



Chamber and Economic Development of the Rutland Region Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday, February 16th, 2021 | 8:00 a.m. | Via Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82083109940?pwd=WCTTmJhV2t3MG5kdFhHWfZ0NnR1Zz09>

Agenda

- Call to Order John Casella II, President
- Approval of Minutes from January 19th, 2021 John Casella II, President
(see attached minutes, [pages 2-3](#))
- Executive Director's Report Lyle Jepson
Guests: Congressman Peter Welch
- Committee Reports John Russell III, Chair
 - Business Development (see attached minutes, [pages 4-7](#)) Nicole Kesselring, Chair
 - Real Estate (see attached minutes, [page 8](#)) Steve Costello, Co-Chair
 - Marketing (see attached minutes, [pages 9-10](#)) MaryAnn Goulette, Co-Chair
 - Finance (see attached materials, [page 11](#)) Karen Garrow, Chair
 - Policy Drew Smith, Chair
 - Events (see attached minutes, [pages 12-14](#)) Eric Mallette, Chair
 - Membership (see attached minutes, [pages 15-16](#)) Laurie Mecier-Brochu, Chair
- Old Business
- New Business
- Adjournment

Upcoming Meetings:

Mayoral Forum, PEGTV Channel 1085 (sponsored by CEDRR) – Thursday, February 18th, 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Real Estate Committee – Wednesday, March 3rd, 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

Marketing Committee – Thursday, March 4th, 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

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

Business Development Committee – Wednesday, March 10th, 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

Events Committee – Thursday, March 11th, 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

Membership Committee – Friday, March 12th, 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

Policy Committee – Friday, March 12th, 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Board of Directors – Tuesday, March 16th, 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes – January 19, 2021

Members Present: John Casella II, Russ Marsan, Mark Werle, Kelley Robinson, Jessica Anderson, Amy Laramie, Brennan Duffy, Eric Mallette, Mary Ann Goulette, Jonathan Spiro, Ed Bove, Drew Smith, John Russell, Steve Costello, Mary Cohen, Nicole Kesselring, Karen Garrow, Mike Doenges, Alex Adams, Shana Louiselle

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

Others Present: Rep. Bob Helm, Rep. Larry Cupoli, Rep. Art Peterson, Rep. Linda Joy Sullivan, Rep. Mary Howard, Rep. Stephanie Jerome, Chris Bowcutt-Lift Marketing

Call to order: The meeting was called to order at 8:03am.

Approval of minutes: Russ Marsan moved to accept the minutes of the November 17, 2020 Board of Directors meeting. The motion was seconded by Mary Ann Goulette and passed unanimously.

Executive Director's Report – Lyle Jepson

Mr. Jepson introduced Jonathan Spiro, President, Castleton University

- Mr. Spiro gave an overview of the proposed plans for the Vermont College System.

Mr. Jepson introduced Chris Bowcutt from Lift Marketing

- Mr. Bowcutt gave the background of Lift Marketing's work thus far with the Regional Marketing Initiative through phases 1 & 2.
- Current work is phase 3 and is focused around re-engaging some of the 4,724 leads from phases 1 & 2. A funnel system was set up to get to the most qualified leads.
- A chat bot has been implemented on the RealRutland.com website. There are volunteers from the concierge program that have signed up to chat as well.
- Next:
 - Refine current automation process.
 - Reintroduce campaigns to drive more traffic to the website and generate new, qualified leads to the concierge program.

Committee Reports

- Please review the two months of committee reports included in the Board Packet.
- Finance Committee: Overall CEDRR's finances are strong.


Old/New Business

There was no old or new business to come before the Board of Directors.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9am.

Respectfully submitted,



Penny J. Inglee

Member Services | Events | Office Manager



Business Development Committee Meeting Minutes Wednesday, January 27, 2021 | Via Zoom

Present: John Russell III, Ed Bove, John Casella II, Mike Doenges, Mark Foley Jr., Rick Gile, Jerry Hansen, Jenney Izzo, Nicole Kesselring, Bernie Krasnoff, Russ Marsan, Greg McClallen, Mark Werle, Lyle Jepson, Tyler Richardson

The meeting was called to order at 8:03 a.m.

Mark Foley Jr. moved to accept the minutes from Wednesday, January 13th, 2021. The motion was seconded by Rick and passed unanimously.

The goal of the meeting is to discuss our potential involvement with CORI. The committee reviewed responses from Nora Foote at CORI and Bob Flint from SRDC. To eventually connect with a grant to implement an innovation center we will need to raise a significant amount of money. SRDC worked with CORI and pulled together \$500,000 in matching funds, mostly from philanthropic sources, and covered an additional match through staff time to create BRIC (Black River Innovation Center). There are only two businesses with 3-5 employees each, hoping to grow to 20 employees in two years, and Bob is hopeful more businesses will emerge. SRDC owns the building that BRIC occupies, charging BRIC rent. Were we to move forward with CORI it would involve significant up-front staff time along with a couple of dedicated committee volunteers. There would be no cost in the initial planning period, as CORI's work would be paid through a grant from VCF. CORI would help position us to write an EDA grant, helping guide us as we create a vision to use this process to leverage and build on existing assets for the purposes of this project. We only have so much capacity as a staff and as volunteers, and CORI would assist in efficiently adding capacity. This concept pairs nicely with the regional marketing initiative and the Lifestyle Locations idea. Now is a good time to pursue this as companies and employees begin to look outside of dense urban centers to locate due to the pandemic. The trends have shifted rapidly, as smaller pods of people are going to become more important than centralized urban offices and remote work becomes more commonplace. People want a rural experience with urban amenities – how can we bring that together? We need to spend time articulating our vision and not create multiple competing visions. Having this located in downtown Rutland would add to a vibrant, walkable downtown environment. There was a concern we need to be sure this has a regional impact and not just Rutland. CORI is prepared to join us at our meeting in February, and they will be looking for an answer at that time. They are looking for four additional communities in Vermont and three are already interested. We will reach out to other communities who have been through this process with CORI to get feedback, and we will want to be transparent with CORI about this as well as our concerns about being able to match the EDA grant. We want to investigate this further to make sure it works for us. If we are going to commit staff time to this we will need to get approval from the CEDRR board.

Motion: Mark Foley Jr. moved to create a subcommittee of Ed, Mike, Rick, and Bernie to assess the foundational elements as outlined in CORI's model and assess the impact of CORI's work on the other communities they've served to bring back to the committee on February 10th for a decision. The motion was seconded by Mike and passed unanimously.

Lyle gave an update on the regional marketing initiative. We are actively raising money and many businesses and municipalities have committed funding. We are using LIFT to automate many of our processes in conjunction with the



concierge network, now made up of 25 volunteers. When we are comfortable inviting folks to visit, we will begin more aggressive outbound marketing efforts. We've spent \$420,000 in the last four years, and we are entering year five of what will be a ten-year initiative.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 10th, at 8:00 a.m.

Adjournment at 8:52 a.m.

Agenda for February 10th

Continued review of CORI planning proposal

- Report out from sub-committee
- Representatives from CORI available to answer questions

MINT Update

Other



Business Development Committee Meeting Minutes Wednesday, February 10, 2021 | Via Zoom

Present: John Casella II, Mike Doenges, Brennan Duffy, Mark Foley Jr., Rick Gile, Jerry Hansen, Jenney Izzo, Nicole Kesselring, Bernie Krasnoff, Russ Marsan, Mark Werle, Lyle Jepson, Tyler Richardson, Leah Taylor

The meeting was called to order at 8:02 a.m.

Mark Foley Jr. moved to accept the minutes from Wednesday, January 27th, 2021. The motion was seconded by Rick and passed unanimously.

The goal of the meeting is to continue to discuss our potential involvement with CORI and synthesize our further assessment of the impact of CORI's work on the other communities they've served. Rick, Bernie, Lyle, and Tyler gave an overview of their discussions with representatives from the Springfield, Vermont, and Waterville, Maine communities. All agreed that these conversations helped them to understand CORI's role in this multi-year effort and how the work is operationalized. The feedback was that CORI helped frame and guide the work, connect them to necessary resources, provide know-how, and overall the CORI team is helpful and high-caliber. The committee emphasized the need to tie in established initiatives and partnerships we've already been cultivating, with the added focus on digital economy careers. We see this as an opportunity to create a multi-year "master plan" that pulls everything together and focuses the community, and we feel we have the variables within the community to make this work. The committee is excited to proceed, and Leah will need to bring this back to her team for a final determination on whether or not our community is one of the chosen communities they will be working with in Vermont. Should we be chosen, our work would begin in May in alignment with the Build to Scale grant process, but we could begin early some of the self-assessment and asset mapping activities so we can hit the ground running in May – this would also give us that much more lead time to develop avenues for grant matching. Leah requested Rick's written comments and a bulleted list of top five community assets as it relates to this project, which will help her team make a determination. Leah exited the meeting for the committee to further discuss and determine how to proceed.

Motion: Mark Foley Jr. moved to recommend to the CEDRR Executive Committee approval of the necessary staff time to begin the planning process with CORI. The motion was seconded by Russ and passed unanimously.

The committee brainstormed a list of community assets. Lyle will follow up with the CEDRR Executive Committee for a final decision from them. From there, Lyle will follow up with Leah with the decision and, assuming the Executive Committee approves, will send her the list of assets. Other communities are studying and compiling their assets and growth strategies, and the Planning Commission is currently underway with an 18-month countywide asset mapping project which could tie in to this project and potentially act as a match. Lyle will invite Amanda from the Planning Commission to the next meeting to discuss.

Tyler gave a brief update on The MINT. They continue to develop their expansion plans and consider additional space and they are planning to hire an Operations Director within the next week. The MINT board has been meeting weekly to review these developments.



Our next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 10th, at 8:00 a.m.

Adjournment at 8:59 a.m.

Agenda for March 10th

Continued review of CORI planning process

- Review response from CEDRR Executive Committee and CORI regarding approval to move forward
- Report out from Amanda O'Connor from the RRPC on their asset mapping project

MINT Update

Other

Real Estate Committee Meeting Minutes | Wednesday, February 3rd, 2021 | Via Zoom

Present: Mike Doenges, John Russell III, Lyle Jepson, Tyler Richardson

The meeting was called to order at 8:07 a.m.

Approval of the minutes was tabled due to lack of a quorum.

Building Update

The section of the roof that was leaking has been repaired, and Tyler will take another walkthrough when the temperatures warm to make sure there are no leaks. We now have an accurate sketch of the building which was included in the agenda packet. We have an agreed-upon lease with Bodycote for three years with a five-year renewal option, and a one-year notice of intention to renew or not, at \$4.32 per square foot. We are actively promoting the vacant space, and we have asked Rob Ripley to quote us out a build for a bathroom, kitchenette, and office. The committee reviewed a maintenance plan summary drafted in 2013 and asked staff to come up with a maintenance plan going forward.

MINT Update

The MINT is putting together a proposal to expand into the existing space, and the committee discussed a rate of \$4 per square foot for the new space and \$2 for their current space with a triple net on everything. They're examining their options of expanding into the vacant space, staying in their current space and not growing, or moving to a completely different location. It makes more sense for them to remain at 112 Quality Lane. We continue to market the vacant space, and if an interested tenant comes along we will want to fill the space as soon as possible so time is of the essence for The MINT. The committee briefly discussed other potential spaces for The MINT, including downtown. Mike will follow up with Karen to check on the BROCC and old Herald building.

Other Business

A cannabis producer looking for 20,000 square feet has been in contact with us, and we've connected him with various contacts around the county. A milk processor is looking for space, as well, and we've connected him to contacts and showed him locations.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 3rd, at 8:00 a.m.

Adjournment at 8:36 a.m.

Agenda for March 3rd

- Lease update
- Vacant space update
- Review of maintenance plan
- MINT update
- Other



Marketing Committee Meeting Minutes Thursday, February 4, 2021 | Via Zoom

Present: Nelson Brown, Mary Cohen, Steve Costello, Brennan Duffy, Joe Gunter, James Lambert, Amy Laramie, Kim Peters, Lyle Jepson, Bill Moore, Traci Moore, Steve Peters, Sarah Robbins, Kelley Robinson, Brooke Rubright, Kim Rupe, Jordan Spear, Michael Talbott

The meeting was called to order at 12:02 p.m.

Michael made a motion to accept the minutes from January 7, 2021. The motion was seconded by Kelley and passed unanimously.

Automation Update

Kim shared that the Chatbot automation on our website is going well and volunteers are signing up for shifts in February. There have been about 11 active chats so far which is expected right now and gives our volunteers an opportunity to get more familiarized with the platform. LIFT has emails scheduled out through February with various topics. Of the most recent emails that have been sent out to leads, the one including jobs and entrepreneurial spirit received the best open rates, so we want to continue offering similar content. Kelley and Kim will meet to discuss ways HR professionals in the region can help with this and promote their open positions. Concierge volunteers are also helping write blogs which can be used for emails in the future. Committee members have been added to the email list so everyone should start seeing these emails shortly.

Generating New Assets

At the last committee meeting, the idea of a photo contest was shared to generate new visual content for our website and social media. Thanks to Michael Talbott and CU, we now have an intern, Maxx, for the semester who is a photographer/videographer who will be helping us out. Maxx is starting this week and has been tasked to get pictures and/or videos in each town of people doing things they love. The hope is to showcase the wide variety of things to do in the region and highlighting new things such as snowmobiling, snowshoeing, farming, and more.

Stay to Stay

Lyle and Steve shared some of this history of Stay to Stay. This statewide group recently was brought back together where Kim and Lyle presented on the work happening in Rutland. Currently Bennington is the only area doing a virtual Stay to Stay and staff is looking forward to hearing feedback soon. The state has been doing some extensive email marketing (802+YOU) to recruit new residents. Kim is reaching out to any new leads coming through this channel and adding them into our current process. Since 1/25 26 people come through this effort who have indicated interest in Rutland specifically and another 77 are unsure which region, they are most interested in. Kim continues to reach out to these individuals as well.

Funding & Sponsorship Opportunities

Lyle has been working with LIFT on sponsorship opportunities and how we can highlight businesses such as on our website and email blasts. The budget is at about \$125,000 with a hope for another round of outbound marketing in summer/fall.

Other

Lyle shared with the committee CEDRR's active support for CU during the VSC's determination of next steps. CEDRR's statement is being distributed throughout the state which Lyle will share with everyone.

Adjournment at 12:38 p.m.



Tentative Agenda
Thursday, March 4, 2021 | Via Zoom

Lead Stats/Update

Automation Update

New Content Update

Phase 4 Plans

Other

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes | Tuesday, February 9th, 2021 | Via Zoom

Present: Karen Garrow, Russ Marsan, Jess Anderson, Scott Dikeman, Mark Foley, Jr., Sarah Furman, Scott Gregg, Rolf Hirschmann, Chris Keyser, Norm Ladabouche, Deb Quirk, Lyle Jepson, Tyler Richardson

The meeting was called to order at 8:16 a.m.

Motion: Chris moved to accept the minutes from January 12th, 2021. The motion was seconded by Russ and passed unanimously.

REDC Internal Financials

The committee reviewed the financial reports including the CEDRR P&L, balance sheet, and regional marketing activity. The regional marketing initiative has \$93,000 in commitments which is enough to cover our marketing activities for the coming year. There were questions regarding the difference in Bodycote rent and water/sewer payments compared to last year which staff will monitor, and staff will follow up with the city to inquire about a water credit. The committee would like to see year-to-year comparisons on the balance sheet.

Revolving Loan Fund

The committee reviewed an application for the construction of a childcare center in Castleton, which would be a lending partnership with VEDA and VCLF sharing first position. The applicant has been informed heavily by the work conducted by Castleton University's work to build a childcare center, a project now abandoned for a variety of reasons, and the applicant has relied on the market studies and initial groundwork already conducted. The applicant has a twenty-year history of operating childcare services. The committee had the following questions:

- What money outside of the initial equity do they have?
- How many full-time positions will this create, and will there be benefits?
- Do we have further projections beyond Year 1? Are there projections if they don't hit their client targets?
- Do we have numbers for 2020?
- What is the size of the building they're looking to construct?

The committee is concerned about the strength of their cash position and their collateral, and recognize the challenges they will have filling the positions they're looking to create. Should we approve the loan, the committee would require key man insurance, a position on personal assets, and payments made through ACH. The committee agreed to table the application pending further information, and Karen, Scott D., Deb, and Sarah will meet with Tyler within a week to address the questions and concerns and refine the application, with a plan on meeting as a full committee in two weeks. In addition to the answers to the questions above, the committee would like to review the VEDA write-up, and Tyler will follow up. All existing loans are current and we're receiving inquiries.

112 Quality Lane / The MINT

The vacant space is being shown to prospective tenants. Simultaneously, The MINT is putting together a plan to expand, which includes hiring staff and may include expanding into the vacant space, occupying other space, or purchasing a building. The MINT board continues to meet to discuss this on a weekly basis.

Old / New Business

None. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 9th, at 8:15am.

Adjournment at 9:00 a.m.



Events Committee Minutes February 11, 2021 via Zoom

Attending: Russ Marsan, Jessica Anderson, Sarah Furman, Eric Mallette, Bill Ackerman, Mary Ann Goulette, Karen McCalla, Lyle Jepson, Penny Inglee

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:04am.

Rally Rutland Challenge

- Start in April.
- Start with 10 people. See attached suggested list.
- Software for fundraising is RallyUp.
- Robo-Rhino students will make demonstration video of “Cookie Face” Challenge.
- Action Items:
 - Penny will get with Brooke on a “sell sheet”.
 - Recruit participants.

Trivia

- Event name/Tag Line
 - Beat the COVID Blues with the CEDRR Trivia Challenge
- Start March 24th run for 5 weeks.
- 10 teams at \$250 per team.
- Do quarterly or more often depending on the response.
- Possible championship during Winterfest 2021.
- Action items:
 - Penny will send “sell sheet” changes to Brooke
 - Lyle/Penny recruit teams.
 - Penny will reach out to restaurants.
 - Penny will create registration form for website.
 - Include information in February 16th newsletter.

Website Update

- The new website is up and running at RutlandVermont.com.
- ChamberMaster is better integrated.
- New advertising format.
 - Businesses can advertise for shorter periods of time (30/60/90).
 - Current advertisers would remain at the same rate for their annual ads, new rates for shorter term ads.
 - RutlandEconomy.com website will go away after re-directs are completed.

Community Celebration

- Lyle has interest from businesses including Rutland Regional Medical Center, Casella and Cape Air.
- Large event, could be multi-day with food and music.
- Probably be Fall 2021 before event can happen.
- Action Items:
 - Everyone start thinking about the even should be.
 - Find out what the threshold is to hold mask free the event.

Other

- Create puzzle to sell.
 - Arial shot.
 - Max (CEDRR Intern) is taking photos of each town in county.
 - Possible to have businesses sponsor from each town and receive their logo on the puzzle.
- Action Item:
 - Penny will look in to puzzle vendor/pricing.
 - Lyle will check with Makers Space to see if they could produce.

Next Meeting: March 11, 2021, 8am via Zoom

Agenda:

1. Rally Rutland Challenge update
2. CEDRR Trivia Challenge update
3. Community Challenge update



Rally Rutland Challenge Suggested Participants

Ben Clark
Brain Kaumda
Chef Robert – Gourmet Provence
Colin Fingon
Dave Ferraro
Elias Hajj
Gwen Flewelling
Jill Jesso-White
Kerri Barrett
Kim Rupe or someone from RYP
Lyle Jepson
Mary Ann Goulette
Matt Prouty
Mel Boynton
Paul Gallo
Russ Marsan
Steve Costello
Tom Huebner
Trish Huebner

Bill Ackerman
Carrie Allen
Claudio Fort
Dan Doenges
Drew Smith
Eric Mallette
Ivan Rochon
John Casella II
Kevin Markowski
Laurie Mecier-Brochu
Mark Foley Jr
Matt Levendowski
McNeil Twins
Mike Solimano
Ron Cioffi
Shana Louiselle
Tom Donahue
Traci Moore

Marcell Oil Ladies
Newlywed participants
Someone in each town in the county
Someone at Vermont Country Store
Mary Crowley/Karen Seward or someone from art community



**Membership Committee Minutes
February 12, 2021 via Zoom**

Attending: Amy Laramie, Alex Adams, Laurie Mecier-Brochu, Lyle Jepson, Penny Inglee

Membership Outreach/Contacts

- A list was provided of the members that staff was in contact with during the month of January.
- Penny has been contacting members to check on them and talk about the current round of PPP.
- Membership recruitment is difficult currently, focus is on retention.
- Focus on services that are offered to members.
- There may be a time when charging for membership may not be an option; how to do we replace that revenue stream.
- Reach out to larger companies to have additional people receive CEDRR communication.
- Suggestion: Use Thanks App to send small gift to renewal members.
- **Action Item:**
 - Penny will look into Thanks app.

CEDRR Website

- New website is live.
- New advertising platform that allows for shorter period of time to advertise.
- Advertising will be available to non-members at a higher rate.

Real Rutland Website

- Advertising will be available soon.
- **Action item:**
 - Lyle will send the committee of how advertising will work on RealRutland.com.

New Members

- Digital Surgeons has joined.
- Accord Mediation is joining, waiting on payment.

Other

- **Diversity Training/Statement**
 - CEDRR is developing a Diversity Statement.
 - Lyle is proposing a Diversity Training for the Board, that could include staff and committee members before creating/finalizing the statement.
 - Training should be focused on all diversity, equity and inclusion.
 - **Action Items:**
 - Lyle will reach out to Nikki A. Fuller, Esq. of Workplace Matters, PLLC to find out information/cost of training.
 - Laurie will send Lyle information on the Diversity Training that was done through Four Season's Sotheby's International Realty.
- **Non-Member Visits**
 - At some point down the road, visit with non-members (and members) with a one-page sheet about who we are and what we do.
- **"Lunch & Learn"**
 - Suggestion that CEDRR provide an opportunity for people to come together to talk about how they have handled operating during the pandemic.
 - Each session would be business sector specific.
 - Three to five person panel or a moderator for each one.

Next Meeting

March 12, 2021, 8am via Zoom

Tentative Agenda:

- Membership Outreach
- Upcoming Event Update
 - Rally Rutland
 - CEDRR Trivia Challenge
- Other