



**Board Meeting Minutes
June 21, 2019
Ulster County Office Building
Karen Binder Library - 6th Floor**

HVADC
507 Warren Street, 2nd Floor
Hudson, NY 12534
P: 518.432.5360
F: 888.317.5556

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Board members: Dave Church, Dennis Doyle, Mark Doyle, Ann Finnegan

On phone: Walter Garigliano, Eric Ooms & March Gallagher

Staff: Todd Erling & Mary Ann Johnson

Meeting called to order at 9:05.

Minutes: Mark asked for a motion to accept minutes. Dennis made a motion to accept the minutes and Ann provided a second. There was no additional discussion and all members voted in favor to accept the minutes as presented.

Financials: Todd reviewed the financials and noted we added the YTD budget column per Ann's request. MA noted the CDFI grant money is showing on the balance sheet as an asset in checking balance and a liability until we start to spend the money down. It will be reconciled appropriately as we move forward. Mark asked for a motion to accept financial report. Dave made a motion to accept and Dennis provided a second. There was no additional discussion and all members voted in favor to accept the financials as presented.

CDFI: Todd offered an update on the background of the grant and noted the board action was needed on securing legal services based of the RFP responses. The goal is to create an entity that will meet the requirements of the CDFI programs. Todd referred to the memo identifying the steps followed to secure proposals for services and discussed the responses. Todd indicated one proposal provided both the experience with non-profit and CDFI whereas the others primarily had experience with non-profit. Walter offered a motion to select the firm Exempt Tax Law as they provided the most qualified proposal and March offered the second to work. There was no additional discussion and all members voted in favor to accept the firm Exempt Tax Law as legal counsel to prepare the CDFI documentation.

Mark mentioned the CDFI could make traction on farm worker housing because he believes this will be an expanded demand for new capital needed quickly. Ann mentioned there could be opportunity for funding ag labor housing as a low-moderate income benefit. Todd explained that CEDC developed a loan/grant program for farm worker housing that could be used as a model.

Updates:

Federal Reserve President John Williams will be visiting on July 10th. HVADC will be hosting him on a farm in the HVADC region, a collective of farm and food system business representatives will join. Fishkill Farm – Mark and Josh will join, HV Fisheries, and Rolling Grocer 19 are committed. Dennis suggested that the broad message is justifying technical assistance for farmers like it has been done for other industries – use the Blueprint as a basis for the message.

NYEDC Annual Meeting: annual association of IDA's/EDC's meeting held in Cooperstown. They have been adding farm and food to their workshops and panels. Todd participated as a moderator of a panel that included Nate Rudgers of Farm Credit East who presented on trends in agribusiness and the main theme regardless of sector was fewer larger units and increasing smaller units with value add on farm. Todd shared several power point presentations from the conference.

NEASDA: Todd attended the Northeast Association of State Directors of Agriculture to seek support for the Blueprint effort and to highlight our farm to school efforts with Poughkeepsie and Wappingers. Poughkeepsie piloted a steelhead fish taste test with the first fin fish grown & certified business. Todd shared materials presented to the 13 state Commissioners/Directors of Ag.

Access to Capital: Todd noted we hosted a workshop at UAlbany with three panels – traditional capital, non-traditional capital and our FFFA peers pitched. Four of the peers participated and the pitch segment was well received. The event was initiated by NYS ESD and DAM along with NY Fed Reserve.

Farm & Food Finance Accelerator – the group has participated in site visits to each peer location, participated in HV Restaurant Week Spring Kick-Off, and attended additional events we arranged for them including Marketing Conference on February 28 at Cornell Cooperative Extension of Albany County and a Wholesaling Workshop offered by GrowNYC FarmRoots. They had a session on labor laws and HR practices, and we held a Buyer Connex event in Hyde Park. As we wind down, they have been practicing their pitches. Next week, we are holding a “pitch session” and will offer Quickbooks training in July. MA will begin doing “exit” interviews to collect data and feedback on the program.

Todd mentioned the Northern Border Regional Commission is a potential funding source for the Blueprint effort and in particular several of our counties including Sullivan, Washington, and Rensselaer. The Board expressed support for a regional application to secure NBRC funds.

Grown & Certified: Todd noted we had 11 applications in the first round and 5 awarded for \$134K+.

REDC: Todd asked the board to let us know if there are any applications in their areas we should be aware of.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:00am.