

## Committee talks updates to CEDC bylaws

By Katie Kocijanski Columbia-Greene Media | Posted: Friday, August 14, 2015 12:00 am

GREENPORT— The Columbia Economic Development Corporation took its first steps on Wednesday toward updating its organizational structure. Interim Executive Director F. Michael Tucker met with the four members of the corporation's newly organized Governance Committee. Members include Tony Jones, David Fingar, Hudson Supervisor Sarah Sterling, D-1st Ward, and Scott Wood. Corporation attorney Andy Howard was also present. The committee discussed updates and revisions to the current corporation bylaws. Tucker's goal has been to update the bylaws according to the Authorities Budget Office's standards, with input from the full corporation board. "I want to establish a point of contact with the ABO's office, they requested to meet with myself and the county at one meeting," Tucker said. "This is an important first step in the overall process in addressing issues raised by the public and county." Tucker said he and the corporation's Marketing Director Carol Wilber have been reviewing the bylaws of other development corporations in the state, including in Erie, Tompkins and Warren counties. One of the main issues raised at the meeting was whether or not the board would continue to have up to 24 members on it. Neighboring corporations have up to 11 members and Jones asked how a board as small as that could handle all of the committee responsibilities expected of members. Tucker said the board can chose to have up to 24 members and the smaller board was a suggestion. The corporation's board has 15 active members. "We should review each policy and see what the best practices are with other LDC's," Tucker said. "I recommend reviewing your mission statement annually." Questions were raised by the public and various supervisors over the corporation's loan portfolio. Tucker said the portfolio amounts to \$1.1 million with a little over 20 loans and its loans through the Small Business Administration total \$350,000. Wood said there needs to be loan safeguards for personal information and Tucker assured him there are state and federal laws protecting a privacy. The director suggested when the Loan Committee meets that Martha Lane, a business development specialist, should prepare a summary of what loans are being considered. The summary would not disclose any personal information to the public. "If there is a need for an executive session regarding a loan, a person needs to say there is a need for one," Howard said. "There is a list of six or eight reasons why you can go into an executive session, you just need to state which one it is and it needs to be noted in the minutes." Members of the public will have access to all documents given to board members at each corporation meeting. Documents will be posted electronically on the corporation's website at [www.columbiaedc.com](http://www.columbiaedc.com). The Governance Committee is scheduled to meet at 8:30 a.m. Aug. 19 at the corporation's 4303 Route 9 location. To reach reporter Katie Kocijanski, call the Register Star at 518-828-1616 ext. 2495, or email [kkocijanski@registerstar.com](mailto:kkocijanski@registerstar.com).