

# FINGER LAKES REGIONAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

## AUGUST 3, 2011

**Council Members Present:** Lt. Governor Bob Duffy, Joel Seligman (via phone), Danny Wegman, Maggie Brooks, Bob Brown, Dick Colacino, Charlie Cook, Bill Destler, Ted Fafinski, Steve Griffin, Mary Pat Hancock, Pamela Heald, James Hoffman, Anne Kress, Brad MacDonald, Tom Macinski, Theresa Mazzullo, Augustin Melendez, Cynthia Oswald, Sandra Parker, Mark Peterson, Tyrone Reaves, Hilda Rosario Escher, Kirsten Werner, Christine Whitman. **Representatives for Council Members Present:** Josh Farrelman and Peter Robinson for Joel Seligman, Bill Strassburg for Danny Wegman, Jason Molino for Marianne Clattenburg, Mitch Rowe for Laverne Lafler, Patrick Rountree for James Merrick, Leonard Redon for Thomas Richards, Ginny Clark for Rob Sands. **Members Absent:** A.D. Berwanger, David Callard, H. Taylor Fitch, John Noble.

**Team Members Present:** Robert McNary, Joe Hamm, Dave Seeley, Betsy Colon, Ed Downey, Kristen Fragnoli, Elaine Miller, Julie Sweet, David Keefe, Mariah Kelley, Laura Magee, Dick Pettite, Amy DeGaetano and Kiska Stevens

**State Agency Members:** Daniel Buyer, Paul D'Amato, Amy DeGaetano, Linda Hardie, Tim Joseph, Lee Loomis, Elaine Miller, Rich Parker, Ron Rausch, J.C. Smith, Julie Sweet, Mark Thomas, David Thompson, Robert Traver, Ralph Van Houten, Kelly Tyler.

**Other Attendees:** Joseph Robach, Kenneth Adams, Sam Hoyt, Scott Steel, Dave Zorn, Laurie Chiumento, Leonard Skrill, Maureen Palumbo.

Lt. Governor Duffy gave the opening remarks and welcomed everyone to the first Regional Council for the Finger Lakes Region. He acknowledged some participants that were present: County Executive Maggie Brooks; Dick Colacino, Town of Arcadia Supervisor; Ted Fafinski, Chairman of the Ontario County Board of Supervisors; Mary Pat Hancock, Chairman Genesee County Legislature; Jim Altman, Wayne County Board of Supervisors; Joe Robach; Kenneth Adams, President and CEO of Empire State Development; Sam Hoyt, Vice President of Empire State Development; Leonard Redon, Deputy Mayor of the City of Rochester, representing Mayor Tom Richards.

Lt. Governor Duffy expressed his pleasure in initiating this effort on behalf of Governor Cuomo and explained the foundation of the Regional Councils. He also explained who will lead the Council, help facilitate these meetings and what the expectations for the outcome will be.

He then introduced the two Co-Chairs of the Finger Lakes Regional Council, Joel Seligman, the President of the University of Rochester, and Danny Wegman, the CEO of Wegmans Food Markets. Mr. Seligman joined the meeting via speaker phone, as he was on vacation.

Mr. Wegman stated he was happy to be part of this effort and was looking forward to working with the Council Membership. He stated that he believed that involving local leaders in the

economic development future of their regions and dividing the State into ten regions, instead of Upstate or Downstate, was the appropriate way to address the economic needs of the State. He spoke about the limitations to funding and that strong private/public partnerships can stimulate economic development activity. He also stated that it is his hope that we can find synergies with other parts of the State that will make us even stronger.

The Lt. Governor then thanked Mr. Seligman for taking time out of his vacation and introduced him to the Council.

Mr. Seligman thanked the Lt. Governor and expressed his gratitude to the Governor Cuomo and the team assembled from state government, particularly to the members of the Finger Lakes Regional Council. He stated he is looking forward to working with everyone and that we have a unique opportunity, being asked to frame the strategic economic development plan for nine counties in the Finger Lakes Region. He indicated that we have a chance to ask ourselves "Where do we want to go?"

The Lt. Governor thanked Mr. Seligman and then introduced Kenneth Adams, the ESD CEO and President. He stated that Mr. Wegman, Mr. Seligman and Bob McNary, the Regional Director of ESD and the Executive Director of the Regional Council, will be the leadership team along with others from the State. He also thanked Irene Baker, Nick Weatherbee, Brian Quiara and the many others who have done so much work to date.

The Lt. Governor then asked the Council Members and representatives around the table to introduce themselves.

Bob McNary next introduced the Regional Council Team staff and asked them to stand.

Bob McNary then asked the State Agency representatives to introduce themselves.

The Lt. Governor then gave his Power Point Presentation. Among other things, he explained that this will be a new operating model for NYS, providing a locally driven approach to economic development, not top down. He indicated that each of the 10 ESD Regions would be preparing a 5 year Strategic Plan to guide development and target investments (due by November 14, 2011). He spoke about the availability of \$1 Billion for the regions to apply for, including competition for \$160 MM from ESD, where 4 regions will receive \$40 MM each. Applicants will apply for these funds using the State's new Consolidated Funding Application (CFA), a single application for multiple state sources. The Lt. Governor's presentation is located in the Member's binders under the Open for Business Presentation Tab.

Next Bob McNary and John Slenker of the Department of Labor gave their Power Point Presentation. It included characteristics of the Region, its strengths, needs, opportunities, labor statistics and challenges. It is also located in the Member's binders under the Finger Lakes Regional Snapshot Tab. Bob McNary also briefly indicated that there was a "Sample Characteristics of the Finger Lakes Regional Economy By Economic Development Drivers" in the

Member's binder. It is a summary of various strengths, issues and opportunities gleaned from a variety of reports on the Region. He thanked our interns, Mariah Kelley and Josh Sacks for their hard work on assembling this data.

George Stafford, Deputy Commissioner of the Department of State, then reviewed the Council purpose, initial tasks and timeframes that are important to developing the Strategic Plan over the coming months. He indicated that the Guidebook, included in the binder, covers much of this and the Operations Manual, which will soon be provided, will also describe it.

Council Members and State Representatives then broke out into five facilitated groups to identify the Issues and Opportunities that the region needs to address. Facilitators David Keefe and Ed Downey led this effort. The two questions Members were asked to address included:

1. What are the Issues that the region faces in terms of its ability to promote job growth and economic development?
2. What are the Opportunities in this region for job growth and economic development?

The results were tabulated on newsprint and then the groups were asked to identify the top Issues and Opportunities. Next the group leaders were asked to provide the results to this exercise.

Facilitators Keefe and Downey then reconvened the Members and asked them to look at the list of Possible Workgroups included in the Binder. Workgroups are where much of the work involving development of the Plan and strategies associated with it will be developed. They asked Members for their reaction to those included on the list. Several recommendations were received. It was indicated that there would be further discussion with the Council on what the Workgroups should be. Members were also asked, based upon the current list, to submit names of experts in the particular Workgroup fields.

Bob McNary also indicated that there were approximately 20 responses to the online Survey completed by Members just prior to the Meeting. Mr. Destler asked that summaries of all of this information be provided to the Members.

Lt. Governor Duffy and Mr. Wegman stated that they knew that there have been a lot of media inquiries. They felt that members could answer them, however, they asked that they keep Bob McNary "in the loop" about such activities. They also said that the ESD Press Office was available to assist in providing talking points to Members.

The Lt. Governor and Mr. Wegman next thanked everyone for their commitment of time and for coming to the meeting. The Lt. Governor also commented that he felt that the facilitated sessions worked very well here.

The Lt. Governor and Mr. Wegman convened a press event right after the meeting and welcomed attendance by the Members. The Lt. Governor stated that if Members have any questions to please contact Bob McNary, as he is the point person for the Council.

The next meeting will be held on 8/16/11 at 3pm at MCC and will cover several subjects, including: a Public Engagement Strategy, A Vision Statement, the establishment and commissioning of Workgroups, etc.