,000 needs to be raised. The group is looking for additional funding sources to be part of the "Founders Club". Please let Russ know if you have any suggestions.
- Masks: CEDRR is working with the City of Rutland to distribute masks to businesses in the region.
- Killington Stage Race: Amy asked who should be contacted regarding bringing back the Rutland Criterium of the Killington Stage Race. She will have someone be in touch with Nikki Hindman at DRP and Lyle, Chrispin & Penny at CEDRR.

Next Meeting: January 13, 2022 - 8am

Proposed agenda

- 1. Real Rutland Feud
- 2. Business Show
- 3. Mixers
- 4. Whoopie Pie Fest/Parade of Heroes
- 5. Young Professionals Weekend



Events Committee Minutes January 13, 2022 – via Zoom

Present: Bill Ackerman, Jessica Anderson, Steve Costello, Sarah Furman, Penny Inglee, Lyle Jepson, Amy Laramie, Eric Mallette, Russ Marsan, Laurie Mecier-Brochu, Traci Moore, Kim Rupe, Kathleen Taft, Arwen Turner, Chrispin White

Rutland Whoopie Pie Fest/Parade of Heroes – June 18, 2022

- The proposed schedule was reviewed.
- Rutland Whoopie Pie Fest and Parade of Heroes is back to being a one-day event.
- The sub-committee will meet the first week of February.
- A decision on if Newlywed game will be a part of the day will made in the next few weeks.

Real Rutland Feud - April 30, 2022

- The sub-committee made the decision to postpone Real Rutland Feud from February 26 to April 30th.
- Team meeting/photos will take place on March 10, 5:30pm at Southside Steakhouse.
- All teams were properly notified and understanding of the change.

Business Show – April 12, 2022

- The committee discussed timing for recruiting businesses to participate.
- Rutland Recreation Center is booked.
- Chrispin will speak with businesses about their comfort level when is out visiting with members.
- It was decided to wait until the February 10th Events Committee meeting before work begins to recruit businesses to participate.
- Chrispin will speak with businesses as he is out having conversations.
- Space is reserved, hold date.

Mixers

- There was discussion regarding ways to restart mixers including an outdoor venue with solar heaters.
- A CEDRR hosted mixer could be held Rutland Recreation Center on April 12th in place of the Business Show if the decision is made to postpone.
- People have a desire to get together in a safe way. Re-starting mixers outside or indoors in larger spaces may work.

Puzzle

- Puzzle sales have slowed.
- A few people have reached out to let CEDRR know that the puzzle is very difficult.

Weekend Getaway Campaign

- The Real Rutland Regional Marketing Initiative has been brought in-house.
- As part of the next marketing campaign the committee is planning a "Weekend Getaway" for possibly six families. There would be meet and greets and other activities specifically for these families.
- CEDRR will be looking for help with things for that weekend.

February 11, 2022 - Proposed Agenda

- 1. Business Show
- 2. Real Rutland Feud
- 3. Whoopie Pie Fest/Parade of Heroes
- 4. Mixers
- 5. Weekend Getaway Campaign

Business Development Committee Meeting Minutes Wednesday, January 12th, 2022 | Via Zoom

Present: Brennan Duffy, Mark Foley, Jr., Rick Gile, Jerry Hansen, Jenney Izzo, Russ Marsan, Greg McClallen, Liz Weinmann, Lyle Jepson, Tyler Richardson, Chrispin White

The meeting was called to order at 8:03 a.m. Lyle introduced Chrispin White and Liz Weinmann. Mark made a motion to approve the minutes from October 13th and November 10th. The motion was seconded by Jerry and passed unanimously.

HUB Update

As we continue to write grants for the development of the Hub, we will need significant grant matching. We are planning on partnering with the RRA to approach the Board of Alderman about leveraging ARPA money for grant matching – if we had cash in hand, and municipal support of this nature, we'd have competitive applications. We are working with the Vermont League of Cities and Towns for guidance on whether we can use ARPA money for federal matching requirements. Lyle showed an updated layout of the Hub, including a newly-designed outdoor deck. Over the next 30 days we will continue to refine this design as MKF Properties works with a designer, and we will provide updates to the committee. The committee discussed exciting uses of the outdoor space off of the deck.

Vermont Farmer's Food Center Update

They are in Phase II of their review of the contamination reported at the center. We have been working with businesses who use the facility to locate them elsewhere for the time being. It is our understanding that the Farmer's Market will continue to use the center. The federal congressional earmark is still in play for the center once the federal budget passes.

CSJ Campus Update

It would appear Heartland Development is backing away from the property and the campus is once again for sale and being actively marketed.

CEDRR Policy Committee Policy Statement

Lyle presented the draft of the CEDRR policy statement being reviewed by the Policy Committee on Friday. It is similar to our statement last year, with no drastic changes or pivots. Once finalized, we will present the statement to our delegation in preparation for our Legislative Breakfast on Monday, February 14th, at 8:00am.

Airport Business Park Phase II Development

The need for manufacturing and warehouse space is continuing, with the lack of available space meeting the needs and hampering business growth in our area. We've been in discussion again on expanding water infrastructure from Phase I of the Airport Business Park to Phase II – this will make this area of the industrial park more desirable for development. We have been looking into EDA technical assistance grants to pay for a study to determine the best path forward, which would then hopefully lead to EPA implementation dollars to do the work. We will work with the Airport Business Park Association to determine a best path forward for the Park.

Old Business

or the Rutianu Region

Killington has applied for a TIF that will allow major infrastructure work in the town that will spur development. They are set to go to hearing on the application on January 27th.

New Business

None.

Adjournment at 8:45 a.m.



Policy Committee Meeting Minutes | Friday, January 14th, 2022 | Via Zoom

Present: Ray Ault, Dennis Carroll, Bree Gunter, Cam Schaefer, Wayne Wilmans, Pam Zagorski, Lyle Jepson, Tyler Richardson, Chrispin White

The meeting was called to order at 12:07 p.m. The minutes were tabled due to a lack of a quorum. Lyle introduced Chrispin to the group.

Review of Policy Statement

Each year we put together a policy statement for the organization, which we then forward to the Rutland County legislative delegation in preparation for our Legislative Breakfast. The breakfast is an hour-long opportunity for the public to meet with the delegation and hear about upcoming legislative topics important to the business community and the community at-large. We will do our first breakfast on February 14th and one more towards the close of the legislative session. Lyle presented a draft policy statement, which is a marked up version of last year's statement. It's similar to last year with a few changes, additions, and subtractions made but no extreme pivots in the priorities. Our goal remains the same: population growth. The priorities have been divided into two categories: quality of life and economic development. Inclusion and DEI language has been added to the statement as suggested by the CEDRR DEI Committee. The committee discussed each item line-by-line, suggesting a few changes which Lyle will make and send to the committee as a finalized document. We will then forward the statement to the CEDRR board and the Rutland County legislative delegation.

Old Business

None.

New Business

Wayne announced his retirement at the end of January, and the committee congratulated him and thanked him for his service over the years. The Legislative Breakfast is scheduled for Monday, February 14th, at 8:00am.

Adjournment at 12:53 p.m.



Public Policy Committee Statement January 14, 2022

Our Mission

The mission of the Chamber & Economic Development of the Rutland Region is to use collaboration, creativity, and ingenuity to create a regional economic climate conducive to business growth by recruiting talent and businesses of all kinds, growing and retaining employers, while creating a bridge to community and cultural organizations which promote healthy and vibrant neighborhoods and enhance the quality of life in Rutland County.

Goal - To grow the Rutland County Population

The Public Policy Committee of the Chamber & Economic Development of the Rutland Region supports the following initiatives with the belief that our Vermont families and citizens will benefit from growth and broadening of the tax base. We believe that population growth and business growth are co-dependent. We must attract new neighbors and we must create an environment that retains those who are already our neighbors. This can occur because of specific actions that include supporting business growth and development, as well as actions that support families and the members of those families who bring with them the skill and energy powering our businesses.

We will be a community where similarities and differences are respected and celebrated with the goal of equal advancement of opportunity within the regional economy. The CEDRR Board recognizes that cultural diversity plays a key role in economic growth, as people from diverse backgrounds bring language skills, unique experiences, new ways of thinking, innovative ideas and creative solutions to difficult problems. Therefore, the CEDRR Board condemns racism and welcomes all persons, regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity or expression, age, or disability, and supports the protection of these classes. As an organization, we condemn discrimination in all its forms and commit to fair and equal treatment of everyone in the communities we serve.

Therefore, we support prioritizing quality of life incentives and actions that:

- 1. result in safe, reliable childcare, which includes livable wage childcare worker pay and benefits.
- 2. increase quality affordable housing options by incentivizing owners and developers with public/private partnerships.
- 3. result in broadband/fiber availability for all households, including support for Communication Union Districts.
- 4. encourage enrollment in Vermont's higher education system through active integration of student loan forgiveness programs by incentivizing businesses, specifically those in



high need areas such as medical/nursing, dental, behavioral health, home & community based service and opioid & substance abuse treatment.

- 5. encourage collaborative approaches to capitalize on cost effective clean energy solutions in support of businesses and families.
- 6. examine the potential value-added outcome of significantly reducing or eliminating taxation of military, emergency services, and other public safety related retirement benefits, thus encouraging those professionals to retire in Vermont. In regard to military pensions the Governor, in his address on 1-4-22 suggested, "And let's finally eliminate the tax on military pensions because if we want members of the military after a 20-year career to join our workforce, we must be able to compete with the 47 other states that have already greatly reduced or removed this burden."
- 7. examine the benefits to the state of reducing and or eliminating taxation of Social Security benefits, thus encouraging retention of our population. The Governor noted, "I will put forward a balanced and progressive tax relief package with a focus on those who need it, like retirees..."

Furthermore, we support prioritizing economic development incentives and actions that:

- 1. through the Agency of Commerce and Community Development or other appropriate agency, offer financial grants/incentives to regional entities that are prepared to focus on marketing their region and growing their population, in addition to continuing to fund the Worker Relocation Grant Program and broadening the list of eligible job categories
- 2. encourage growth in our downtowns, including Project Based Economic Development (Project Based TIFs) as well as a newly developed initiative that is under development, Grand List Enhancement through VEPC.
- 3. help businesses adapt and adjust to the realities of the new economy by authorizing the Agency of Commerce and Community Development to increase the Regional Development Corporation grants to fund workforce navigators for each region to undertake activities to reverse demographic decline. These activities include immigration and refugee resettlement, and Pipeline & Pathways training programs.
- 4. support employers with options to grow their employment base and to train employees, by increasing funding for the Vermont Training Program.
- 5. increase workforce participation from non-working populations by supporting education and training that attracts retired and/or older Vermonters who have left the workforce.



- 6. retain our youth in Vermont by creating relationships through internships and apprenticeship opportunities for graduating students.
- 7. eliminate obstacles which stand in the way of timely, efficient, and transparent permitting processes and provide solutions that encourage economic growth while preserving our natural environment both on a statewide and local level. Also, Act 250 requirements should be relaxed or waived for workforce housing planned for state designated areas through changes such as the municipal pre-approval provisions suggested in H.278 and reorganization of the Natural Resources Board into an Environmental Review Board (see H.492). In his address the Governor suggested that, "to truly make the most of this incredible moment, the time to modernize Act 250 is now."
- 8. address concerns that the total tax burden faced by Vermonters is driving workers across the demographic spectrum from Vermont along with their future earnings and philanthropy.
- 9. support funding for Career & Technical Education, and encourage alternative delivery models, which enhance student access. In the Governor's address on 1-4-22 he followed up comments regarding heath care workers with, "But if we don't have enough CDL drivers, mechanics and technicians, hospital staff won't get to work; there will be issues getting the life-saving equipment and supplies we need; and we will see fewer EMTs available to get patients to emergency rooms. If we don't have enough carpenters, plumbers and electricians, or heating, ventilation, air handling and refrigeration techs, there are fewer to construct and maintain the facilities in our healthcare system or build homes for the workers we are trying to attract..... It is time we end the stigma around CTE."
- 10. adjust and modernize alcohol regulatory and financial policies. Allowing small Vermont distillers to ship directly to consumers would bring Vermont in-line with other states that have already passed a similar measure.
- 11. reduce the tax complexity for manufacturing inputs. The RDCs support expanding the sales and use tax exemption for manufacturing machinery and equipment to exempt equipment that is part of an integrated production process, as proposed by H.437.
- 12. increase the Capital Investment Program (CIP) to \$30 million in FY22. In 2021, the General Assembly funded CIP at \$10.5 million. The first round was heavily oversubscribed.



DEI Committee Meeting Minutes Wednesday, December 15, 2021 | CEDRR Conference Room

Present: Thomas Franco, Nikki Fuller, Lyle Jepson, Shana Louiselle, Bill Moore, Kim Rupe, Courtney Widli

Recap

Shana shared a recap from the last meeting and that she met with Lyle and they took a deeper dive into the strategic plan for the committee to review in advance of today. Shana thanked everyone for their feedback which was incorporated into the draft plan. The plan for today's meeting is to go through each line item and review suggestions on actions items and prioritize. Nikki suggested items be prioritized by short-term, mid-term, and long-term. Next steps will also be to assign some responsibility and lead roles for action items to begin moving items forward.

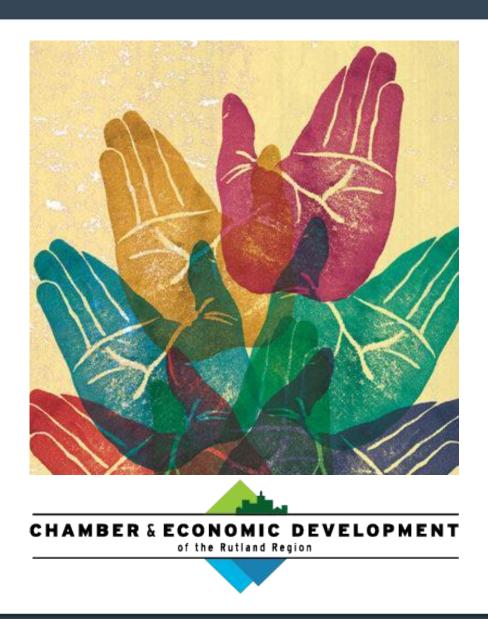
Strategic Plan

The committee began reviewing the action items one at a time and determined priority level for each. Updates were made in the document as discussions took place. Here is a link to the working document.

Follow Up Actions

- Nikki will send around an assessment tool for committee review
- Nikki will send some inclusivity survey examples for review
- Shana will send an email to the committee to determine date for next meeting after the new year

Adjournment at 3:33 p.m.



Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Strategic Plan 2022-2024

Message from the President

An ever-evolving society wisely learns from the past and creatively shapes the future, and we each have a part to play in our collective progress. Every member of society is important and should be respected for what each can contribute, and there is a responsibility on the part of each of us to foster that respect for others while earning it for ourselves. It is the responsibility, of those that are able, to work towards ensuring opportunity for all.

Like geese in flight, we support one another during the journey by sharing our strength. We step up to continue the strategic direction of the whole in a way that no single individual can do alone. CEDRR's work on diversity, equity, and inclusion is a marathon flight, a journey to where all people feel respected, welcomed, and a part of the progress. It is a long journey, and it won't always be easy, but it is a path we're dedicated to – a path to a place where we can proudly say, "We are one Rutland."

To truly have Rutland County be the best place to live, work, and play, we must ensure that all our friends, neighbors, colleagues, and residents feel welcome and respected. As CEDRR's DEI Committee, it is our responsibility to work towards our organizational goals in setting a positive example of what a welcoming, respectful, and opportunistic community should look like.

We know that these efforts take time, and our committee stands ready to lead by example in what will make Rutland County the best place to live, work, and play – for all.

Message from the DEI Committee

Vision

We will be a community where similarities and differences are respected and celebrated with the goal of equal advancement of opportunities within the local economy.

Mission

The CEDRR DEI Committee is an approved committee of the CEDRR organization and is charged with developing, overseeing, and supporting progress toward achieving the mission and objectives of the CEDRR DEI Strategic Plan.

Vision and Mission
Statement
DEI Committee

Diversity:

Diversity encompasses an array of experiences including, but not limited to, age, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, disabilities, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and national origin. An appreciative awareness of diversity provides the foundation for the understanding that individuals are shaped by this array of experiences.

Equity:

Equity seeks to ensure fair treatment, equality of opportunity, and fairness in access to information and resources for all. We believe this is only possible in an environment built on respect and dignity.

Inclusion:

Inclusion is building a culture of belonging by actively inviting the contribution and participation of all people. We believe every person's voice adds value, and we strive to create balance in the face of power differences. We believe that no one person can or should be called upon to represent an entire community.

DEI is much more than an acronym.

It is a mindset. It is the sincere belief that we all deserve to be appreciated, heard, and included.

Defining DEI

According to the 2020 McKinsey & Company report diversity wins. Diverse companies outperform non-diverse companies financially and across the board:

- Diverse teams are more creative and innovative.
- Diversity provides a business with a range and variety of skills to use in reaching its goals.
- Diverse, inclusive workplaces have greater employee engagement and retention.
- Diverse teams have Increased productivity.
- Diverse business reach a wider customer base.
- Diverse businesses are able to better serve their customers.

The Business Case

DEI FRAMEWORK

VISION

MISSION

LEADERSHIP

WORKFORCE

MARKETPLACE

INFRASTRUCTURE/FOUNDATION

DEI Strategic Plan



APPENDICES

Common DEI Language and Terms

<u>Ally</u>

Advocates for people from underrepresented or marginalized groups. An ally takes action to support people outside of their own group.

Cisgender

A term used to describe people whose gender identity matches the sex they were assigned at birth. Often abbreviated to cis.

Equality

Treating everyone the same way, often while assuming that everyone also starts out on equal footing or with the same opportunities.

Equity

Working toward fair outcomes for people or groups by treating them in ways that address their unique advantages or barriers.

<u>Intersectionality</u>

The intertwining of social identities such as gender, race, ethnicity, social class, religion, sexual orientation, and/or gender identity, which can result in unique experiences, opportunities, and barriers.

Neurodiversity

The concept that there is great diversity in how people's brains are wired and work, and that neurological differences should be valued in the same way we value any other human variation.

Non-Binary (also known as Genderqueer)

A category for a fluid constellation of gender identities beyond the woman/man gender binary.

Unconscious Bias

An implicit association, whether about people, places, or situations, which are often based on mistaken, inaccurate, or incomplete information and include the personal histories we bring to the situation.

Common DEI Language and Terms

Workplace Inclusion

An atmosphere where all employees belong, contribute, and can thrive. Requires deliberate and intentional action

<u>Social Justice</u> Active engagement toward equity and inclusion that addresses issues of institutional, structural, and environmental inequity, power, and privilege.

<u>Systemic Raciism</u> (AKA structural racism or institutional racism) Systems and structures that have procedures or processes that disadvantage African Americans, Indigenous people, Latinx people, and people of color

<u>Privilege</u>: Systemic favoring, enriching, valuing, validating and including of certain social identities over others. Individuals cannot 'opt out' of systems of privilege; rather these systems are inherent to the society in which we live.

Race: A socially or politically constructed group based on perceived differences in physical characteristics.

Racism: Belief that some races of people are better than others.

DEI: DEI is an acronym for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

BIPOC: An acronym for Black, Indigenous, and People Of Color

Valuing DEI Principles

- V Value DEI work by making sure all understand that DEI is at the center of your organization
- A Adopt DEI goals that align with organizational goals and ensure that those goals are actionable, measurable, and evidence-based.
- L Leaders and managers are held accountable for implementing the organizations DEI vision, setting goals, achieving results and being role models.
- U Understand that DEI is more than anacronym. It is a mindset a way of thinking and a way of being as an Individual and an organization.
- **E** Elevate DEI work internally and externally by ensuring visible and vocal leadership support and sufficient resources to effectively sustain the work.

Aapted from: How to Elevate Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Work in Your Organization. Knowledge@Wharton (2020, d

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee Members

2021-2022 Members List

Shana Louiselle, Co-chair Courtney Widli, Co-chair Thomas Franco Lyle Jepson Bill Moore Traci Moore Kim Rupe

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Subcommittees

- Education & Engagement
- Marketing & Promotion
- Governance
- Structural Equity/Policies
- Recruitment, Hiring and Retention

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee Charter

Mission:

The CEDRR DEI Committee is an approved committee of the CEDRR organization and is charged with developing, overseeing, and supporting progress toward achieving the mission and objectives of the CEDRR DEI Strategic Plan.

Scope of Work:

- Develop a CEDRR DEI Strategic Plan and set annual goals and objectives.
- Monitor the progress of the CEDRR DEI Strategic Plan.
- Recommend modifications to CEDRR policies and practices where they are inconsistent with DEI principles.
- Provide regular updates to the Board on the progress made towards the goals and objectives of the CEDRR DEI Strategic Plan.
- Champion DEI Strategic Plan to gain commitment across the organization and its membership.
- Identify opportunities for the CEDRR to engage with its members and the broader community to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion (i.e., community events, learning activities, DEI and social responsibility initiatives).

Membership:

- The DEI Committee will follow the procedures set up in the Bylaws for Rutland Economic Development Corporation (DBA Chamber & Economic Development of the Rutland Region – CEDRR.)
- The DEI Committee will have no fewer than six members and shall have diverse representation consistent with DEI principles. Membership will be open to individuals who are committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion and who will actively participate in the mission and objectives of the Committee.
- Members will be solicited from the CEDRR Board, CEDRR membership and the broader community.
- Members will serve a 2-year term on the Committee.
 Members who have already served a term may request to serve for up to two additional terms.

Administration:

- The Committee shall meet at least one time per month or may choose to meet more frequently as deemed necessary to accomplish its responsibilities in appropriate time frames.
- The chair or co-chairs will be selected by the committee at the first business meeting of the year.
- The chair and/or co-chairs in collaboration with the CEDRR Executive Director will be responsible for scheduling meetings, meeting facilitation, follow-up on action items, DEI communications, and liaising with the DEI consultant.
- The Committee is responsible for recommending actions and/or activities to the CEDRR Board. Committee consensus is reached when, after discussion, the majority of the members present agree that an action should or should not be recommended.
- The Committee will provide meeting minutes from all meetings to the Executive Director for dissemination to the CEDRR board.
- The Committee may form and delegate authority to one or more workgroups as it deems appropriate from time to time.
- At least annually, the Committee will review and reassess the adequacy of this Charter and make any changes to ensure efficient and effective progress towards the goals and objectives of the CEDRR DEI Strategic Plan

Committee Member Responsibilities:

- Regularly attend Committee meetings and, if appointed, work group meetings.
- Devote the time and engagement necessary to accomplish committee goals.
- Commit to on-going professional development activities to build awareness and knowledge of diversity, equity, and inclusion principles.
- Attend and participate in CEDRR DEI events, activities, and initiatives.
- Appropriately represent the CEDRR DEI Committee and the principles of DEI internally and externally.
- Use a DEI lens when making decisions related to the CFDRR DFI Committee.

Leadership

OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	PRIORITY	DUE DATE	LEAD
Develop a strong rationale for DEI vision, mission, and strategy and align it to organizational goals.	 Develop CEDRR DEI Strategic Plan. Develop business case to communicate to membership 	Primary and ongoing in CEDRR subcommitt ee	2/28/22	DEI Committee and CEDRR Board
Hold leaders accountable for implementing the DEI vision, setting goals, achieving results, and being role models.	 CEDRR will operationalize DEI throughout the organization. Including EEO statement on job description 	Primary and ongoing	6/1/22 and 12/1/22	DEI Committee CEDRR Board CEDRR Staff
Provide visible, dedicated support and structure with authority and budget to effectively implement DEI.	 Conduct first Inclusivity Survey in 2022 to staff and Board Create DEI Toolkit on website with resources (mission, vision, resources, etc) 	Short term Mid term		DEI Committee DEI Committee & CEDRR Staff DEI Committee & CEDRR Staff
	 Provide educational resources to Board and Committees Board will approve budget for DEI work 	Mid term Short term		CEDRR Board
The board and leadership are diverse.	Board Diversity AuditDevelop job description for board members.	Short term Mid term		Board Committees & DEI Committee CEDRR Staff

Workforce

OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	Priority	DUE DATE	LEAD
Recruiting processes are unbiased, fair, and equitable with a focus on DEI.	 Advertise on DEI focused websites and in a variety of other media to increase visibility. (Include in toolkit) 	Short term		CEDRR Staff
	 Recruitment and selection panels are diverse and knowledgeable about the recruiting process. (Identify skillsets) 	Short term and ongoing		CEDRR Staff
Job descriptions are evaluated for bias.	 Include DEI statement on job descriptions and in advertisements 	Short term		CEDRR Staff CEDRR Staff
	 Utilize gender decoder in job descriptions 	Short term		
DEI is integrated into professional development.	 Inclusive Recruitment and hiring training 	Long term		CEDRR Staff
DEI is a performance measure and is integrated overall into performance management, advancement, and retention.	 Adding DEI measurements to performance evaluations 	Long term		CEDRR Staff CEDRR Board
Ensure that compensation is equitable across the organization	 Develop compensation method (Classify jobs, determine compensation, and assess pay differences) HR Policy/benefit audit 	Long term		CEDRR Staff

Workplace

OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	PRIORITY	DUE DATE	LEAD
Regular DEI Communications to all employees	- Regular agenda item on staff and Board meetings	Short term		Staff & Board
	 Encourage resource sharing among CEDRR staff and Board Include CEDRR staff 	Short term		Ctoff Doord
	and Board in planning and implementation of DEI Committee goals - Invite a DEI speaker	Short term		Staff, Board, DEI Committe e
	annually to CEDRR Board meeting	Mid term		Ç
Provide necessary professional development to employees and Board to achieve the level of DEI competence and confidence needed to create a diverse, equitable, and inclusive organization.	 Join one or more organizations that focus on DEI issues (e.g. NAACP, VT Businesses for Social Responsibility, VT Professionals of Color Network) Ensure budget & staff time is available for education and training of CEDRR staff 	Mid term		
Conduct regular climate and culture surveys.	 Adopt a climate & culture survey annually 	Short term		Staff
Provide opportunities for employees and Board to share concerns.	- Create standard procedure for employees and Board to share concerns	Long term		Staff

	 Include in the development of Organization Handbook 		
Flexible work options are widely available and accessible.	 Adopt guidelines for flexible work options 	Long term	CEDRR Staf
Policies and practices are communicated and applied equitably across the organization in a culturally sensitive way.	 Ensure employees are provided Employee Handbook, and give due consideration to personal/religious/cultu ral requests 	Long term	CEDRR Staf

Membership

OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	PRIORITY	DUE DATE	LEAD
Be proactive in working with membership and community.	 Create a plan to bring awareness & education of DEI learning opportunities to membership Incorporate DEI content 	Long term		DEI Committee, Board, Staff
	in CEDRR newsletter monthly	Short term		CEDRR STaff
Embed DEI in services offered to membership	- Create DEI resource page on CEDRR website			
Integrate DEI into marketing and membership services.	 Heighten consciousness of marketing materials (language, images, etc) and include and celebrate DEI 	Short term		CEDRR Staff
Develop and nurture underrepresented members.	-Develop programs to support underrepresented groups -Recognize member businesses for success in their DEI efforts	Long term		DEI and Events Committee