

# FINGER LAKES REGIONAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

## SEPTEMBER 6, 2011

**Council Members Present:** Lt. Governor Robert Duffy, Joel Seligman, Danny Wegman, A.D. Berwanger, Maggie Brooks, Bob Brown, Dick Colacino, Bill Destler, Ted Fafinski, Steve Griffin, Mary Pat Hancock, Pamela Heald, James Hoffman, Anne Kress, Bradley MacDonald, Tom Macinski, Theresa Mazzullo, Augustin Melendez, John Noble, Cynthia Oswald, Sandra Parker, Mark Peterson, Tyrone Reaves, Hilda Rosario Escher, Robert Sands, Kirsten Werner, Christine Whitman. **Representatives for Council Members Present:** Steve Hyde for Charlie Cook, Bret Garwood for Thomas Richards, Jason Molino for Marianne Clattenburg, Mitch Rowe for Laverne Lafler, Patrick Rountree for James Merrick. **Members Absent:** David Callard, Taylor Fitch.

**Team Members Present:** Robert McNary, Joe Hamm, Dave Seeley, Irene Baker, Betsy Colon, Cynthia Cooper, Ed Downey, Kristen Fragnoli, Laura Magee, Dick Pettite, John Striebich, Kent Gardner, George Stafford, and Kiska Stevens

**State Agency Members:** Daniel Buyer, Paul D'Amato, Tim Joseph, Lee Loomis, Joan McDonald, Elaine Miller, Rich Parker, Leonard Skrill, J.C. Smith, Ralph Van Houten, Patricia Walsh.

**Other Attendees:** Ginny Clark, Josh Farrelman, Anne Humphrey, Mark Michaud, Peter Robinson, Debbie Stendardi, Bill Strassburg, David Zorn, Amy Happ, Greg Albert, Ellen Rosen, Rich Perrin, Judy Seil, Chris Weist.

Lt. Governor Duffy welcomed everyone to the third meeting of the Finger Lakes Regional Council and thanked all for the tremendous work that is being done. The Plan will be the guide for a coordinated development mechanism between the State, local government, non-profits and the private sector. It will chart the course for economic development well beyond the November 14<sup>th</sup> due date. In addition to commending the Council members, he also recognized the Team Staff, the State Agencies and Dr. Anne Kress, thanking her for hosting all of our meetings.

Mr. Seligman also thanked the members, staff and Dr. Kress. Additionally he mentioned the three very well-attended public forums. He indicated that there were a number of important things learned at these events, including: 1) We may want to make special efforts to reach out to Young Professionals; 2) we may have to temper the public enthusiasm, indicating that it will not be possible to obtain funding for all of the projects. Project prioritization may be necessary.

He also indicated that the development of the final Plan document will be accomplished by he and Danny working with the Existing Conditions and Economic Opportunity Committee and the Economic Development Vision Committee. They will then bring a draft back to the full Council for their review, with subsequent review at the second series of public forums.

Mr. Wegman stated he has learned some interesting things about economic development in the region as a result of the Regional Council planning process to date. He stated that we are all finding our way with this process and encouraged members to ask questions and bring new ideas to the table.

Irene Baker explained that the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) process is now in effect and went live on September 2nd. All applicants applying for the programs described in the Guidebook for the \$1 B must apply with a CFA application before October 31<sup>st</sup>. This is a 60 day solicitation and encompasses \$1B. This is further described on the Governor's website under the Regional Council page. As completed applications are received, they will be forwarded to the Co-Chairs and to Bob McNary. At this point the Strategic Plans and the CFA reviews by the Council must be submitted by November 14<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Baker noted that the Regional Council must adopt CFA Endorsement Standards or criteria that will provide the scoring methodology whereby the projects submitted by applicants for the \$1 B will be judged. She indicated that there is some standardization from Region to Region, as the Office of the State Comptroller (who is requiring that these Standards be adopted), has stated that the scoring must be aligned with the scoring of the Regional Plan itself by the State Plan Review Committee.

She also pointed out that there has been some confusion about the difference between the CFA Endorsement Standards and the Priority Project Action Criteria (PPAC). The PPAC is to be developed and used by the Council to identify transformative projects that could be included with the Strategic Plan.

Ms. Baker next discussed the Code of Conduct. The intent is to insure that the process for reviewing projects stands up to public scrutiny and that there are no conflicts of interest. Council members are not subject to the Public Officers Law, as are ESD and Governor's Office Officials. However, to insure that there is ethical behavior and there is no conflict of interest, Members must attend Ethics Training, as well as file a written Statement of Interest, indicating the individual's (or his/her family) business and non-profit agency interests. The Ethics Training will be accomplished by the Member participating in a Webinar. The Statement of Interest must be filed with Seth Agata, the Governor's Office ethics attorney, by September 16, 2011. It is important to avoid conflicts of interest. If there is something being considered by the Council that you or your family have an interest in, you need to make that known to the Council co-chairs, immediately removing yourself from any discussions or voting on that particular application/project.

Ms. Oswald indicated that they have been receiving comments and suggestions from Members on the Vision Statement. These have been incorporated in the revised Statement dated 8/31/11, which was included in the pre-meeting handout packet. Ms. Oswald stated the Vision Statement continues to be a working document and will continue to be so until a final version is agreed upon by the Council. After further discussion and suggestions by the Members, she indicated that it will be revised again and further input will be solicited in the future.

Ms. Parker next presented the CFA Endorsement Standards, indicating that we must adopt this criteria in order to score the projects that will be submitted as part of the \$1 B in CFA funding programs. The Office of the State Comptroller has indicated that this must be accomplished before September 15, 2011. Mr. McNary indicated that the Council's CFA criteria will account for up to 20% of the final State funding agency score. As a result, while the Council score carries some weight, it is not the final score. After further discussion by several members concerning the applicability of the CFA Standards, Mr. Seligman called for a vote, indicating that the Council needs to approve it before September 15, 2011. In a motion by Ms. Parker and a second by Mr. Brown, the Council unanimously adopted the Standards. (A copy can be found attached to these minutes.)

Ms. Parker also presented the Priority Project Action Criteria (PPAC) for consideration for adoption by the Council. This would be used to identify the Transformative Projects that could be submitted with the Strategic Plan. Mr. Griffin and Mr. Hyde noted that they are concerned that some of the PPAC might not be accurate in determining what is truly transformational for a given local economy. For instance, small business start-ups and agriculture may not produce significant jobs initially, but could set the groundwork for a good economy over the long term. Mr. Garwood commented that there may already be transformational projects in the pipeline which would generate good jobs and investment. However, establishing measurements for what is transformational seems to be necessary.

Next Mr. Peterson and Mr. Griffin explained how the workgroups were formed around important segments of the Regional economy. The basis for this were the dominant economic sectors, as well as input received from Council Members and the public at large. There are eleven workgroups and candidates to populate them were obtained by recommendations from Council Members and other entities. From this broad list of names, 161 individuals with expertise in specific sectors and from certain geographic areas were invited to serve, with most of them agreeing to do so. Two co-chairs were selected and at least one Regional Council member was assigned to each workgroup. Mr. Griffin stated that the co-chairs were provided with member contact information, as well as a charge of duties (e.g. development of strategies, implementation agendas, priority projects, etc.). It will be requested that all of this information should be developed within 20 days, or before the end of September. Before the workgroups meet, they will be given some briefing materials, basic industry data and a standard reporting mechanism.

Mr. Seligman then opened the meeting to the public and thanked everyone who participated in the implementation of the three very successful public forums.

Mr. Hamm gave a presentation on the three Community Engagement Sessions. They were well attended with over 80 people at the Batavia session, close to 200 people at the Monroe County session and approximately 200 people at the Geneva session. There were two primary purposes for these sessions. One was to provide background and information on Governor Cuomo's Regional Economic Development Planning approach and the second was to obtain information from the public on strengths, issues, and opportunities for the Regional Plan.

There were approximately 1,500 recommendations from the three sessions. These were distilled down to 600. An analysis of the public input demonstrated a close alignment with the strengths, assets and opportunities identified by members of the Council through surveys, facilitated sessions, etc. Following are the top strengths, opportunities and issues identified by the public

Top Strengths: High quality of colleges and universities  
Skilled workforce  
Water resources  
Natural resources  
Agriculture  
Food Processing Industry  
High Quality of Life

Top Opportunities: Commercialization of basic employers that are coming out of research institutions and colleges  
The need to capitalize on our fresh water resources  
Growth potential of tourism  
Proximity to major markets, both nationally and internationally

Top Critical Issues: Taxes and regulations  
Access to capital  
Aging infrastructure (roads, sewers, digital infrastructure)  
Lack of skilled workers (those with more than high school education but less than 4 year degree) who run machines or are technologists.  
Lack of aggressive marketing of our region  
High energy costs

Mr. Seligman thanked Mr. Hamm and his team, stating that he felt that it was important to go back out to the public again with the second series of forums. At that time we will request further input on how they feel about the draft Strategies and Plan. Mr. Peterson stated he attended all three meetings and found that it was a very engaging process, with nearly 500 citizens who were very energetic and welcomed the opportunity to be involved in development of the Strategy. Mr. Wegman stated that we should feel good about the region we live in and that we have citizens that really care about this process and want to be involved. The feeling of optimism generated by this process has been significant and he thanked the Council for making it a very positive experience.

Mr. Seligman stated we are off to a good start and this is a work in progress. Much has been accomplished to date. Once the Workgroups formulate strategies, these will be incorporated into the actual development of the Plan, along with such things as an Implementation Agenda, Performance Measures, Transformative Projects, etc. He and Mr. Wegman will chair the development of this final portion of the Plan.

Lt. Governor Duffy thanked everyone for their continued support and participation at the meetings. He encouraged the Council to “keep their eye on the ball” and not get too bogged down in the details. He indicated that the Governor is very proud of what these sessions have generated so far. He then reminded everyone that the tenth anniversary of 9/11 is coming up on Sunday and there are 30 sites around the state that have artifacts from the 9/11 site. The Rochester Museum and Science Center is one. He asked everyone to take time to remember those who died in this event, as well as the suffering of their families.