

DRIVE, An Economic Development Council of Governments

Meeting Minutes for December 7, 2016

Attending: Board members Greg Cole, John DeFinnis, Lance Diehl, Harold Hurst, Teri MacBride, Al Neuner, Matt Prosseda, Chris Young

Excused: Trevor Finn, Susan McGarry, David Soltz and Solicitor Karen Hackman

The meeting was held at 114 Woodbine Lane, Suite 103, Danville and called to order by Chairman John DeFinnis at 8:05 AM. The chair welcomed everyone and recognized the guests in attendance, Fred Gaffney, and Bob Snyder. Steve Phillips and Joe Scopelliti came later in the meeting.

Minutes:

The minutes of November 2, 2016 were accepted without correction by motion of Harold and seconded by Matt. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Reports & Budget:

The Treasurer's and budget variance reports through November 30, 2016 were distributed and reviewed by Matt. The reports show receipts of \$22,572, expenses of \$ 21,839 and assets totaling \$201,739. The Columbia Alliance payment arrived after the report period closed so will be noted in the December report. Although CCIDA has not remitted their 2016 contribution it is payment is anticipated before year end.

A motion to approve the Treasurer's report as presented was made by Harold and seconded by Chris. Motion carried.

Transition Volunteers' Report:

Greg reviewed the mail received. Teri attended the Team PA-convened "Next Generation Sector Partnerships" meeting on behalf of DRIVE. She anticipates a report from the facilitators and partners would be forthcoming. John thanked the volunteers.

President's Report:

John reported the search for a new Executive Director did not result in a final candidate moving through for board action. Although one candidate from out of the area came for a second interview, discussions and negotiations for the position broke down. It was agreed there is a sense of urgency to fill the position but the right candidate is needed and the potential for the new formal cooperation with Berwick Industrial Development Association (BIDA) should be explored before deciding next steps in filling the vacancy.

New Business:

Two representatives of Berwick Industrial Development Association (BIDA), Joe Scopelliti and Steve Phillips, were introduced and given the floor. Joe said BIDA is looking to be more of a regional player and "that reach is limited only by what the BIDA board approves". He said because Steve offers a lot of potential to mentor a new economic developer and has no definite retirement plans, BIDA is searching for someone to head the organization but they have not taken action. He reported BIDA recently hired an individual to attend to more

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entrepreneurial opportunities in an area which extends well beyond Berwick. Joe said BIDA is looking to DRIVE and its partners so there is "cohesiveness to economic development efforts". In discussion, various members expressed support for a unified effort; for DRIVE to be part of something larger; to see greater efficiencies and effectiveness; that economic development and tourism development go hand and hand and are part of the focus; the potential for the Columbia-Montour Partnership to come into the group; etc. There was discussion about DRIVE's existing structure and suitability for an effective economic and tourism development organization; the confidential nature of economic development projects and how to operate while respecting those sensitivities as a Council of Governments; adopting an organizational model paralleling a philanthropic Foundation structure with central staff and local funds staying in their communities (where originally intended); how to identify a strong leader of a joint organization that is focused on the many common goals of regional prosperity and healthy quality of life.

Joe committed to reporting to the BIDA board about the conversation and assessing next steps with the BIDA Board at their December meeting. DRIVE members expressed interest in keeping the doors open for further discussion.

Executive Session:

An Executive Session to discuss a new name for consideration for the Executive Director position was called at 9:15 AM and ended at 9:25 AM.

Regular Session Resumed:

The Regular Meeting resumed at 9:25 AM.

New Business continued:

There was continued discussion of the merits of exploring opportunities with new partners and an appropriate organizational structure.

A motion for a small committee of Matt, Al, and Lance to approach BIDA for more discussion about partnerships and organizational structure was made by Harold and seconded by Matt. Motion carried.

Harold noted that the 2017 Notice of Meetings (schedule) must be published and our Annual meeting held in February. Class A membership must be addressed and officers elected. This will be addressed in discussion with our solicitor.

Adjournment:

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 4th at 8 AM, at the same location.

A motion to adjourn was made by Al and seconded by Chris. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 AM.

Submitted by Teri MacBride, Secretary.