

**North Country Regional Economic Development Council
High Peaks Resort | Lake Placid
Thursday, May 12, 2016**

Present: Tony Collins, Garry Douglas, Rollin Beattie, Cali Brooks, John Burke, Joseph Butler, Jr., Jim Calnon, John Donoghue, Cathy Dove, John Ettling, William Farber, Kate Fish, Paul Grasso, Scott Gray, Bridget Hart, James McKenna, Carl McLaughlin, Harry McManus, Zvi Szafran, Donna Wadsworth, James Wright

Also Present: Reg Carter for Bill Murray, Larry Dolhof for Mike Tabolt, Steve Hunt, Ashley McCloskey

Absent: Ken Blankenbush, Janet Duprey, Bill Ferebee, Joe Giroux, Joe Griffo, Hugh Hill, Billy Jones, Bob Lenney, Betty Little, Patty Ritchie, Addie Russell, Dan Stec, David Tomberlin, Mark Tryniski, Lisa Weber, Dan Wilt

Public Session:

Tony Collins opened the public session at 12:02pm.

Tony Collins provided the public with an overview of the closed meeting.

We heard an overview of the upcoming round of funding; very similar to past years. There will be five Best Plan awardees and five non-awardees. There will be a difference in funding of priority projects for awardees and non-awardees. We believe there is a particular emphasis this year on bringing everything together. We've had a strong strategic plan that we filtered down to three sections for our Upstate Revitalization Initiative plan last year which was not successful. In that process we're comfortable that our strategic plan is the right one for the region. We'll continue to update that plan.

The other major initiative this year is the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) where one community in the North Country region will be selected for a \$10 million investment. The region will identify that community. There is a workshop after this meeting for those interested in submitting or learning about the DRI. There is also a workshop here at 2pm for regular CFAs.

We've developed a process for the DRI in the region. We've identified a committee of five members that we believe are not from communities that will be submitting. These are people of high integrity and value the process. They will review the proposals. Our application process is the same as the State's, with the caveat that each answer can only be 5,000 characters, or about 500 words. You can add attachments, though. We encourage communities that meet the criteria to apply. The committee will recommend up to three communities to the State. The State will then validate that the communities meet the criteria. The application deadline is May 27. Recommendations will be given to the State in June.

We also had a brief report on the working groups. We're redoing the working groups to more closely match our strategic plan. We had to rearrange some last year for the Upstate Revitalization Initiative.

Finally, we reviewed the regional council code of conduct. We ask that members disclose potential conflicts and reuse themselves from actual conflicts.

Tony Collins opened the meeting up for comment.

No public comment was submitted.

Tony Collins provided an update on upcoming events.

On May 27th at 4pm the DRI applications are due.

On June 10th, there is a council meeting at Clarkson. Following that meeting will be another CFA Workshop starting at 2pm.

The CFA closes on July 29 at 4pm.

On August 19 there will be a council meeting in Lake Placid.

On October 3rd, the REDC scores and strategic plan update are due

Tony Collins said it's important for communities that submit or think of submitting to the DRI to look at the projects and determine how many are eligible for regular CFA funding. If you don't get the DRI award, then the effort you put in can hopefully help you be successful in regular CFA funding. I want to highlight Jim Wright's comment that the region is very successful in terms of public or community-based projects but has been less successful once we moved to projects in the private sector. For our economy to move forward and grow, we do need to look for more private sector projects.

Garry Douglas highlighted that every year the Council has held public forums in every county in the region. People can come in a learn more or tell us about a project. It's a chance to openly interact with the council. When those dates and sites are finalized they will be posted on the council's website.

Garry Douglas said that the Airport competition will not go through the Regional Council but rather through NYS Department of Transportation.

Tony Collins closed the public session at 12:16pm