

**North Country Regional Economic Development Council
Clarkson University | Potsdam
Friday, February 19, 2016**

Present: Tony Collins, Garry Douglas, John Burke, Joseph Butler, Jr., Jim Calnon, Cathy Dove, John Ettling, William Farber, Kate Fish, Hugh Hill, Billy Jones, Bob Lenney, James McKenna, Carl McLaughlin, Harry McManus, Addie Russell, Zvi Szafran, Donna Wadsworth,

Also Present: Reg Carter for Bill Murray, Larry Dolhof for Mike Tabolt, Steve Hunt, Ryan Silva,

Absent: Ken Blankenbush, Cali Brooks, John Donoghue, Janet Duprey, Bill Ferebee, Joe Giroux, Paul Grasso, Joe Griffo, Bridget Hart, Betty Little, Patty Ritchie, Dan Stec, David Tomberlin, Mark Tryniski, Lisa Weber, Dan Wilt, James Wright

Public Session

Garry Douglas opened the public session at 12:00pm.

Garry Douglas provided an overview of the executive session.

We welcomed several new members of the council: Rollin Beattie, Town of Potsdam Supervisor; Joseph Butler Jr, City of Watertown Mayor; John Burke, Chair of the St. Lawrence County Legislature; Scott Gray, Chair of the Jefferson County Legislature; and, Harry McManus, Chair of the Clinton County Legislature.

We heard an update from Ryan Silva, VP of Regional Economic Development for ESD, on several new initiatives that will be upcoming this year; particularly, the Downtown Revitalization Initiative and the Upstate Airport Initiative competitions. We have to wait for the budget process to complete before we know more. We also heard about the \$200 million set aside for non-URI winners. Each of the four regions will receive \$50 for top tier URI projects.

We had a presentation from Melinda Sanderson, Director of Mentoring-Upstate, regarding the NYS Mentor Program. We encourage participation cross the North Country.

There was a presentation by Jeff Nordhaus, Executive VP of Innovation & Broadband at ESD, regarding the New NY Broadband Program. An RFP/auction process is upcoming to bring broadband service to all remaining areas upstate that do not have access at the present time. Part of this is regional, so we'll have fair competition.

Tony Collins gave an overview of the St. Lawrence County Economic Development study which fits with our aims and strategies.

We renewed the assignment and mission of exiting leadership councils and workgroups.

We passed a resolution offered by Addie Russell supporting the School Nutrition Association's "Drive for 25" initiative to increase state funding of school lunches with special support for local food access and use in our schools.

The meeting was opened to public comments.

No comments were made.

Garry Douglas closed the public session at 12:20pm.