



Southern  
Worcester  
County  
Economic  
Development  
Organization

c/o Central Massachusetts  
Regional Planning Commission  
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**Southern Worcester County Economic Development Organization  
Board of Directors  
Remote Meeting via Zoom  
April 6, 2023  
Meeting Minutes**

**Present:**

**SWC EDO Board Members: (Exec Cmte)\***

Janet Pierce, CMRPC\*`  
Karen Pelletier, WRCC\*  
Jeff Turgeon, Central MA Hire\*  
David George, Rutland\*  
Brad Kadelski, Brookfield\*  
Jeremy Thompson, 495/MW Partnership\*  
Joe Laydon, Upton\*  
Peter Dunn, Worcester\*  
Jeannie Hebert, BVCC\*  
Julie Holstrom, WBDC\*

**Guests:**

David Sullivan, WRCC  
Angela Chviek, UMass Memorial Health -  
Harrington

**CMRPC Staff:**

Kerrie Salwa, CMRPC

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1. Meeting began at 3:04 p.m.: Janet Pierce began the meeting at 3:04 p.m. Janet Pierce welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending the SWC EDO Quarterly meeting. Janet announced that the opportunity to meet remotely or in hybrid fashion had been extended until March 2025. Kerrie Salwa conducted a roll call of the board members present.
  2. Minutes: Janet stated that the Executive Committee had to approve the meeting minutes from the March 2, 2023, Executive Committee meeting. Jeannie Hebert made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 2, 2023, Executive Committee meeting. Brad Kadelski seconded the motion. Janet asked if there was any discussion. A roll-call vote of the Executive Committee was conducted. Dave George abstained. The motion passed. Jeff Turgeon arrived during this agenda item.
  3. CEDS Update: Kerrie said the community engagement phase of the CEDS process is beginning to come to an end. Kerrie said that there is about a week and a half left of meetings scheduled currently. When the community engagement phase closes, CMRPC will do a complete analysis of comments, feedback, survey results, and other data with CMRPC staff

members Wenzheng Wang and Will Talbot. The data will be compiled and analyzed the week after next. CMRPC will then present in a public meeting on Thursday, April 27<sup>th</sup>, at 2:00 p.m. at the new MassDOT District 3 Headquarters building. We've reserved a room at the new Mass building. The presentation will provide an overview of what kinds of data and feedback have been collected so far.

To date, CMRPC has met with community leaders organized by Clark University, Quinsigamond Community College's Academic Affairs Leadership Group, the Higher Education Consortium of Central Massachusetts, the Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce, the Blackstone Watershed Collaborative, Discover Central Massachusetts, UMass Memorial Health, Downtown Worcester BID, the Worcester Business Resource Alliance, the Southeast Asian Coalition of Central Massachusetts, the Worcester Business Journal, and Glickman Kovago & Jacobs. CMRPC held a Town Managers and Administrators meeting to discuss the CEDS. CMRPC CEDS staff also presented about the CEDS at the CMRPC Quarterly meeting and at internal CMRPC full staff meetings. Next week, CMRPC is meeting with a group from Clark University, with Massachusetts Biomedical Initiatives, and with MassHire. CMRPC will be hosting a meeting for all Economic Development Committee members in the region on Thursday, April 13<sup>th</sup>, at 6:00 p.m., to gather insight about the CEDS. There are also two other tentative meetings. Kerrie said she hopes CMRPC can meet with a member of the region's agricultural community. CMRPC is also working on scheduling a meeting with the delegation for Central Massachusetts, but it does not look likely to happen. Janet asked if there were any comments, questions, or suggestions. Janet asked Kerrie if she presented at BVCC's Valentine's Day event. Kerrie said yes.

4. Project Review: Peter Dunn arrived to the meeting at the beginning of this agenda item. Kerrie said that there are two project updates. The RFP has been released for the Wrights Recovery Master Plan Project that received EDA funding. It will be due in two weeks so that the Master Plan process of that project can begin. Kerrie also said that she received a call yesterday from some of the project stakeholders who informed her that they sat with the Governor last week. Governor Healey was impressed by the project and her office said it will be in touch as the project continues moving forward.

Kerrie said that the second project is the Greendale Revitalization Initiative Project. Kerrie asked Julie Holstrom to confirm if the project name was correct. Julie said yes. Julie said her former colleague Lisa Drexhage came before the EDO about a year ago to present on the project. At the time, WBDC or New Garden Park was not able to provide full details on the project. In November of 2022, WBDC purchased over 50 acres of the former St. Gobain campus in north Worcester. It is now being labeled as the Greendale Revitalization Initiative. The intention is to redevelop the site and place it back into active use. The plan is to seek EDA funding to support some extensive infrastructure work to open new roadway networks, which will make that site accessible. Julie said that it is the largest project WBDC has ever taken on and that there is a lot of positive momentum with the project right now. Julie said she hopes to talk about the project more with the EDO, especially as WBDC examines its timeframes of when it would be looking for EDA funding. Janet asked Julie if the project has

received any other funding, or if any funding has been awarded to the project as of now. Julie said yes, and that WBDC has secured some earmark funding on the federal side through FY 22 and FY 23 funds. WBDC has submitted requests to the federal delegation for FY 24 funds and is hopeful that the request will come back favorable. The City of Worcester has also received \$1.5 million of MassWorks funding for some infrastructure work in that area. WBDC has received some site readiness funds. WBDC and the City also received direct earmarks in the State's Economic Development Bill that went through last year. In addition to the federal earmarks, there are still a few other outstanding funding opportunities. WBDC applied for a \$2 million EPA Brownfields clean up grant and is hoping to get a notification in May. WBDC has also been working with the City's Brownfields redevelopment clean up funds and has received notification of a grant and a loan for some of those funds.

Jeff Turgeon said that MassHire has an EPA Brownfields Workforce Training Grant. MassHire currently has trainees that are just starting the three-week program now, and there will be three cycles of the program this spring. Jeff said MassHire would like to connect with any of WBDC's providers or contractors that may be looking to hire staff. Jeff said MassHire has been in talks with its City partners, but that he would like to speak with WBDC about syncing up efforts, too. Julie said that she would reach out to Jeff offline to connect. Janet said it is great to hear about the opportunity and the work that has already been done. Kerrie asked Julie if there was a timeline of when WBDC would seek EDA funding. Julie said that the timeline changes day-to-day, and there is still remediation and demolition work that needs to be done. Julie said she anticipates WBDC putting together an EDA application in spring of next year. Julie said that that timeline could change. Janet asked if there were any other project updates. There were none.

5. Discussion of SWC EDO Board of Directors Membership: Janet said that the last Quarterly Meeting of the Board of Directors was held last month at the Worcester Memorial Auditorium. Janet thanked Tim Loew for setting it up and thanked Jake Saunders for giving the tour. A handful of board members were present in-person. A quorum was never reached, so rather than carry laptops around during the tour, the remote meeting was closed down. Janet said that the group may recall in FY 22 that the Board struggled to achieve a quorum for the entire year for Quarterly meetings. Janet asked if Ryan had sent the attendance list to everyone. She asked if everyone has seen the list of board members since its inception, or from at least the last few years. Janet said she was not sure if Ryan sent the attendance list only to her, but she did forward it to Karen. Karen said she only got it from Janet. Janet said she wants to look at the composition of the board. In order to conduct business as a full board, a quorum is required. The last time the full board achieved a quorum was the December Quarterly meeting at Polar Park. Prior to that, it was a full year without reaching a quorum. Janet said there are 27 board members now, so 14 members are needed for quorum. She said that there was always a concern about having too many members. Janet said she would forward the list to everyone. She asked if the group was okay to discuss the board make-up at the next meeting. Janet asked if there were any comments or suggestions. There were none.

## 6. Partner Updates:

- Jeannie Hebert: BVCC is having a business after-hours tonight at Purgatory Beer Co. Jeannie said it is a fun event hosted by BVCC's Food, Beverage, and Hospitality network. Anyone is welcome. BVCC is again a collaborator and sponsor of the new Mass Growth Capital grants for Covid recovery and movie theatres. Jeannie said if anyone knows of clients or businesses that could use \$75,000 that they can refer them to Jeannie for her to help with the applications. Applications need to be filed by April 26<sup>th</sup> she believes. The opportunity was just announced last Friday. BVCC's golf tournament is on May 8<sup>th</sup> at the Pleasant Valley Country Club. The event is to benefit the students of the valley, to fund grants to teachers for the education foundation, and to help pay tuition for students at the EdHub. On April 26<sup>th</sup>, BVCC is having a psychic come to Apple Tree Arts. It is Lisa Prower from Worcester.
- Angela Chviek: The hospital will be kicking off a huge campaign to renovate its ICU, which was way over-taxed with Covid. The hospital's emergency department was overwhelmed with flu and Covid, so an urgent care express was just opened in Southbridge right on the outskirts of the Harrington Hospital campus. The facility is open 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. as a walk-in facility. It has been very busy, which is a good thing. The hospital has lost of WooSox events coming up at Polar Park, so she encouraged the group to be on the look-out for UMass Memorial events.
- Karen Pelletier: Karen said she put the details for three relevant events in the chat, but there are many things going on with WRCC now. There is a ribbon cutting tonight for Unique Café, which is a WRCC member and a member of many other organizations. It is a new location for that business. The business used to be located on Millbury Street and was closed for over a year. The grand opening is today at 3:30. The other event is the Worcesterpreneurs Forum. This is a great event for any small businesses and entrepreneurs. Business service organizations like WRCC and LABO will be there tabling, along with lenders that table. There will also be panels and a keynote speaker on different information. It is a free half-day event at Holy Cross. The Worcester Women's Leadership Conference is on May 4<sup>th</sup> at the DCU Center. There are still 100 tickets available, and the event usually sells out. Typically, over 700 women attend with great keynote speakers and exhibitors. On April 12<sup>th</sup>, WRCC is partnering with LABO, the City, and other groups on a seminar series for businesses that are considering either the minority- or women-owned business certification or other State certifications. The Operational Services Division (OSD) will provide an overview of the process, what businesses should consider before going through it, why a business would want to do it, etc. WRCC has done this event several times before, and it has always been helpful to businesses.
- David Sullivan: The Startup Worcester Open House is on May 17<sup>th</sup>. City Manager Batista will be there, along with one of the alumni from the program who runs a very successful card game studio out of New York City. The alumnus will be the keynote speaker. WRCC has two roundtables coming up in May. The Construction and Real Estate roundtable is Lynn Tokarczyk from Business Development Solutions. That event will be useful for municipal leaders looking for advice on how business tax credits can be leveraged, or how to bring businesses to a town. Lynn has worked with all of the

largest employers in Massachusetts. On May 16<sup>th</sup>, WRCC will hold the Manufacturing roundtable at QCC in their new advanced manufacturing and robotics center. David said if a non-WRCC member wants an invite to either of those roundtables, let him know, and he will add those interested on the list.

- Elizabeth Cruz: On April 29<sup>th</sup>, LABO is hosting the Latin American Business Expo at the DCU Center. The event will be slightly different this year, as exhibitors will be given an opportunity to do a two-minute venture pitch to potentially win \$1,000. Elizabeth asked the group to refer any interested small businesses to her. Discounts for the event are also being given, as the purpose of the event is to promote small businesses. The more businesses that attend, the more affordable the event will be. Event details are on LABO's website. If interested businesses need help getting a table due to a financial situation, LABO can provide some help. Interested businesses that are in that situation can call Elizabeth.
  - Dave George: Dave said that the Town finally closed on the Heights Property, which is the site of a former State hospital. The groundbreaking was held last Tuesday. Phase One of the project has begun, which is about 44 units of the 142 units. The project can provide recurring tax revenue and potentially spur more activity in the downtown area. Janet asked when Phase One is expected to be completed. Dave said he believes that Phase One is a two to three-year timeline. Dave said he expects, based on current information, that the pre-seals are robust at this time. He thinks it will be dependent on resale to help finance it, which will set the table for the rest of the project. He believes the entity involved is sophisticated enough to know how to do outreach beyond the local area to attract people from other parts of the Commonwealth and beyond to come to Rutland.
  - Jeremy Thompson: 495/MW has its annual State House Day on Wednesday, April 12<sup>th</sup>. It is the first in-person State House Day being held since 2019. The event will have good speakers, such as Undersecretary Stolba of the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development., Senate President Karen Spilka, and Speaker Pro Tempore Kate Hogan. The event runs from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Jeremy said he will put the registration link in the chat. Janet asked if the event is next Tuesday. Jeremy said the event is Wednesday, April 12<sup>th</sup>. Janet asked if there were any other updates. There were none. Janet thanked everyone for sharing and said CMRPC will try to promote all of the events through its social media streams, to its different partner organizations, and to its different committees.
7. Review Meeting Dates/Locations and Other Important Dates: The next Executive Committee meeting is on Thursday, May 4<sup>th</sup>. The June Executive Committee meeting will be on Thursday, June 1<sup>st</sup>. The next Quarterly meeting will be on Thursday, June 15<sup>th</sup>, at 3:00 p.m. Janet asked Kerrie if an agenda is set up for the next Quarterly meeting yet. Kerrie said no, but that she does have someone set up to join the meeting to speak. Kerrie said she is forgetting who will be joining the meeting, but she will communicate that when she remembers.
  8. Other Announcements: Janet asked if there were any other announcements. Janet said that CMRPC will be having its Annual Meeting on June 8<sup>th</sup>. Anyone is invited to attend. The meeting

will be held at Galliford's Restaurant & Tavern, which is part of Southwick's Zoo. For the prior five to seven years, CMRPC had held golf outings prior to its Annual Meeting. Prior to this year's meeting, there will be zoo networking. CMRPC received discounted tickets to the Southwick's Zoo for \$15. The zoo also gave the opportunity to purchase discounted tickets for \$20 a piece that can be used at any time within the calendar year. The tickets are normally \$45 each for adults. Janet said she hopes to see some of the EDO board members there. The event will be held rain or shine.

9. Adjourn: Jeremy Thompson made a motion to adjourn, and Brad Kadelski seconded the motion. A roll call of the Executive Committee was conducted. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting concluded at 3:35 p.m.