

**Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council Meeting**  
**Friday, July 17, 2015**  
**Public Session: 11:00 AM**  
**Center for Discovery**

Attendees: Co-Chair Dennis Murray; Jason Baker (Rep, Mayor Spano); Martin Brand; David Church (Rep, CE Neuhaus); Robin Douglas; Jonathan Drapkin; Freda Eisenberg (Rep, Chairman Samuelson); Carol Fitzgerald; March Gallagher; Peter Harckham; Bill Gorton; Suzanne Holt (Rep, CE Hein); Erica Kane (Rep, Assemblywoman Barrett); Brian Kelly (Rep, Assemblyman Cahill); Thom Kleiner; Monique Le Gendre; Dana Levenberg (Rep, Assemblywoman Galef); Jacquie Leventoff; Jack MacKenzie (Rep, Senator Serino); Ryan McLeod; William Mooney (Rep, CE Astorino); Charles Radier; Lucy Redzeposki (Rep, CE Day); Al Samuels; Ryan Silva; Sullivan County Chair Scott Samuelson; Supervisor Chris St. Lawrence; Ned Sullivan; Jim Taylor; Meghan Taylor; Mary Kay Vrba; Bruce Walker (Rep, CE Odell); Eric Warren; Cliff Wood.

Vinnie Cozzolino, Paul Ryan and Matt Watson were on the phone

**I. WELCOME**

At 11:14 AM, Co-chair Dennis Murray opened the meeting, and gave an overview of the schedule.

**II. ROUND 5 CFA OVERVIEW/INDUSTRY CLUSTER UPDATE**

Meghan Taylor welcomed everyone to Center for Discovery, a beautiful facility. She reminded the attendees that the deadline for CFA is July 31st at 4 PM, and it is also the Priority Project deadline as well. On September 21st, the Progress Report is due to the State, and the URI Plan is due on October 5th.

Meghan stressed that the most important deadline is July 31st at 4 PM.

Meghan went over the unprecedented amount of dollars available this year.

URI - the M-H is one of the 7 to compete; it's a 1.5 billion competition, 3 \$500M awards, which will be paid out in 5 \$100M increments.

For the CFA, the range of dollars is up to \$90M all the way up to \$105M. As a point of reference, we were a top performer last year, and we brought in \$82.8M.

Meghan went over the competition criteria for the CFA, and read out the four core and four supporting goals of the Council for the public.

**Regional Cluster Update**

Meghan went over what the Council has been tasked with - researching and identifying a regional cluster,

Meghan announced that this Council has chosen a food and beverage manufacturing cluster; related to manufacturing, we have a very strong cluster in this region, for instance, a pizza box manufacturer in Middletown, Orange County.

Co-chair Dennis Murray emphasized that this is not going to replace high tech or advanced manufacturing, it will help us highlight a key part of the forthcoming URI plan.

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**III. URI OVERVIEW**

March Gallagher of Pattern for Progress gave the URI Overview.

March went over the progress to date:

Blended 3 REDC initiatives; received commitments from all 7 counties; held several focus groups to test ideas; started a website [HVrevitalize.com](http://HVrevitalize.com); engaged the planners, workforce directors and tourism directors throughout the region; created a resource of data gatherers from the focus groups and they have briefed the M-H Sustainability Group.

**NAPA EAST**

changed the initiative back to a focus on the NYC tourism market; meeting with regional stakeholders and organizations; meeting with individual project proponents; evaluated regional tourism economic impact data and are reviewing regional agricultural economic impact data from USDA and the Census, among others.

**Investing in City and Town Centers**

Consulting with urban planning and service entities; engaging local electeds and planning staff to identify barriers to growth and regional urban success stories; Id'd OA's for addressing poverty

**High Tech/High Salary Initiative**

Convened with digital, IT and manufacturing reps twice; one on one meetings/interviews are critical; analyzing data on employment, wages and economic impact in biotech, advanced manufacturing and IT.

March ended her presentation with a request for people to go to [HVRevitalize.com](http://HVRevitalize.com) to share their ideas.

**IV. WORKGROUP UPDATES**

**Global NY** - Charles Radier provided the update for the Global NY workgroup. The Council has supported the international trade and investment initiatives of companies in the region who approached the Council for funding - Selux Corporation (Germany) and Zumtobel (Austria) and USAI, who is retiring manufacturing jobs from China. The Council also identified the craft brewery and cider sector as a group that should be encouraged, and awarded assistance to Kikkerfrosch Brewery from Greece.

The group also disseminated a trade and investment survey to over 1,000 businesses in the region, and the results of the survey will be used to guide attention to the identified issues. The workgroup also conducted a trade analysis and identified the region's strengths in exports, and a key finding was that there was region-wide symmetry in the export services of tourism and education.

The Council is also partnering with our sister Regional Councils to engage foreign trade counsels and attract increased foreign direct investment. To that end, a joint meeting of the MHREDC Global NY Workgroup was held on June 16th with the NYC and LI Regional Councils.

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Going forward, the Global NY workgroup will work with Stewart Airport to help expand the global cargo capabilities. To that end, meetings with the Port Authority have been scheduled to see what the Council can do to move this forward.

**Tourism** - Mary Kay Vrba informed the Council that the Tourism Workgroup had a meeting on July 7th, and will meet once more this year.

At that meeting, the Tourism Workgroup learned that visitor spending in the past year was \$3.9 billion, which is up 4% from the previous year.

The Tourism Workgroup wants to work on the following in the coming year:

- A visitor profile should be completed to give the Region a base for moving forward in terms of marketing efforts.
- A branding strategy for the Hudson Valley/Catskills region should be undertaken to build on what's already out there.
- There is a need for a stronger transportation linkage in the Hudson Valley/Catskills region, including rental cars, train extensions, bus service and river access.
- Development of four and five star hotels with 75 to 80 rooms throughout the region.

**Sustainability Workgroup** - Ned Sullivan stated that the goal is promote natural resources, and the M-H region has a ton of natural resources to support from agriculture, farm to table, urban revitalization, food and beverage, craft breweries.

He informed the Council that one of the big successes this year was securing \$20,000,000 to preserve farmland in the region

### **V. PUBLIC COMMENT**

No comments from the Council.

Co-chair Dennis Murray opened the meeting to public comments.

Patricia Pomeroy, the Executive Director of the Hudson Valley Regional Council spoke about the work they have done. She encouraged everyone to read the Hudson Valley Distressed Communities Report, as it disabuses people of the notion that this is a wealthy area, as there are pockets of extreme poverty throughout the region.

Mark Baez, the CEO Sullivan County Partnership, elaborated on some things that are happening in Sullivan County that are relevant to the Council, such as the Montreign Casino, the Veria Lifestyle Resort, an alternative healing/yoga resort, as well as a number of food and beverage businesses that are starting up throughout Sullivan County.

Liz Kallen of Procurement and Technical Assistance Center wanted to introduce herself to the Council. PTAC helps local businesses get federal contracts, and they are looking to expand their service area from Westchester, Orange, Dutchess and Rockland counties to include the entire Mid-Hudson region.

Roberta Lockwood, the President of the Sullivan County Catskills Visitors Association, spoke of the work they have done with the I LOVE NY program, started by Rob Dyson during the Mario

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Cuomo Administration. She mentioned that tourism in the Hudson Valley - Catskills region is a \$4.4 billion industry, and the Council needs to find a way to expand the public's perception of the Hudson Valley -Catskills to include the Delaware River.

At 11:49 AM Co-chair Dennis Murray closed the meeting.