



TOWN OF RANDOLPH, VERMONT

Economic Development Council

In-Person Meeting

Minutes of November 1, 2021

Members Present: Mary Richter, Sarah Jackson, Ken Cadow, Bethany Silloway

Guests: Gary Dir, John Farrow, Jerry Ward, Ed Rooney, Larry Satcowitz, Zoë Newmarco, Andrea Easton, Erika Hoffman-Kiess

Town of Randolph: Joshua Jerome

Selectboard Liaison:

Public Attendees: None

Establish Quorum

Quorum

Call to Meeting to Order

Mary called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM.

Public Comment

None

1. Updates:

a. **VTC (Pat Moulton)**

October 1 email:

- *"VT Tech is working with Josh Jerome, Ericka Hoffman-Kiess, and Dan Devoe on a "Building Back Better" grant from the US Economic Development Administration to advance the "Innovation Hub" concept Randolph has been working on with CORI. This grant has potential, if awarded, to enable Randolph to make real progress on the "Innovation Hub" strategy. Josh will have more, I am sure."*
- *"New name: You may have heard some press the VT State Colleges Board of Trustees has approved of the name "Vermont State University" for the newly combined university we will become when VT Tech, Castleton, and Northern Vermont University merge into one university. The Board recognizes there is more work to do around branding, organization of the new university before we finalize how the campuses and/or programs will be branded and marketed. For example, and what I am hoping for, the VT Tech campuses could be part of "Vermont State University Institute of Technology" or some better branding, so our "technical" brand and name is not lost. I have heavily advocated for that."*
- *"The transformation process to the new university is well underway. There are 4 "core" planning teams comprised of members from all three institutions working on Academic Programming, Student Experience, Administrative Consolidation, and soon Continuing Education and Workforce Development. Each "core" team has a variety of "sub-teams" working on specific aspects of these major areas. Those teams are "building" the best practices the new university will employ to assure a quality experience for students and continue to provide excellent outcomes and career placement for our graduates. This is a LOT of work and is taking time, but it needs to take time to get it right."*

- *“VT Tech is fully opened this year and back to regular in-person education. We are not as full in our res halls as we would like but are much more full than last fall thanks to students following COVID protocols and getting vaccinated. We have recovered our 15% loss of enrollment from last fall. We are a more “typical” enrollment year this year which is a good thing. We are hosting conferences and events again as well. We had a great Homecoming last weekend with 100 or so alumni attending and a number of parents as well. We were grateful for great weather last Saturday!”*
- *“Our Advanced Manufacturing Center is nearing construction completion. We have encountered supply chain issues like literally EVERY sector of our economy which has slowed down completion. We hope to have a ribbon-cutting and open house in early 2022 when we are completed, have had students in the Center working, and can demonstrate the incredible capabilities this new Center has for our students and VT businesses through public/private partnerships!”*
- *“VT Tech hopes to be a host site for the VT Department of Health (VDH) to offer vaccine boosters as early as October 11. We hosted vaccine clinics and expected to be hosting booster clinics as well. VDH will announce a schedule when it is finalized.”*

b. CORI - Digital Economic Ecosystem Project (*Erika Hoffman-Kiess, Joshua Jerome*)

Erika has been in communication with Pat Moulton working on the Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant to advance the Innovation Hub.

There is an upcoming meeting where the group will discuss strategies and stakeholders.

c. Economic Director (*Joshua Jerome*)

- Marketing & Tourism Grant application due on November 3rd. Awarded grants need to focus on regional partnerships, creation of the Randolph in Motion website; Chandler’s New World Festival will be celebrating its 30 years; targeting tourism from the Boston, New York City, and Canadian areas; Ridgeline and expanding the trails. Funds will range from \$10,000 to \$30,000 awarded in January 2022 and be used by March 2023.
- VOREC Community Grant Program application is due by the end of November. Looking to establish a Hostel in Randolph Village property located next to the Gear House. Grant money would be used towards the hostel and trails. There will be a meeting with the State Program Director.

d. Childcare (*Damian DiNicola*)

Work continues with the VTC subdivision and funding with a focus on building as much equity as possible to keep the fees low. Target opening at early as 2023 or 2024.

e. Rural School System Project (*Damian DiNicola, Ken Cadow, Mary Richter*)

Suggestions were made to reach out to Felicia Allard at RTCC for Randolph in Motion website development and/or maintenance as a “skill builder” initiative. Ken to discuss further with Josh.

f. Gifford Medical Center (*Dan Bennett*)

Bethany Silloway reported CoVID Booster vaccines are available and to make an appointment through the Vermont Department of Health.

The hospital is considering working with the schools to make vaccinations available.

g. RACDC (*Julie Iffland*)

No representation / no updates.

h. WRVCC (*Linda Runnion, Andrea Easton*)

Andrea was in attendance.

2. Old Business

Hotel

John Farrow reported they are re-engaged with the bank and the Capital Investment Program submitting a \$1M application.

Branchwood

The assessment has been completed. The property would be used for mixed-use; Commercial on the lower level with housing/residential on the upper level.

Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee (TRORC) has identified redevelopment parcels within the downtown. There will be community engagement, market analysis, and architecture November-December targeting January 2022 to complete.

Belmain's

Compucount is moving into the space with a target Summer move-in date. They are lining up contractors and there will be space for commercial tenants. Third Branch Pottery will be moving into one of the commercial spaces.

3. New Business

Energy Committee

Gary Dir reported the October Weatherization Event at Central Supplies was a success.

The committee has started a list of projects and to proceed with energy planning as an agenda item at the Selectboard's November 18th meeting.

Window Dresser program has been postponed until October 2022.

Adjourned: 8:12 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Mary V. Richter, Chair