



BRPC

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

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CEDS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

May 17, 2023

Committee Members Present

George Ambriz, Berkshire Community College
Roger Bolton, Williams College (Retired)
Heather Boulger, MassHire - *alternate*
Kyle Hanlon, BRPC, CEDS Chair
Laurie Mick, PERC
Mike Nuvalle, City of North Adams
Chris Rembold, Town of Great Barrington
Shannon Smith, Berkshire Agricultural Ventures
Ben Sosne, Berkshire Innovation Center

Committee Alternates Present

Jayne Bellora, MSBDC, Berkshire Regional Office
Kevin Pink, 1Berkshire

Not Present

A.J. Enchill, Berkshire Black Economic Council
Keith Girouard, Massachusetts Small Business Development Center Network
Mike Coakley, City of Pittsfield
John Duval, Town of Adams/BRPC Commission Chair
Lesley Herzberg, Berkshire County Historical Society at Arrowhead
Ben Lamb, 1Berkshire
Jim Lovejoy, Town of Mt. Washington
Ian Rasch, Alander Construction

Guests Present

Bryana Malloy, Manager of Industry Relations MassHire **Bryana will be the new MassHire CEDS Committee representative in FY24; Heather Boulger will return to being an alternate.*

BRPC Staff Present

Tom Matuszko, Executive Director
Laura Brennan, Economic Development Program Manager
Wylie Goodman, Senior Economic Development Planner

I. Call to Order

Kyle H. called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. after which Laura B. conducted a roll call of CEDS Committee members in attendance due to technical issues with Kyle H.'s internet.

II. Approval of Minutes from February 15th, 2023

Chris R. moved to approve February 15, 2023 minutes. Heather B. seconded. The minutes were approved via roll call vote. All were in favor.

III. State Economic Development Plan Rollout

Tom M. shared a new agenda item regarding Governor Healy's Economic Development Plan. The process has begun and will be taking place via in-person hearings on May 19th at Springfield College and June 8th at the Berkshire Innovation Center, as well as other locations throughout the state in May and June. Tom M. urged people to attend and contribute input at a session of their convenience. Laura B. will share the list of sessions taking place across the state and the plan from the previous administration for reference.

III. CARES Act Grant Extension

Laura B. shared that the CARES Act Grant performance period has been extended until August 2023, giving BRPC an additional six months to provide technical assistance to nonprofits and small businesses and support Berkshire Funding Focus, among other tasks. There is approximately \$100K remaining.

IV. Berkshire Funding Focus – Update On The Initiative

Laura B. shared updates about Berkshire Funding Focus, which launched in late 2022 and is available to a wide range of audiences, providing information about government grant opportunities on an easy-to-access website. BFF staff helps applicants determine if a grant is right for them and supports grant seekers in forming collaborations to strengthen applications. On rare occasions, Karen Pelto will help people develop applications. She also helps people better understand reporting obligations. BRPC encourages more people to use the site and encourages others to share it widely. Shannon S. asked whether a database had been created to make submitting information easier. Laura B. encouraged people to share information about training and resources directly with Karen Pelto. Valuable collaborations have already begun to develop because Karen P. has served as a connector. The site has garnered attention from outside the region.

V. 2023-2027 Berkshire County CEDS

a. Public Roll-Out Update

Laura shared the CEDS landing page where the report and accompanying videos, ArcGIS StoryMap, and Executive Summary, live. In many cases, these materials have been translated into Spanish. Wylie G. shared more about a social media/video campaign created with a local high school intern. Laura B. also shared additional articles that have run about the CEDS in *Berkshire Magazine* (Spring issue) and *The Berkshire Business Journal*. Wylie G. will be making follow-up presentations to Select Boards in several communities with a focus on resiliency. A case study and best practice recognition of BRPC's CEDS will be featured on the National Association of Development Organization's (NADO) CEDS Central website. *The Berkshire Edge* will also be offering a webinar about the hospitality industry and Laura will be included as a panelist to speak on the topic from the CEDS' perspective.

b. Annual Progress Report - #1 due early 2024

In January 2024, BRPC will provide EDA with a condensed Performance Progress report summarizing any shifts in demographic or economic data and representative examples of movement on stated objectives as exemplified in projects or programs as well as Priority Projects. Changes or shifts in project foci can also be included. The next CEDS Committee convening will be in the fall when we will begin to vet and vote on Priority Project edits or new Priority Projects people would like to suggest before the next five-year CEDS.

VI. Adjournment

Heather B. made a motion to adjourn. Roger B. seconded the motion. Laura B. took a roll call vote to confirm agreement on adjourning due to technical issues with Kyle H's internet connection. The meeting adjourned at 1:39 pm. Laura B. will follow up with a few associated items for consideration and to confirm details about the next meeting date.

Next Meeting – Wednesday, September 13 or 20, 2023 @ 1 pm.