



# Choose Columbia

Columbia Economic Development Corporation

**MINUTES**  
**COLUMBIA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**  
**Tuesday, December 15, 2015**  
**4303 Route 9**  
**Hudson, NY 12534**

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Columbia Economic Development Corporation (CEDC) Board of Trustees was held at their offices located at 4303 Route 9, Hudson, NY 12534 on December 15, 2015. The meeting was called to order at 8:35a.m. by Tony Jones, Chair.

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Rick Bianchi	Board Member	Present	
Jim Champion	Board Member	Present	
David Fingar	Vice Chairman	Present	
Greg Fingar	Board Member	Present	
Tony Jones	Chairman	Present	
Kim Keil	Board Member	Present	
Jim Mackerer	Board Member	Excused	
John Porreca	Board Member	Excused	
Robert Sherwood	Treasurer	Present	
Colin Stair	Board Member	Present	
Sarah Sterling	Secretary	Present	
Scott Wood	Board Member	Present	
Andy Howard	CEDC Attorney	Present	
F. Michael Tucker	Interim President /CEO	Present	
Lisa Drahushuk	Administrative Supervisor	Present	
Martha Lane	Business Development Specialist	Present	
Erin McNary	Bookkeeper	Present	
Edward Stiffler	Economic Developer	Excused	
Carol Wilber	Marketing Director	Excused	
Katie Kocijanski	Reporter, Register Star	Present	

**Minutes:**

*Mr. Wood made a motion seconded by Mr. G. Fingar to approve the minutes from November 24, 2015. Carried.*

**Chairman's Report:**

Mr. Jones thanked those who attended, noting every Board member was needed to obtain a quorum. He noted Mr. Tucker would update the Board on the Consolidated Funding Applications and the

Upstate Revitalization Initiative. He noted the contract between CEDC and Columbia County had been executed by CEDC and was at the County. He noted the \$114,000 check to the County had been prepared and we were awaiting receipt of the county's funding check.

**Treasurer's Report:**

Mr. Tucker handed out a balance sheet, and an income and expenses sheet which showed the consolidated numbers for all the bank accounts, with a primary focus on the operating account. He reviewed the figures for the Board. He noted the corporation remained on budget with the exception of consultants which was higher than budgeted due to his hiring. He also noted the \$25,000 contribution to the URI was an unbudgeted expense.

*Mr. G. Fingar made a motion, seconded by Ms. Keil to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. Carried.*

**Interim President/CEO Report:**

Mr. Tucker noted he had been joined by Mr. Jones and Ms. Sterling for the Governor's CFA and URI announcements in Albany. He handed out a sheet showing the awards in the county and the awards in the region. He informed the Board that Columbia County had been awarded \$75,000 for a research center study and the Opera House had received \$1.3 million. He informed the board that the Lieutenant Governor would be visiting the Opera House later in the day and that he and Mr. Jones would attend. Hudson Valley Creamery also received \$500,000 funding. Mr. Tucker noted Redburn Development Companies also received \$1.5 million for hotel development at 41 Cross Street. He stated the hotel is a possible IDA project.

Mr. Tucker stated it was disappointing that the Region didn't win the URI funding, but the Governor announced that he will request the Legislature provide \$50 million to the regions who didn't win the top awards in order to advance the high end priorities within each region. He stated the Capital Region Economic Development Council want to fund projects that support its plan. He stated CEDC should align their strategic planning with the regional plan.

Mr. Tucker stated Mr. Jones and the staff would be focusing on the strategic plan and he, along with Ms. Wilber, Mr. Jones would begin making sales calls in January to solicit membership.

**Membership Report:**

Mr. Jones stated \$12,500 has been raised to date. He reminded the Board members that they were required to pay memberships in order to remain on the board. He asked the Board to help advocate for memberships.

**Committee Reports:**

**Audit and Finance Committee:**

Mr. Jones stated the Committee would be scheduling a meeting in January.

**Executive Committee:**

No report.

**Loan Committee Report:**

Mr. Bianchi stated the Committee would be discussing CEDC loan policies and procedures at the next meeting. He stated the SBA had increased their target goal to closing 10 loans per fiscal year. He noted CEDC has closed 3 to date and asked the Board to use every opportunity to promote the loan program.



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Mr. Bianchi stated a resolution was required to write off 2 loans/grants, one to Local Ocean and the other to Greenport Crossings. Mr. Tucker stated this action was recommended by CEDC's Independent Auditor's and he had discussed the issue with Mr. Howard and Mr. Levine of Lemery Greissler, who assured him the write off wouldn't affect the right to collect. *Mr. G. Fingar made a motion, seconded by Mr. Bianchi to write off the Local Ocean loan/grant. Carried.* The Greenport Crossings loan write off was tabled until the next meeting.

## **Governance and Nominating Committee:**

Mr. Jones stated the Committee had met yesterday. He noted it was difficult to take any actions due to the bare minimum of Board members. He reminded the Board at the end of the year, Ms. Sterling and Mr. Porreca would end their terms. He stated the Committee had recommended a slate of candidates for the Board to consider. The slate consisted of Russell Bartolotta, Michael Polemis and Sarah Sterling.

Mr. Campion stated Mr. Bartolotta and his family had been in agriculture for generations. He stated agribusiness was one of the targeted sectors identified for new board members. He stated Mr. Bartolotta was interested and had been vetted and recommended for consideration by the board.

Mr. Wood stated Mr. Polemis had been in the County since the 70's and had been the driving force behind the Columbia Land Conservancy, noting he made the organization a dynamic organization. He stated his background was international maritime shipping and was on the board of the Shelbourne Museum.

Mr. Jones stated Ms. Sterling has served diligently as both a board member and its Secretary. He reminded the Board that she had been an alderman prior to her election to the 1<sup>st</sup> Ward Supervisor in the City of Hudson. He stated she was an Associate Broker with Halstead Property and a fine arts photographer. *Mr. Fingar made a motion, seconded by Ms. Keil to approve the slate as presented. Carried.*

Mr. Jones stated the election of the new members had not significantly improved the quorum situation. He stated the Governance Committee would be meeting again in January to discuss and recommend another slate of prospective board members. He said he had the names of between 8 and 12 persons interested in serving.

Mr. Jones stated the Committee had received and reviewed the 2014 Confidential Board Evaluation Summary. He handed out copies to the Board for their review. He noted the most negative answers were in the category: "The Board sets clear and measureable performance goals for the Authority that contribute to accomplishing its mission." He noted that would be mitigated as part of the Strategic

Plan. *Ms. Keil made a motion, seconded by Mr. Sherwood to approve the 2014 Confidential Board Evaluation Summary and submit it to the ABO. Carried.*

Mr. G. Fingar and Mr. Stair stated they would be out of town for the January 26<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**CEDC/ IDA Contract:**

Mr. Tucker handed out the IDA approved contract with CEDC to the Board. He noted the payment amount had been adjusted to a base amount with a sliding scale. He stated the IDA would pay CEDC \$25,000 and 20% of the project fees between \$100,000 and \$150,000, up to a total fee cap of \$36,000. He recommended the contract be approved by CEDC, noting it had been approved by IDA. *Mr. Wood made a motion, seconded by Ms. Sterling, to approve the contract as presented. Carried.*

**County Broadband Study:**

Mr. Jones stated a presentation of the County study had been done in early December. He referred the Board to the article included in their meeting packet. He stated the study concluded more public fiber was required if there would be any competition for service. They suggested linking emergency service towers at a cost of \$4 million. In order to open more opportunities, they suggested linking schools, libraries and municipal buildings. The consultant felt the county needed to be the lead, but in order to move the project forward they felt a "champion" should be appointed along with a committee of 4 – 5 people. Mr. Jones asked the Board's feeling about a role for CEDC and if they should advocate.

Mr. D. Fingar noted the map that NYS uses shows no broadband in Columbia County, which is wrong. He cautioned about government competing against private sector and using public funds. He noted Mid-Hudson had received a grant for this purpose in the past and had found the process to not be feasible. Mr. Tucker noted there could be a role in the project for CEDC.

Mr. Jones noted that the 2014 financial disclosure forms had been mailed. He asked Mr. Howard to explain the instructions for the Board. Mr. Howard explained the forms and asked the members to call him if they had any questions. Mr. Jones asked the Board to return the completed forms to Mrs. Draushuk.

He reminded the Board the January meeting dates would be changed. He thanked the Board, staff and Mr. Tucker for their assistance.

*Having no other business to discuss, a motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Keil, seconded by Mr. Bianchi. Carried. The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 a.m.*

*Respectfully submitted by Lisa Draushuk*