

**Economic Development Committee (EDC)**  
**MINUTES**  
***Tuesday, July 5, 2016***

***Committee Members Present:*** Martin Donnelly, James Eisel; Tina Mole; Michael Triolo; Richard Parete; Jim Bogner, Innes Kasanof, Thomas Snow, Jr and Alan Rosa

***Committee Member(s) or Staff Absent:*** Ursula Basch

***Committee Member(s) Calling In:***

***Staff Present:*** Barbara Puglisi; Timothy Cox; Jason Merwin, Phil Sireci

***Guest(s) Present:*** Phil Eskeli

The meeting was called to order at 10:40 a.m.

Minutes from the EDC meeting of May 3, 2016 were moved and passed without comment; *all in favor.*

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Loan Update**

Barbara presented an update of loan activity, which showed the following:

CFF Loan Activity through 4/30/2016 indicated there is \$5,443,223 committed so far of the \$10,000,000 budget for 2016. There is \$478,000 in process.

Regarding the Hospital Health-Care Fund, staff indicated a current balance of \$4,155,138 from our original balance of \$5,000,000, with no loans in process.

The Colchester Flood-Repair Program showed a loan balance of \$499,761.41 with \$2,000,238.59 remaining in the budget. Barbara told the committee this number is representative of the end of April and the loan has been paid off since then.

The Municipal Sewer Flood Business Retention Program, has \$155,137 committed with a balance of \$94,863 left in the budget.

Barbara presented a chart showing CWC's collateral position of defaulted and delinquent loans as of 6/21/16. She indicated the Default and Delinquent rate is currently at 9%.

Barbara presented a chart showing a breakdown of CWC Loans that have been "written-off" as of 6/21/16. The total dollar amount of the write-offs is \$2,215,671.48. The chart showed that 62.45% of the total amount written off were loans located in Delaware County. Additionally, 32.44% of the write

offs occurred in Ulster County and the remaining 5.11% were located in Sullivan County. There have been no write offs in Greene or Schoharie County.

Barbara presented an updated CFF County Fund Allocation chart showing where and how the CFF has been spent. The chart included how much each county has left to spend.

### **Maurice D. Hinchey, Catskill Interpretive Center**

Barbara presented a request letter from Michael Drillinger explaining that the State contacted them stating that allocated funds of just under \$1,000,000.00 was available for capital improvements, as they were not used during the construction phase of the project. These funds will be used to build a new entrance sign, a fire tower, the forest ranger station, observer's cabin/museum, a pavilion, shed and restroom for the groundskeeper, a car charging station and a dog park at the CIC. The letter asked if CWC would allow for the remaining funds (\$42,922) that had been allocated for construction of a forest ranger station, observer's cabin/museum to be repurposed to hire a trained interpretive center designer.

Barbara also told the committee that she had read that the Governor had announced that the Catskill Center for Conservation and Development was awarded a Smart Growth Grant in the amount of \$30,992 for the Catskill Interpretive Center (CIC) Interior Design.

Alan said that he is ok with this but he wants to make sure we are paying attention to how the funds are used. He said he wants to make sure something gets done, not just create a plan. He also added that he did not like how the art exhibit looked out front.

Barbara added that those in charge of running the CIC have also received complaints about the art and may move it out of sight from the road. She said that they really do need a designer to tell them how things should be done and they recognize that.

Innes asked who will be overseeing the designers work. Alan said that it is pretty much all volunteers doing everything down there. Marty agreed and said it was evident based on the helter-skelter nature of the way it is set up there.

Rich said that he heard from someone that there were pamphlets out there telling people to call their legislators to support the trails instead of trains. He said he didn't think such things should be there.

Barbara said that in an earlier CIC meeting, there was much discussion about what brochure would be allowed to be displayed and their content, at that meeting, she insisted that there be a written policy, so that it remains consistent; and to the best of her knowledge; that was done. She said that the issue is that the CIC is staffed by other entities namely the Catskill Mountainkeeper, Catskill Mountain Club, Catskill 3500 Club and the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference, these entities pay their staff member to be at the CIC one or two days a week, there is also at least one other volunteer there and they are open seven days a week. The CIC does not pay staff, the entities they work for pay them to be there.

Jim Eisel suggested CWC write a letter expressing displeasure with the way the center is being run and hold funds until things improve.

Innes asked what our overriding principal is when supporting projects like this. Is it educational based?

Alan explained what their initial request was for operating costs, a mapping system and the ranger station. This new request is for a designer, which he is ok with but wants to make sure someone is watching over the project.

Innes said we should be clear what our mission is with a letter. She said that our organizations mission doesn't really tie into it. She said she would like to have a letter expressing our concerns.

Alan said he would write a letter.

Barbara told the committee that we do already pay some of the operating costs for the first 5 years.

Mike asked if there was a manager. Barbara said that Michael Drillinger is charged with managing it. He oversees volunteer staffing and other aspects of day to day operations. Barbara also explained that the center is open 7 days a week and is staffed by volunteers from various organizations.

Jim Bogner asked if the consultant would have any input on the operations or just design. Barbara said that we could suggest having them look into the operations as well.

Alan said he can include the idea in his letter. He added that he is not against the volunteer work, it is great and huge that they do everything they do.

Berndt added that he does not like how it looks and he thinks it makes a bad impression on the area.

Alan added that we should also make sure that there actually is a policy on what is put out for visitors to see and take.

Marty said that even the letter they sent said that there is a hodge-podge nature to how the center looks and is run. He said that there should be mention of this in the letter.

Alan said he will write it.

### **Village of Fleischmann's BAN for FEMA projects**

Barbara told the committee that Fleischmanns has been awarded FEMA funds but they are to come in the form of reimbursements. She said like other projects we have done, the village has asked CWC for a BAN to cover the costs as they wait to be reimbursed by FEMA. Alan added that this is the same as what we did with Colchester.

*Innes made a motion, Seconded by Jim Eisel to approve the BAN request. All in favor*

### **MARK Project letter of support**

Barbara told the committee that the MARK Project has requested a letter of support for a project they are working on.

Jim asked if we usually do this.

Alan said that we only usually do when we have already invested money into a specific project. He said we don't like to do it when it is something that can compete with other organizations or applicants in the Catskills. Mike added that once we start doing these letters it won't stop.

Marty said we should not write the letter.

### **Adopted Floodplain Maps – Flood Insurance**

Barbara told the committee that there are updates to the FEMA flood maps in our communities and as a result, loans that did not require flood insurance when they closed, may now require flood insurance. She asked the committee to look review the flood maps of those in question.

As the committee was looking over the maps, Phil Eskeli who was in attendance told the committee that there are actually more up to date maps than what was being reviewed. He suggested reevaluating the maps after looking at the updated layers.

Marty said that we should table the review until next month with the updated maps.

### **Other**

Barbara told the committee that she has been in contact with Vincent Scalise regarding the Delaware Inn and he has expressed he is still interested. He has been held up on the grant for his Utica facility and now that he has been awarded that grant and renovation has begun, he can work on the business plan for the Delaware Inn. Barbara suggested that if this does not work out we should think about doing an exclusive with a realtor since not much has been happening.

Barbara also told the committee that we are moving forward with the \$500,000 grant from the state. The contract is due to start September 1 and last for 3 years.

There being no other business the meeting was adjourned at 11:35