

# Choose Columbia

Columbia Economic Development Corporation

## **COLUMBIA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION NOTICE OF MEETING**

Please take notice that there will be a meeting of the Columbia Economic Development Corporation Workforce and Education Committee held on September 7, 2017 at 8:30am, at 4303 Route 9, Hudson, NY 12534 for the purpose of discussing any matters that may be presented to the Committee for consideration.

Dated: August 31, 2017

Sarah Sterling

Secretary

Columbia Economic Development Corporation

### **CEDC Workforce and Education Committee Agenda**

#### **Chairperson:**

Triona Fritsch

#### **Members:**

Jim Calvin

Tish Finnegan

Tony Jones

James Lapenn

John Lee

Michael Polemis

Maria Suttmeier

1. Minutes, February 14, 2017\*
2. Current Youth Education Programs
3. CEDC/Chamber of Commerce High School Leadership Program
4. Discussion of Initial CEDC Programs & Initiatives
  - a. List of Suggested Partners with Mentoring
5. Public Comment

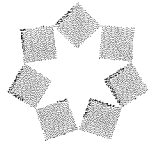
#### **Attachments:**

Draft February 14, 2017 minutes

Draft April 10, 2017 meeting notes

Columbia Paper article "2016 High School Completers"

\* Requires Approval



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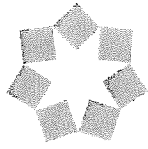
Columbia Economic Development Corporation

**MINUTES  
COLUMBIA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION  
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
Tuesday, February 14, 2017  
4303 Route 9  
Hudson, New York**

A regularly scheduled meeting of Columbia Economic Development Corporation's (CEDC) Workforce Development and Education Committee was held at their offices located at 4303 Route 9, Hudson, NY 12534 on February 14, 2017. The meeting was called to order at 8:34am by Mr. Jones, CEDC Chairman.

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived/ Departed
James Calvin	Committee Member	Present	
Tish Finnegan	Committee Member	Present	Departed 9:32am
Triona Fritsch	Committee Chair	Present	
Kate Johns	Committee Member	Present	Arrived at 8:44am
Tony Jones	Committee Member	Present	
James Lapenn	Committee Member	Excused	
John Lee	Committee Member	Present	
Michael Polemis	Committee Member	Present	
Maria Suttmeier	Committee Member	Present	Departed 9:35am
F. Michael Tucker	President/CEO	Present	
Andy Howard	Counsel	Present	
Lisa Drahushuk	Administrative Supervisor	Present	
Erin McNary	Bookkeeper	Present	
Ed Stiffler	Economic Developer	Present	
Carol Wilber	Marketing Director	Present	

Mr. Jones reminded everyone the genesis of the committee was the strategic plan and the business retention visits last year showing difficulty finding employees. He cited the number of local, state and federal programs operating in this space and stated that CEDC should not duplicate existing efforts, noting there appeared to be room to assist with apprenticeships or internships via county high schools that would make local businesses more visible and attractive to students. He hoped a pilot program could be in place in 2017, and expand in 2018 based on experience.



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## **Election of Chair:**

Mr. Jones suggested Ms. Fritsch as Chair stating she represented a sizable business with a commitment to their workers. *Mr. Jones made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lee. Carried.*

## **Committee Discussion:**

Ms. Fritsch thanked the committee. Mr. Tucker stated it was important to have people with skills and talent in order to attract new business. He reviewed the spreadsheet containing the enrollment figures for public and private schools located in Columbia County. He noted it didn't include the Pine Plains public school district, or the Berkshire Union Free School District, a specialized school district.

Mr. Tucker stated the Strategic Plan's fourth pillar, workforce and education, stated "CEDC will facilitate networking and collaboration among the County's educational, business and government institutions to stimulate purposeful alignment of educational offerings and business needs. Objective: Create an environment that leverages Columbia County's "education to workplace" pipeline."

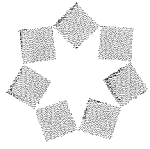
Mr. Tucker stated he recently met Kelly Ann Radzik the new Director of Applied Learning and Job Development at Columbia Greene Community College, as well as with Joan Rogers, Work Based Learning Coordinator at Questar III, to discuss partnering on workforce and education initiatives

Mr. Tucker stated he, Mr. Jones and Mr. Polemis had met with representatives of the Berkshire Taconic Foundation. He stated CEDC was putting together a proposal for a grant in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce for a Summer High School Leadership Program. He stated the pilot program would be for 12 – 16 high school students for a 6-8 session 2.5 hour program in the summer for a mini-leadership program. He stated funds would be used to hire a teacher to teach soft skills, introduce to a civic organization and visit some business locations, in order to expose to different types of experiences.

He reviewed the percentages of graduating students and the types of diplomas for the county. He stated the numbers from 2016 were consistent with 2015 numbers. Dr. Suttmeier noted the 2016 numbers didn't include the August graduates. Mr. Tucker reviewed the median incomes of the graduates' families along with other census data. He noted it would be helpful to determine what the graduates did after graduation, work or school.

Mr. Tucker referenced the Saratoga County Prosperity Partnership survey asking the most pressing issues employers face. The three top results were available workforce, skills gap and attracting talent. When asked what characteristics or skills make an employee successful in the company, the top three answers were: reliability, good communications and ability to work within a team environment.

Ms. Fritsch stated she was trying to determine a way for CEDC to become a connector, to open up a network, and to ensure the creative economy was included. Mr. Tucker stated CEG had done a study



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while he was there, which showed Hudson was the third t in the country, behind Brooklyn and Taos, New Mexico, in the number of people per capita involved in the creative economy. He stated nearly every company has someone that is doing a creative job. Ms. Fritsch suggested defining the parameters. Mr. Polemis felt the funding should be defined. He felt it would be impossible to present ideas without knowing the amount and limitations of the funding.

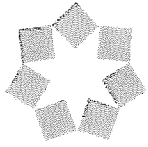
Dr. Suttmeier suggested doing an outline. She stated currently the schools have the programs but no work study coordinator and no capacity to have current staff members coordinate. She noted unions have had issues with internships and businesses would be prohibited from offering a paid internship. Ms. Finnegan suggested the business offer the position, which is paid for by a sponsoring business. Mr. Tucker questioned if it could be set up through a third party. Mr. Jones asked Dr. Suttmeier if the structure currently existed. She stated Hudson City School District participated in the YES (Youth Employment Services) program with 25 students. She stated the program took a great deal of time to coordinate.

Mr. Polemis suggested that the start should be small and manageable and not try to solve the entire problem. He stated Columbia Land Conservancy had received donor money to do their summer program with 20 participants. He suggested perhaps that a program could be done under CEDC. He stated transportation was a big issue, but the program gave the participants a window into the world.

Mr. Tucker asked what population would be best served by the program. Mr. Lee asked from the employer's side how many graduates would stay and work in the county. He reminded the committee that similar meetings had taken place before resulting in programs that didn't necessarily lead to jobs for the participants. He suggested looking at the available jobs in the county. Mr. Polemis cautioned against trying to solve the problem with broad strokes. He suggested starting with one or two and increasing after success could be shown.

Mr. Tucker asked which age group should be targeted. Ms. Finnegan suggested 13-15 year olds. Dr. Suttmeier stated the graduation requirements had been changed to allow workforce training as one part of the graduation requirements. Dr. Suttmeier stated Hudson School District offered PACE Lab where participants clocked in, assembled and finished a project. She stated it taught basic job skills. She noted there was currently no room to expand the program.

Mr. Tucker asked if the consensus of the committee was to target the 14 to 18 year-old group and to partner on the college age group with the college. Mr. Calvin stated the high school age group was not the only pool of workers available. He noted a large number of citizens work outside the county. Mr. Tucker stated once all data has been gathered and organized, it could be determined who needs assistance. It was also noted that there are many underemployed workers, along with those who are unemployed, who could benefit from addition workforce training programs.



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Ms. Fritsch asked how often the Committee should meet. The Committee felt they should meet at least monthly.

With no further business to come before the committee and no public present, Ms. Fritsch called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. *A motion was made by Mr. Calvin, seconded by Mr. Jones to adjourn the meeting. Carried. The meeting was adjourned at 9:48am.*

*Respectfully submitted by Lisa Drahushuk*



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**MEETING NOTES  
COLUMBIA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION  
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
Monday, April 10, 2017  
4303 Route 9  
Hudson, New York**

A regularly scheduled meeting of Columbia Economic Development Corporation's (CEDC) Workforce Development and Education Committee was held at their offices located at 4303 Route 9, Hudson, NY 12534 on April 10, 2017. The meeting was called to order at 8:35am by Ms. Fritsch, Chair.

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived/ Departed
James Calvin	Committee Member	Excused	
Tish Finnegan	Committee Member	Excused	
Triona Fritsch	Committee Chair	Present	
Kate Johns	Committee Member	Excused	
Tony Jones	Committee Member	Excused	
James Lapenn	Committee Member	Present	
John Lee	Committee Member	Excused	
Michael Polemis	Committee Member	Present	
Maria Suttmeier	Committee Member	Excused	
F. Michael Tucker	President/CEO	Present	
Andy Howard	Counsel	Present	
Lisa Drahushuk	Administrative Supervisor	Present	
Erin McNary	Bookkeeper	Present	
Carol Wilber	Marketing Director	Present	

Mr. Tucker noted no quorum of the board was present and no votes would be taken.

**Committee Discussion:**

Mr. Tucker stated the current attendees brought a perspective from outside the county. He noted committee had agreed to focus upon high school initiatives. He stated they had to determine how to develop a pilot program to be implemented in the summer or fall of the current year. He reviewed the workforce and education portion of the Strategic Plan with the attendees.

Mr. Tucker noted he was not ready to call a meeting of the stakeholders and partners, but had begun cataloging the training and identifying skill gaps. He noted he had met with the town supervisors and



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others regarding workforce housing. Dr. Suttmeier had informed the CEDC board that Hudson City School District contained 100 children who had no home, and had alternative lodging arrangements. They had discussed the condition and currently available workforce housing in the City of Hudson.

Mr. Tucker reviewed the handout entitled “Ten Steps to Aligning Workforce Development and Economic Development”. He reviewed the remainder of the handouts presented to the Committee.

Mr. Tucker reviewed the breakdown of the graduate’s destinations after high school. Mr. Polemis asked if there was information available regarding military service. Mr. Tucker stated Ms. Wilber would obtain that information.

Mr. Tucker discussed the need for work based learning. He noted that all agreed that top students didn’t need services. He noted that often students and businesses are unaware of each other and are unaware of the programs available to each. Additionally, there is a lack of knowledge for alternative learning. He also pointed out that there is a disconnect between what businesses are seeking and what schools believe businesses are seeking.

Referencing the local statistics, Mr. Tucker presented the number of students in 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades in Columbia County:

9 <sup>th</sup>	588
10 <sup>th</sup>	555
11 <sup>th</sup>	497
12 <sup>th</sup>	490

Mr. Polemis felt obtaining the percentage or number of drop outs would be helpful in reviewing the numbers.

Mr. Tucker referred the committee to additional handouts regarding workforce/education programs in other areas of the country. He noted he had also included a table of contents to be used to design a program.

Mr. Tucker stated he had included 3 to 5 examples of what was currently available in Columbia County. Mr. Tucker stated that Ms. Fritsch had spoken to Tara McSherry-Wolfe, Social Worker with Homeless Families/YES Program Manager of the Hudson City School District. Ms. Fritsch stated she had met with Ms. Wolfe, and learned the program had been running well, with high involvement from both students and businesses. Ms. Fritsch stated that as an example, in years past the YES program had placed up to 40 interns (to note: it was made clear in Ms. Fritsch's conversation with TMW that the number of participants is variable from year to year). She felt Ms. Wolfe and the



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Hudson City School District would be a great partner and resource. She would like to investigate expanding the program for our pilot program. Ms. Fritsch noted the Hudson City School District programs offered work at a business as well as a student/mentor match which was someone unrelated to the business where the student worked.

Mr. Tucker reviewed offerings from other school districts. He noted some districts charged for their programs. He noted that Ichabod Crane had only after school programs, Taconic Hills had a high school business program. He noted Chatham has an interesting career exploration program. He provided a link to the program for the committee members. He reminded the committee that Questar III had their career development center, while Pine Plains, New Lebanon and Germantown had limited programs or none at all.

Mr. Tucker reviewed the program designed in conjunction with the Chamber. He stated the program would be 6 – 8 weeks in duration for a minimum of 12 students. They would meet at the Chamber with the exception of the first and last weeks when they would meet at a local company. He offered as examples Etsy and Saturn. He noted running the program in the summer allowed for the hiring of a teacher already trained to deal with students and vetted for liability issues. They would be able to teach interviewing skills, resume writing and other soft skills.

Mr. Tucker reminded the committee that Columbia Greene Community College has a full time director of applied learning and job development. He informed the committee that Cornell Cooperative Extension had run a similar program in the past. He reviewed a program at Ballston Spa which ran or one to three weeks teaching specific tasks and dealing with work assignments. He noted Capital Region businesses had produced videos that were shown at each school district. He also referenced the Tech Valley Minute, which consisted of a brief video shown at schools.

Mr. Polemis questioned if a business in Columbia County which is chronically short of trained employees would be interested in what was described. He felt businesses short of labor aren't going to be interested in investing time and money into a program and students if it won't result in permanent employment. He raised that particularly around manufacturing-based work, an apprenticeship program might be a better option. He cautioned doing field trips to businesses wouldn't work. The program would require a commitment from businesses for the offer of real work and an achievable goal for the attendees. He suggested the real focus be on the student who should be assigned real tasks as well as someone who would make sure the tasks were done. He noted this would cost the businesses.

Mr. Tucker stated he felt CEDC could invest \$15,000 in a program. Mr. Polemis stated the CEDC Board and the Board of Supervisors would need to be convinced that a recovery of investment would





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be made but it would be intangible and not financial. Mr. Tucker stated the County has a summer jobs program which lasts 14 weeks. Mr. Lapenn agreed that narrowing the focus was a good idea.

Mr. Polemis gave a brief overview of the current Columbia Land Conservancy program which hired students for a number of weeks during the summer who completed trail building and other similar tasks. He suggested using that model, finding a partner, then customize the program to what CEDC would prefer. He suggested funds could be raised nationally and locally and through CEDC.

Mr. Tucker suggested selecting four sectors and selecting 3-4 students to attend each sector. He would suggest a tech company, a manufacturer, a not-for profit and another sector. Mr. Polemis suggested picking only two, Mr. Lapenn agreed. They stressed the need to succeed with the project in order to continue and expand.

Mr. Tucker expressed the need to include a company which had difficulty attracting employees. He stated he would prefer to do three companies a traditional business, a not-for-profit, and a manufacturer. Mr. Howard suggested finding the business partners first. Mr. Polemis felt it was vitally important that the businesses have a contact who could engage the student. Mr. Lapenn asked if the program would start this summer, Mr. Polemis felt summer would not allow enough time for planning and organization. He suggested fall.

Mr. Lapenn suggested speaking to Columbia Memorial Hospital as a partner. Ms. Fritsch suggested passing around a list of the suggested partners to the entire of the Committee for their suggestions and comments, prior to the next Committee meeting. She noted it would be important to understand if the partners would be willing to participate or contribute to the project. Mr. Lapenn suggested including the element of mentoring/engagement.

With no further business to come before the committee, the meeting ended at 9:30am.

*Respectfully submitted by Lisa Draushuk*

# THE COLUMBIA Paper

## Here's where 2016 high school 'completers' went

July 17, 2017 by JEANETTE WOLFBERG

GHENT—Last year almost three-quarters of the public high school “completers” in Columbia County went on to higher education, according to data from the state Education Department. Overall, 40% headed to 2-year colleges, 33% to 4-year colleges, 18% to employment only and 3% to the military.

The Education Department defines a high school completer as one who graduates from high school with a Regents or local diploma or who achieves an IEP (individual education plan) certificate. The above percentages above come from 497 completers in the Class of 2016 from the six public school districts in the county: Chatham, Germantown, Hudson, Ichabod Crane (Kinderhook), New Lebanon and Taconic Hills.

In the four larger districts—Chatham, Hudson, Kinderhook, and Taconic Hills—17% of the completers had the classification “disabled.” Of these, 41% went on to college, compared to 78% of those four districts’ other completers. The statistics also show that, 42% of those who are “disabled” went to employment, compared to only 15% of the others.

The percentage of completers who went to 2-year colleges was about the same for both “disabled” and “general education” completers. Of those going on to higher education, almost all “disabled” students were attending 2-year colleges, while the “general education” completers were divided almost evenly into those going to 2-year colleges and those who attended 4-year colleges.

What follows is a breakdown by school and disability of the percent of completers taking each major post-graduation path, for the Class of 2016. The Education Department will make data for the Class of 2017 available next year.

POST-HIGH SCHOOL PLANS of COLUMBIA COUNTY CLASS OF 2016

	Total	College			Employ-	Military	Other or
	Completers	2-year	4-year	Total	ment		Unknown
<b>TOTAL</b>	497	40.4	33.2	73.6	18.3	3	5
<b>Chatham</b>	91	34.1	40.7	74.7	20.9	0	4.4
<b>Germantown</b>	39	48.7	35.9	84.6	10.3	5.1	0
<b>Hudson</b>	105	50.5	24.8	75.2	20	1.9	2.9
<b>Kinderhook</b>	127	33.1	33.1	66.1	19.7	5.5	8.7
<b>New Lebanon</b>	41	51.2	31.7	82.9	12.2	0	4.9
<b>Taconic Hills</b>	94	37.2	35.1	72.3	18.1	4.3	5.3
<b>Chatham, Hudson, Ichabod Crane and Taconic Hills only</b>							
<b>General Ed</b>	346	38.4	39.6	78	15	2.9	4
<b>Disabled</b>	71	39.4	1.4	40.8	42.3	4.2	12.7