

**North Country Regional Economic Development Council**  
**Meeting Summary**  
**Lake Placid Convention Center**  
**June 5, 2012**

**Open Session**

Attendance: Lt. Governor Robert Duffy, Tony Collins, Garry Douglas, Adore Flynn Kurtz, Betty Little, Bill Farber, Jim McKenna, Gordon Crossman, John Donoghue, John Ettling, Kate Fish, Bridget-Ann Hart, Hugh Hill, Carl McLaughlin, Bill Murray, Mark Pacilio rep MOA Russell, David Tomberlin, Eric Virkler, Donna Wadsworth, Daniel Wilt, Jim Wright, Ann Merrill

Lt Gov Duffy convened the open session at 12:30

The Co-chairs reported on the Statewide Council of all Regional Economic Development Council Co-chairs to encourage dialog between the councils. A major focus of the co-chair council is regulatory reform. They are forming working groups to identify and develop key areas for reform. The Lt. Governor reminded everyone that the Governor is dedicated to improving the business environment. Tony Collins noted that a subset of this group is trying to align the approval processes within the Adirondack Park.

Tony Collins noted recent changes that have been made allowing Senator Betty Little and Assemblywoman Addie Russell to be voting members.

Tony also encouraged public attendance and participation in the CFA Workshops being held throughout the Region to help in the creation of applications for this consolidated funding program. Also, the public is welcome to attend the seven NCREDC public forums and provide their input. A forum will be held in each of the seven counties. The date for the Indian Lake meeting has yet to be set.

Discussion then shifted to this year's Regional Council competition. NCREDC will be competing against the four Councils awarded winning plan status last year. The top four councils are competing for two \$25 million dollar prizes. The major factors will be how successful the funding awards have been and as well as plan's implementation.

Kate Fish then presented information on the NYSERDA Cleaner, Greener, Communities program for the NCREDC. This is a \$1 million dollar program. Phase 1 will create a greenhouse gas inventory for the region as well as a comprehensive sustainability plan. There will be significant efforts to gather stakeholder input to ensure that this adequately reflects North Country needs. This will help the region achieve its goal of becoming the greenest economy in the State. Input can be given to Kate Fish and there will also be public input sessions set up as well as a facebook page.

Terry Martino presented information on the new, Path Through History Initiative was announced in March of this year to enable the North Country to capture the opportunity of cultural and history

tourism. A workgroup has been set up to implement this project. Signage and marketing will be components of this initiative. An important component of the rollout of this project is coordination with the Scenic Byways program.

Jim McKenna discussed progress that the Priority Project and Plan Implementation committee has made. They have been meeting regularly and will provide a formal report at the July meeting. There will be adjustments to the tourism and community development strategies that have just been adopted by the Council and are available on the Council's website.

Tony Collins and Jim McKenna discussed the Priority Project process for this year, the process of identifying priority projects is fluid. People can use the Council the website to determine if a project fits the Priority Project criteria, to download a nomination form. Priority Projects should consider filling out a CFA application form for state funding as part of this process. Tony encouraged people to consider applying as a Priority Project and not to be intimidated by the criteria.

Eric Virkler made a presentation on NCREDC public forums that have been scheduled. The co-chairs will be at the each forum and Council members will also be in attendance as well. And committee and working group members are also encouraged to attend as many other public forums as possible. The Public Participation Committee has also been active in the CFA trainings and we are focused upon training people for selling their project. The website has been updated with new information. We are also working on highlighting the development of the priority projects through press releases and a PR campaign.

Tony Collins recommended that applicants preparing their CFAs should be consulting the strategic plan. In September, we plan on updating the plan to reflect changes and updates within the context of 2012 guidelines.

Bill Murray reported on the Strategic Clusters Working Group: Last year there were 10 strategic cluster work groups, refined through a public input process. The strategic cluster groups have now been combined down to eight committees. We are now working to adjust the action items for the cluster strategies. The clusters are Manufacturing, Agriculture, Clean Energy, Higher Education, Biotech and Healthcare, Aerospace and Transportation, Arts and Culture, and Fort Drum. Adore Kurtz, co-chair of Strategic Clusters Working Group, stated that we are working to expand the strategies for Arts and Culture and Fort Drum. Garry Douglas is temporarily heading up the Biotech/healthcare WG and has recommended more direct contact with these committees and expects to have more strategies and refinements coming out of these working groups.

The Adirondack Work Group report was presented by Bill Farber. The committee grew out of a need to look at development within the Park differently. Through the committees' outreach broadband infrastructure was prioritized as top need. Another issue was the fragmentation in the Park. The Adirondack Work Group now works with people from the Mohawk and Capital Region on Park issues. There is now a great effort with both the DEC and APA to coordinate on their permitting processes. Bill spoke to the need to focus upon healthcare. In particular, there is an issue with the Clifton/Fine hospital. The hospital is facing financial challenges and needs state legislation to allow the hospital to

change from a municipal corporation to a not-for-profit entity. Bill asked the Council if there is a role that we could plan in advocating for this change that would result in continuation of the critically needed health services in Town of Fine. Bill Murray commented that the paper mill in Clifton Fine recognizes access healthcare, broadband, cell phone service, etc., as critical to their operations and to the area. Bill Farber made a motion, seconded by Bridget Ann Hart, to support the pending legislation that now before the Senate and Assembly that would allow Clifton-Fine Hospital to become a not-for-profit corporation. Adore Kurtz and John Ettling abstained from this vote.

David Tomberlin discussed the lawsuit that has again stalled the Adirondack Club and Resort (ACR) development in southern Franklin County. David and Gordon Crossman asked the Council to support the ACR project as it continues further litigation through the new Article 78 proceeding. A motion to support the expeditious litigation regarding the Article 78 on the Adirondack Club and Resort Project was made by Jim McKenna, seconded by Gordon Crossman. The motion passed unanimously with the abstention of Adore Flynn Kurtz

The Lt. Governor commented that this is a first for the Council and is fully supported by him as an important role of the Council members. Making stands on important local issues carries great weight on policy decisions in Albany.

Megan Daly noted that the 2012 guidebook for Regional Councils' is available on the Regional Council's update. The CFAs are due on July 16<sup>th</sup>. Plan update is due on September 14<sup>th</sup>.

**Public Input:**

Champlain Watershed Improvement District: Beth Gillis; In the last CFA round we asked for money for a non-point source pollution study. We believe we have a process that would meet your qualifiers for a fundable project. How does the Council rank projects that don't directly create jobs.

Tony Collins: Firstly, this is not a question and answer session. Also, you should apply through the CFA and articulate the same argument you just made here.

Jim Wright: These projects are also competitive through state funding sources and not just the Council.

Shared Services: Bernier Carr Associates: Working with Champlain to provide a water and sewer to three communities in northeastern Clinton County. Gregory Martin, Mayor of Village of Champlain: we have a plan to combine facilities. Cost effective water and sewer through out shared services plan will help us attract and retain companies in our towns. William Masbough Board of Trustees Rouses Point: Please help us with this shared system.

Tony Collins: There is a requirement that state investment leverage significant private dollars. You are challenged to also figure that out as part of your project out.

Clifton Fine Hospital: Mark Hall: Thank for supporting the Clifton/Fine Hospital.

Ausable River Association: Corrie Miller: Please support our project for implementing our watershed management plan.