



Board of Directors Meeting | Tuesday, April 16th, 2024 | 8:15am-9:15am

IN PERSON: The Hub CoWorks, 67 Merchants Row, Suite 201

Remote: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/8028021111?pwd=M2tYNHNNOU3RzTUZiemkrVmk0MmFvUT09>

Meeting ID: 802 802 1111 Passcode: 559659

Agenda

- Call to Order Shana Louiselle, President
- Approval of Minutes from March 19, 2024 Shana Louiselle, President
- Executive Director's Report Cooper Babbitt / Bill Lucci
 - Matt Dunne, Founder and Executive Director at the Center on Rural Innovation
- Committee Reports
Shana Louiselle, Chair
Chrispin White
Cooper Babbitt
MaryAnn Goulette, Chair
Russ Marsan, Chair
Karen Garrow, Chair
Cooper Babbitt
 - DEI (enclosed)
 - Events (enclosed)
 - Real Estate (enclosed)
 - Marketing (no meeting)
 - Business Development (enclosed)
 - Finance (enclosed)
 - Policy (enclosed)
- New Business
- Old Business - Request to enter Executive Session for the purpose of discussing a contractual agreement where premature general public knowledge would clearly place the Board at a substantial disadvantage.
- Adjournment

Upcoming Meetings and Events:

DEI Committee – Thursday, April 25th 11:00am-12:00noon

Real Estate Committee – Wednesday, May 1st 8:15-9:15am

Marketing Committee – Thursday, May 2nd 11:30am – 12:30pm

Events Committee – Tuesday, May 7th 8:00-9:00am

Business Development Committee – Wednesday, May 8th 8:15 – 9:15 am

StartUp Rutland Board Meeting – Friday, May 10th 10:30-11:30am

Policy Committee Meeting – Friday, May 10th 12:00-1:00pm

Finance Committee – Tuesday, May 14th 8:15 – 9:15 am

Board Meeting – Tuesday, May 21st, 8:15 – 9:15 am

Regional Marketing Meet & Greet at Stonehedge Indoor Golf – Wednesday, May 22nd 5:00-7:00pm



**Board of Directors Meeting, March 19, 2024, 8:15 am
The Hub CoWorks, 67 Merchants Row, Suite 201**

Present: Shana Louiselle, Karen Garrow, Sue Bishop, Carly Belden Perry, Russ Marsan, Michael Ramsey, Raven Crispino, Daniel Mora, Kelley Robinson, Amy Laramie, Cameron Schaefer, Lyle Jepson, Cooper Babbitt, Chrispin White, Shasta Mattino, Olivia Lyons, Joel Desoto, Bill Lucci, Judi Delpha, Mose Cassaro, Karly Haven, Devon Neary and Greg Poelker-McKee

Guest: Matt Barewicz, Labor Marketing Information Director for the VT Dept. of Labor.

Meeting called to order 8:18 am by Shana Louiselle, President

Approval of the minutes: Karen Garrow made a motion to accept the meeting minutes from January 16, 2024. The motion was seconded by Amy Laramie and passed unanimously.

Executive Director Report: Lyle introduced Matt Barewicz from the Department of Labor. Matt presented labor market data and responded to questions. His presentation is attached.

Devon Neary spoke about the process for revising and updating the Regional Plan. He encouraged everyone to respond to the survey [found at this link](#).

Committee Reports

Finance - Cooper pointed out that the audit is being finalized. There do not appear to be any irregularities that will require significant procedural modifications. It will be distributed as soon as it is finalized and approved by the Finance Committee.

Due to time restrictions, Board Members were encouraged to review the written committee reports and to reach out to Lyle with questions.

New Business: Lyle requested that the Board enter Executive Session.

A motion was made by Shana Louiselle and seconded by Karen Garrow for the purpose of discussing a contractual agreement where premature general public knowledge would clearly place the Board at a substantial disadvantage. The Board entered Executive Session at 9:07am.

A motion was made by Shana Louiselle and seconded by Karen Garrow to exit Executive Session at 9:20am with no action taken.

Old Business: There was no old business.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:22am.




DEI Committee
Minutes from Tuesday, March 28th 11:00am-12:08pm

Present: Shana Louiselle-Co-Chair, Jeanette Langston- Co-Chair, Lyle Jepson, Olivia Lyons

Unable to attend: Traci Moore, Brian Kerns, Leslie Classen, Marissa Arduca, Raven Crispino, Daniel Mora, Danielle Monroe

The meeting was called to order at 11:05am.

The group reviewed the heat map, discussing the best use being a 20,000 foot view of current status. It was agreed that some categories are not relevant to CEDRR's work. But many categories are. It is a good "point in time" monitoring document and should be revisited, perhaps on a yearly basis.

Lyle completed the heat map from his perspective it is in the shared resource folder found here  [Resources](#).

There are four pillars of the Benchmarking document. They include:

- Foundational: Driving the Strategy
- Internal: Attract & Retain People
- Bridging: Align & Connect
- External: Listen to & Serve Society



The group began to fill in the template with colors denoting the status of the work.

- Green: Currently in place
- Orange: In progress
- Red: No in place
- Gray: N/A

Action items:

1. Lyle will complete heat map "2024 Baseline Spreadsheet"
2. How can we create a simpler version of evaluation/assessment of CEDRR's DEI strategic activities?
3. We need to ensure that any evaluation includes the whole internal CEDRR team (including Board and committees) as well as an external facing evaluation to members/partners/etc.

Agenda for Thursday, April 25th

1. Review outcome of heat map. (Found in the  [Resources](#) folder.)
2. Return to the DEI Strategic Workplan, adding a column for completion and comments. (Found in the  [Resources](#) folder.)
3. Community engagement discussion

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 12:01pm.

Next Meeting: Thursday, April 25th, 11:00am-12:00pm - Join Zoom Meeting
Meeting ID: 802 802 1111 Passcode: 559659



Events Committee Minutes, April 2, 2024 8:00 AM

The Hub CoWorks – Classroom 1

Attending: Chrispin, Olivia, Judi, Karen Worcester, Penny Inglee, Leona Minard, Daniel Mora and Amy Laramie

- Chrispin opened with Business Show information. The location, time, 55 vendors signed up and menu. Big savings on tables and chairs this year. Rutland Recreation has their own and gave us a great price.

The Governor has been invited; we won't know until we get closer to April 9th if he will show.

Formula Ford will have two vehicles in front of the Recreation Dept.

Volunteers:

5:30–7 pm Karen Worcester and Nancy Greenwood

2-5:30 pm Karly, Shasta, Judi

Daniel (daughter) & Leona said they could be available if needed.

- Amy asked about discounted tickets for employees. Chrispin and Olivia will try to get something out before Monday about this to all businesses.

Think about signage on Route 4 for the Business Show.

- **Shared information about Vista Senior Living events:**

April 11th – 5pm – 7:30pm - Spaghetti Dinner to benefit the Alzheimer's Association

Friday, May 3rd - Cinco De Mayo

- Touched on the Whoopie Pie Fest and activities. May have Box Car Races. Daniel mentioned wanting to have a Food Cart there.
- Mixers are full for 2025, except for January. 2026 is also filling up.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 AM



Real Estate Committee Meeting Minutes Wednesday, April 3rd, 2024

Present: Nicole Kesselring, Andy Paluch, Lyle Jepson, Cooper Babbitt
The meeting was called to order at 8:18 a.m.

112 Quality Lane Updates

With Bodycote leaving on April 30, 2025, Lyle has been working with Rutland Area Robotics on a Congressionally Directed Spending request that would subsidize 14,000 +/- sq/ft of space with fit-up included in the base rent. That grant will be submitted on Monday, April 8th. It is hoped that at some point in the summer there will be an indication of the status and appetite for the request. Prior to that time, the Real Estate Committee should prepare to market the space. CEDRR will talk with Bodycote about the process for vacating the space.

The staff has been reviewing insurance coverage. Currently, 112 Quality Lane is insured for approximately \$6,000,000 in replacement cost. The staff wants to be sure that sufficient insurance is available, if needed. Lyle will reach out to Mark Foley to inquire about best practice.

Airport Industrial Park

CEDRR has applied for two distinct Rural Industry and Development Program, each intended to be used at the Airport Industrial Park.

- The first application, in the amount of \$150,000, will seek additional funding for the current Phase II project to move water and fire suppression across Route 7B to provide access to developable plots on the west side of the road. The 80% match requirement is provided by the previously received Northern Borders Regional Commission grant.
- The second application, in the amount of \$1,000,000, will be for CEDRR to purchase a vacant, developable property in the existing business park. If awarded, CEDRR will seek additional funding sources for feasibility studies and pre-development work.

Legislative Updates

Cooper provided a comprehensive update on Act 250. It is still expected that, based on information available, Senate Natural Resources is expected to combine the land use regulatory changes proposed in H. 687 with the housing programs and incentives in S. 311. It remains to be seen how this will influence downtown development for cities such as Rutland.

Old Business: CEDRR has begun the process, with Steve Cassarino at Ryan Smith and Carbine, to create the documents necessary to take control of a local brownfields site for the purpose of accessing EPA cleanup funds. The paperwork will be reviewed by the CEDRR Board of Directors at the April meeting, with action necessary in May or June.

New Business: Cooper updated the Committee on a Canadian firm's interest in the Skyline building in Fair Haven. He has been involved in two visits to the site with the company owners.

Adjournment: 9:15 a.m.



Business Development Committee Meeting Minutes **Thursday, March 13th, 2024 | Via Zoom**

Present: Russ Marsan, Jenney Izzo, Mark Werle, Liz Weinmann, Lyle Jepson, Cooper Babbitt

The meeting was called to order at 8:18 a.m. Mark made a motion to approve the minutes from the last meeting, seconded by Liz. The motion was passed unanimously.

Department of Labor Work Based Learning and Training Grant – Lyle

Lyle informed the committee that CEDRR has received approximately \$67,000 as a grant from the Dept. of Labor for Stafford to run its Work Based Learning and Training program, which is nearly twice as much as prior awards. \$55,000 of the money will be paid directly to students at a rate of \$15/hr for their work at local businesses this summer and fall. Russ asked what students qualify for the grants. Lyle explained that it is typically second-year students studying to join the trades who have specific training goals. Russ expressed how important these programs are, and that Carpenter & Costin is in the process of developing a co-op program for Stafford forestry students.

Rutland Area Robotics Congressionally Directed Spending Request - Lyle

Rutland Area Robotics will be going to Houston for a competition next week, competing against 4,000-5,000 students from teenagers across the globe, representing more countries than are represented at the Olympics. Russ noted that he is hoping to get Electric Sheep and Nvidia to sponsor Rutland Robotics. Lyle also announced that Rutland Area Robotics had applied for \$1.5 million in Congressionally Directed Spending from Sen. Welch and Sen. Sanders, which would allow them to rent and fit up a 14,000 sq. ft. space that will be used by the iBots and other robotics teams from across the state. The committee discussed the possibility of Rutland Area Robotics taking over additional space at 112 Quality Lane, which will be vacant in May 2025 after Bodycote moves out of the facility.

The committee discussed further the prospect of how to utilize the space at 112 Quality Lane and other spaces available locally, including the Blodget Supply Building across the street, which appears to be available. Mark asked whether the committee had heard anything about Amazon's decision to put its distribution center in Granville as opposed to in Rutland County, and whether that was the result of Vermont's permitting and land use regulations. The Committee had not heard any specifics.

Russ has been working with MINT to develop a training center for his industry and determine how they could how upfit the MINT with the equipment they need to perform that work. There is an opportunity for other businesses to send employees to the program. Liz expressed that it would be great for that program to offer opportunities for non-commercial learning for gardeners and DIY landscapers who want to hone their skills.

Revolving Loan Fund – Cooper

Cooper announced to the Committee that CEDRR had submitted an application to the USDA for another round of Intermediary Relending Program funding for the CEDRR Revolving Loan Fund. Cooper is actively marketing the fund and this additional \$400,000 will allow CEDRR to continue to make loans to regional business and support economic development and jobs.

Hub CoWorks Mentor Survey – Lyle

Bill Lucci created a survey for those in the business community willing to serve as mentors for a pitch competition run by The Hub, which will be sent out in the coming weeks. These mentors will judge the competition and also provide mentorship to aspiring business owners who have gone through programming through The Hub and/or StartUp Rutland



to develop their product and business. Lyle encouraged committee members to fill out the survey and participate in the programming.

Rural Industry and Development Program - Cooper

Cooper gave an overview of CEDRR's applications to the Rural Industry and Development Program through the ACCD, which includes an application to increase funding for Phase II of the Airport Business Park expansion and also for a spec building in Phase I of the Park. CEDRR has not yet heard from ACCD on the outcome of its applications.

Center Street/Wales Street Project update - Lyle

Lyle provided an update on the project at the corner of Center Street and Wales Street, including CEDRR's application for Congressionally Directed Spending to help fund the brownfields remediation and other potential sources of funding.

Business Show Follow-up – Lyle

Lyle provided a recap from the CEDRR Business Show, which took place on Tuesday, April 9th. The show featured many regional businesses and organizations, as well as the Rutland Town School Jazz Band and demonstrations by the iBots. The committee discussed attendance and how it could be boosted in future years. Mark noted that the Rutland Regional Medical Center annual meeting took place at the same time, which may have prevented some from attending the Business Show.

New Business – Lyle

CEDRR's April Board of Directors meeting with feature Matt Dunne, the Founder and Executive Director of the Center on Rural Innovation, and invited the Committee to attend.

Liz noted that many non-profit Executive Directors have either left their roles recently or have announced that they plan to leave. The Committee discussed this issue, the opportunity it presented for individuals who are a good fit for such a role, the difficulty attracting people to the area to work non-profit jobs, and what type of programming could be developed to encourage experienced professionals to enter the field.

Adjournment at 9:00 a.m.

Next meeting – Wednesday, May 8th, 2024



Finance Committee Meeting Minutes | Tuesday, April 9th, 2024 | Via Zoom

Present: Karen Garrow, Russ Marsan, Rolf Hirschmann, Chris Keyser, Deb Quirk, Jess Anderson, Mark Foley, Lyle Jepson, Cooper Babbitt, Shasta Mattino

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

Mark moved to approve the minutes of March 12, 2024; Chris seconded. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

CEDRR Internal Financials

The committee reviewed and discussed CEDRR's monthly financial reports for March 2024. Cooper provided an executive summary of the monthly P&L and Balance Sheet. Administrative fees will be coming in soon from various grant sources. We are ahead of scheduled for the year on the revenue side because we did not budget for the administrative fees for the Small Business Technical Assistance Program or grant administration for the EDA fund. Most revenue this month was for the Business Show (April 9th), the mixer, and annual meeting sponsorships that are starting to come in for 2024.

Grant program drawdown will take place in June. This will create a bump in revenues again.

Regional Marketing is receiving funding from the GROW program, which has bolstered CEDRR's opportunity to fund outreach.

StartUp Rutland grant drawdown has seen a delay in approval for amendments to the budget. In large part the delay has resulted from an update to the administrative system at EDA. May will see a substantial reimbursement soon. The requested amendment funds generator and allocations to equipment to conference rooms.

Revolving Loan Fund

All loan clients are current on payments. Olivia's was delayed due to a change in staffing. They have now signed up for ACH Payments, which should resolve the issue. Lyle is meeting with Olivia's and the other lenders this week.

IRP 6 Application

A request for an additional IRP fund has been submitted for \$400,000. Cooper and Shasta met with USDA last week to determine what was needed. The first step was to request the allocation, which is complete. The application process will evolve over the next several weeks. Once approved, it will be drawn down over a one to three-year period, as needed. Cooper requested a motion to approve acceptance of the funds, which would be taken at 1% interest over a 30-year loan.

Mark made a motion that, if approved by the USDA, CEDRR may accept the IRP-6 loan funds for use in loans to area businesses as outlined in the USDA approved work-plan. Deb seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

Loan Application – A hotel operator has applied for a loan. Cooper met with one of the owners. They purchased a hotel in February and worked with Claremont Savings Bank and the SBA to secure loans to purchase the building and make cosmetic renovations. They have determined that more substantial renovations will be necessary, putting them \$211,000 over budget. They have personal financing available for a portion of the overage. Cooper modeled a \$100k and \$200k loan for review by the committee. They will become a member if approved.

CEDRR would have a third position on the property. Claremont Bank currently has first and second position, and Granite State Development Corporation/SBA will assume second position mortgage upon completion of renovations. Our interest rate would start at 8.5% based on the WSJ Prime rate and adjusted based on the risk of the loan as determined by the committee. Our Work Plan provides for a 1% discount for CEDRR members. The provided 2023 partial-year P&L was discussed.

Topics of discussion included:

- They will hire staff following the first year. They will run it as a hotel. One partner will be full-time. There will be at least one full-time employee hired to manage the property.
- SBA's loan amount.
- Will upcoming development on the mountain be an influence on the demand for rooms?
- Can an additional investment property be attached as collateral?
- There is an appraisal available. There is a proposed property valuation upon completion.
- The owners are not necessarily known to the community.
- Could be considered a high-risk loan.
- Occupancy projection rate 58%.
- They appear to have no working capital outlined in the proposal.

Karen and Cooper will put together criteria that will help to determine eligibility. Consideration will include but not be limited to:

- 1) What type of personal guarantee can they provide? Can they pledge their property in New York as collateral? Is other tangible collateral available to protect CEDRR?
- 2) Credit report.
- 3) Consideration of a shorter term – 5-year loan with a five-year balloon, as opposed to a 10 year loan.
- 4) Key Man Life Insurance.
- 5) Should CEDRR suggest a loan below \$75k?

Rural Industry & Development Program (RIDP) - Have not yet heard back on the two requests.

New Business

USDA Community Facilities Grant Update – CEDRR was not approved for \$50k for the downstairs conference center in the Hub CoWorks. USDA only has \$1million to distribute and they do not expect to be funding any projects in Vermont. We would be funded if there were funds available. The EDA budget amendment will help support conference room fit up. CEDRR may be asked to help support a portion of the cost.

Congressionally Directed Spending Application – CEDRR and the Rutland Regional Planning Commission are working with Belden Company on the hotel project. Brownfields clean-up funding costs have increased significantly. The appropriate cost is \$4.5-\$5 million. Working closely with the Regional Planning Commission, CEDRR has submitted a \$3.5 million Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) request to both Senator Welch and Senator Sanders. Funding would be combined with state clean-up funds to complete the project. Because a private developer cannot access CDS funds, CEDRR has initiated the legal process to create a transfer agreement so that CEDRR would take ownership of the project for the period of clean up. The property would then be transferred back to the Belden's.

Old Business

A final copy of the audit being conducted by Davis & Hodgdon CPAs has not yet been provided. Cooper will follow up.

Adjournment at 9:10 a.m.

Next meeting – Tuesday, May 14th, 2024



Policy Committee Meeting Minutes | Friday, April 12, 2024 | Via Zoom

Present: Lyle Jepson, Doug Babbitt, Michael Ramsey, Andrew Brewer

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

Andrew Brewer from Downs Rachlin Martin attended the meeting to provide an update on the status of the Legislative Session. He presented on various topics, including:

Potential Tax Increases:

Education Property Tax - Act 127 – 1/3 of school budgets went down. There is a lack of cost control discussion. Local control in education is not a reality when it comes to the current taxation process. New numbers indicate that the gap in the Education Fund will be \$197million, which represents a 10% increase. Trying to buy it down by \$100m. They are working to tax the business community.

- Cloud Tax would raise about \$20-\$21million
- Short-term rental tax. Move from 9% to 10%. Would raise \$38-47million.
- Air B&B taxes

Complete overhaul of funding for education is being discussed. Simplifying it to an amount per student has been proposed. Towns could then increase their local tax burden if they wanted to pay more. This would return to a system previously used, which was brought to the courts as inequitable. Stay tuned.

Surcharge on household income over \$500k (H129). It is now 8.75% and would increase to 11.7%. It is very controversial. Is tax flight an actual “thing”? If a high earner leaves the state, it could impact the pool.

The Property Transfer Tax is now .5% on \$100k. Above that 1.25%. Change to increase the transfer tax based upon a tiered system with above \$750K at 3.75%. The topic is currently in the Senate.

Corporate taxes: Increase top corporate taxes from 8.5% to 10%. We would be highest in the country. Additional corporate taxes would also make us the highest taxed state on Corporations.

Telecommunications fees (taxes) under discussion.

Ethics Bill – It is in House Government Operations. It is getting a thorough look and may not get out.

H.666 will allow escrowed housing down payment funds to be used for constructions costs. RE: Great Gulf. Passed 5-0 with a small amendment regarding surety bonds.

July 1 will see the payroll tax for childcare contribution begin. All payroll taxes will increase by a .44% deduction. It will raise \$97million.



Act 250 – Be Home Bill S311. It is now sitting in Senate Natural Resources with the goal of melding it with H687, which is an Act 250 expansion bill. Discussed the Tier System.

Tier 1 – Designated Downtown-like cities and towns that have staff etc.

Tier 1B –

Tier 2 – Everything else. Old road rules would be reimplemented. Any road/driveway over 800', used to trigger Act 250. Any combination over 2000' or single road over 800' would now trigger Act 250.

Tier 3 – Wetland, mountain towns – all need to be mapped.

NRB would be ERB (environmental review board). The staff would be increased to five paid professionals with the same oversight that the NRB currently has and would be of more assistance to the District Commissions. Also, the current discussion would move appeals away from the Court System and put it in front of the ERB. Governor would pick the ERB. A nominating committee would provide names. (Vote by nominating committee - 2 named from Senate, 2 named from House, 2 named by the Governor).

All bills in Senate Natural Resources. The tier structure will require a lot of mapping, years of work. Senate bill has some interim exemptions: 75 units in a 2-year period is being proposed. It may not happen.

3-Acre Rule – No discussion is taking place.

VEGI Forgivable Loan - ACCD has a forgivable loan process where a business gets the money up front. If the business hits its hiring target, it becomes a grant. If not, it is a loan.

S213 – River Corridor Safety Program – All development in river corridors would need to get an ANR permit. The issue is downtowns, many of which are in river corridors.

The meeting adjourned at 12:45pm.

Meeting Schedule

Friday, May 10th 12:00 noon – Andrew Brewer, DRM

TBD Monday, June 3rd or Monday, June 10th Legislative Breakfast