

FLREDC MEETING SUMMARY

Introductory Information:

Date and Time Meeting Commenced: May 13, 2022 at 10:00 am

Location: Virtual via Zoom meeting

Council Members Present: Bob Duffy, Denise Battles, Kereem Barry, Matt Cole, Steve Griffin, Matt Hurlbutt, Steve Hyde, Theresa Mazzullo, Steve Mowers, David Munson, John Noble, Wade Norwood, Hilda Rosario Escher, Jaime Saunders, Erin Tolefree, Assemblymember Harry Bronson, Supervisor Jack Marren, Grant Malone

****Council Member Substitutes:** Rosanna Yule for Dr. DeAnna Burt-Nanna, Marianne Clattenburg for Genesee County Legislature Chair Rochelle Stein, Jeff McCann for County Executive Bello, Tammy Mayberry for Mayor Malik Evans, Bill Bacon for Dave LeFeber

State Agency/Local Government/ESD Staff: Vincent Esposito, Bridget O'Brien, Kristin McCann, Arthur Briley, Maranne McDade Clay, Joseph Hamm, Ryan Trevas, Hector Gonzalez, Sharon Gray, Elizabeth Morabito, Fred Bonn

Special Guests: Joe Stefko, ROC2025; Jeff Janiszewski, ESD; Joseph Hamm, NYS DOL

Time Adjourned: 11:30 AM

Welcome and Remarks: Vincent Esposito welcomed everyone to the first FLREDC Meeting for this year.

Co-Chair Welcome: Denise Battles welcomed everyone to the meeting and looks forward to the important work ahead. Bob Duffy also welcomed everyone. He spoke about the exciting opportunities the infusion of federal stimulus funding and new spirit of cooperation among government leaders will bring to our region. He encouraged Councilmembers to actively participate and share ideas about how best to innovate our regional economy.

Executive Director Update (Last Meeting: 9/9/21): Vinnie Esposito introduced and welcomed new FLREDC Members Rochester Mayor Malik Evans and Yates County Legislature Chair Leslie Church as well as new staff members. He gave a presentation (posted on-line) highlighting major project announcements, CFA Round 11 Awards, new changes to this year's CFA process, and other noteworthy events since the last meeting. He also provided a brief overview of additional new funding opportunities.

ROC2025 Update: Regional Metrics & Greater ROC: Joseph Stefko gave a presentation (posted on-line) on the metrics ROC2025 uses to track our region's fiscal health and recovery progress. He provided a high-level overview of our region's job base, pandemic recovery rate, labor force growth, and unemployment rate. Our regional economy continues to improve, and we are outperforming our Upstate peers, Albany, Syracuse and Buffalo in most measured areas. Joe also spent a few minutes outlining ROC2025's capacity building investments, which focus on business growth, talent, Downtown, and marketing.

Hilda Rosario Escher asked if there was much disparity in the metrics among the nine counties. Joe indicated that they were relatively consistent and mirrored the statewide trends. Bob Duffy thanked Joe Stefko and the ROC2025 team for their continued work. He mentioned the need to work collaboratively on these initiatives and sited County Executive Bello's recently announced RETAIN program to help incentivize recent college graduates to

remain in our area as a program that aligns with ROC2025's priorities. Steve Mowers asked about the status of the FLREDC goal of lifting people out of poverty. Joe indicated that poverty data is lagged a year, but there has been a very small improvement in the percentage of people living in poverty using the most recent data available. Vincent Esposito thanked Joe for the updates and reiterated that these updates will be part of all future FLREDC meetings.

Restore NY Overview: Jeff Janiszewski, ESD Senior Vice President for Strategic Development and Global NY, presented (posted on-line) an overview of Round 6 of Restore NY Communities Initiative Municipal Grant Program. This program provides financial resources to revitalize communities by redeveloping or eliminating blighted structures. He outlined recent changes to the program, eligibility criteria, scoring emphasis, projected timeline, the application process, and funding limits. Jeff included contact information if anyone had follow-up questions about Restore NY.

Hilda Rosario Escher asked if only municipalities could apply. Jeff explained that counties, towns, villages, and cities are eligible to apply, but cities with populations over 1M can only apply in distressed areas.

NYS Budget 2022-2023 Highlights: Vincent Esposito gave a presentation (posted on-line) on the 2022-2023 New York State Budget. He provided a quick overview of the significant investments made in the State's continued COVID response, public safety, education, childcare, health care, and the environment. The budget includes \$4 billion for economic development programs. He highlighted some of the new statewide programs as well as state investments in local initiatives such as Phase 2 of ROC the Riverway, High Falls State Park, and the Inner Loop Project.

Consolidated Funding Application Round 12: Bridget O'Brien gave a presentation (posted on-line) on the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) process and deadlines. Round 12 consists of over 20 programs across 10 state agencies. She explained some of the changes made to this year's CFA process, including the new open enrollment process for ESD Grant Funds and the reduction in the number of programs scored by the REDCs. Starting this year, some will be standalone programs. REDC members will be made aware of these applications, but they will be scored 100% by state agencies. She also discussed the CFA review and scoring process.

Vincent Esposito emphasized the new standalone program model and the benefits to the REDCs. He also informed the Council Members that there are still existing funds available and encouraged them to share their ideas with him.

Office of Strategic Workforce Development: Vincent Esposito gave a presentation (posted on-line) on the new Office of Strategic Workforce Development at ESD, which will focus on employer workforce needs and strategies. The REDCs' focus this year will be developing regional workforce strategies, which will inform the work of the new office and funding programs. He outlined the two phases of this process. Phase One is a review of current and future regional workforce market needs and challenges. DOL is in the process of conducting an employer survey. This data will be used to create a Regional Workforce Inventory. Phase Two will use the Regional Workforce Inventory to produce regional strategy documents by early Fall. The FLREDC will be reconstituting and activating the Workforce & Talent Work Group for this purpose. Joe Hamm informed the Council members that the Finger Lakes Region had the highest return rate of Regional Workforce Inventory surveys in the state.

Assemblymember Harry Bronson: Vincent Esposito asked Assemblymember Harry Bronson to address the Council. Assemblymember Bronson thanked Governor Hochul for prioritizing workforce development in this year's budget. He thanked Vinnie and the FLREDC for their important work. He outlined some of the initiatives he championed during this year's budget negotiations that benefit our region. He continues to focus on creating a more equitable and inclusive economy.

Discussion and Next Steps: Vincent Esposito informed the members that they will need to complete ethics training soon, as well as Code of Conduct and Statement of Interest Forms. He also explained that starting this year all council members will be made aware of other members' recusals.

Vincent also indicated the FLREDC Work Groups will be reactivated this year.

There was discussion about the format of the next council meeting in June, but a date has not been set.

Denise Battles thanked the presenters, Council members, and ESD staff for all their work. She encouraged active engagement by Council members this year.

Bob Duffy echoed her sentiment. He also thanked Assemblymember Bronson for his efforts. With all the exciting work ahead, he urged everyone to "focus and finish".

Next Meeting: TBD. Meeting adjourned.

Group Chat Questions and Answers Given During the Meeting:

Anonymous Attendee asked: How large is the benchmark group? Joe Stefko responded: It's about 50 metros of similar size/make.

Anonymous Attendee asked: Is the reduction in poverty rates within the margin of error? Joe Stefko responded: Not certain of the exact numbers from last year's reporting, but I believe so.

Karen Zandi asked: Investment in education does not secure support for special needs populations in the 853 schools. There are 2 bills proposed this week for which we are seeking support. The bills will ensure that the 853 and 4410 preschools can access the increase that the Governor promised, when the bill for parity was vetoed. Can we ask for support on these bills? A.10191/S. 9132 and A.10192/S 9134. Vincent Esposito answered: Thanks Karen. The REDC doesn't typically weigh-in on non-econ dev policy issues, at least not as an entity. But many individual members/partners might do so on their own accord.

Lee Koslow asked: The last Pay for Performance grant appeared to be (and perhaps we misunderstood it) a combination of Pay for Performance but as a reimbursement of grant expenses (i.e., the worst of both worlds). Do we know, can the Pay for Performance grant be a true Pay for Performance contract without a requirement that expenses be submitted as backup? Vincent Esposito responded verbally during the meeting that this was a great question, and they will work to make sure this issue is addressed in the future.

Joshua Farrelman asked: How is the new Workforce WG being constituted? Concerned about the survey not capturing the complete needs of the community. The survey was designed for employers but concerned there are gaps. For example, the UR is completing as an employer, which captures our healthcare needs, but there isn't an opportunity to amplify the industry sector needs we see from educational perspective for OPI, semiconductors, etc. Just want to make sure those get captured. Vincent Esposito responded: Good input Josh? We are accepting any and all interest. We definitely need help building the workforce pipeline for food and beverage processing and semiconductors!