



## **CEDS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

*Virtual Meeting via Zoom*

February 15, 2023

### Committee Members Present

George Ambriz, Berkshire Community College  
Roger Bolton, Williams College (Retired)  
Heather Boulger, MassHire - *alternate*  
A.J. Enchill, Berkshire Black Economic Council  
Keith Girouard, Massachusetts Small Business Development Center Network  
Kyle Hanlon, BRPC, CEDS Chair  
Lesley Herzberg, Berkshire County Historical Society at Arrowhead  
Laurie Mick, PERC  
Mike Nuvalle, City of North Adams  
Ian Rasch, Alander Construction  
Chris Rembold, Town of Great Barrington  
Shannon Smith, Berkshire Agricultural Ventures

### Not Present

Mike Coakley, City of Pittsfield  
John Duval, Town of Adams/BRPC Commission Chair  
Ben Lamb, iBerkshire  
Jim Lovejoy, Town of Mt. Washington  
Debra Sarlin, Berkshire Community College  
Ben Sosne, Berkshire Innovation Center

### BRPC Staff Present

Laura Brennan, Economic Development Program Manager  
Wylie Goodman, Senior Economic Development Planner

### Guests Present

Sabrina Damms, iBerkshires.com  
Kamaar Taliaferro, resident

## **I. Call to Order**

Kyle H. called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m. after which he conducted a roll call of CEDS Committee members in attendance. Guests were announced.

## **II. Approval of Minutes from December 14th, 2022**

Chris R. moved to approve the December 14, 2022, minutes. George A. seconded. The minutes were approved via roll call vote. Mike N. abstained.

### III. 2023-2027 Berkshire County CEDS

- a. EDA Acceptance Letter – February 2nd, 2023 - Laura B. confirmed that Debra Beavins from EDA had provided an acceptance letter for our CEDS. Kyle Hanlon noted complimentary statements made by EDA about the final report, including the expanded Resiliency Planning chapter.
- b. Public Roll-Out – Laura B. shared details about the CEDS public rollout and updates to the agenda links. The campaign will include a press release and other public-facing activities such as an article in *Berkshire Magazine* and announcements via BRPC’s website, e-newsletter, social media, and more. Laura B. shared a two-page summary of the CEDS with its consolidated focus on the CEDS vision, goals, priority projects, and resiliency. The summary also notes the importance of regional coordination to seek funding. Laura B. will also be meeting with members of the Berkshire delegation to share the document. Wylie G. shared the short video and StoryMap created to help engage the public about the CEDS. Chris R. and others suggested a more accessible term than “ArcGIS StoryMap” be used on the BRPC website. Roger B. noted that some of the video moved quickly and might be improved by slowing down the SWOT analysis section. Wylie G. will be outreaching to town leaders, such as Select Boards, to circle back on earlier engagement at the outset of the CEDS process, with a focus on resiliency. We will also reconnect with people who participated in the business survey to let them know the report is released and to thank them for their input. Prior to the public launch, a guest columnist wrote a “review” of the CEDS that appeared in the *Berkshire Business Journal* and was favorable. Wylie G. suggested that the CEDS be shared with the Williams College economics department to encourage students to do follow-up research. Roger B. suggested it also be shared with students at MCLA and BCC who are more likely to reside in the region. A.J. E. suggested sharing the report with Associated Industries of MA. Laura B. asked attendees to spread the word on their social media pages.
- c. Annual Progress Report - Laura B. reminded the group of past annual report formats, which were akin to mini-CEDS. Going forward EDA’s expectation is for annual reports to be much shorter (10-15 pages), so this should make future updates a more manageable undertaking. BRPC, however, still wants to track Priority Projects each year but will be working to make the process as efficient as possible. If people are aware of activities representative of CEDS goals, they should feel free to share those with BRPC. The first annual CEDS update will be due in early 2024.

**IV. Adjournment** – George A. made a motion to adjourn. Ian R. seconded the motion. Kyle H. took a roll call vote to confirm agreement on adjourning. The meeting adjourned at 1:38 pm.

**Next Meeting – Wednesday, May 17, 2023, @ 1 pm.**