

**NORTH COUNTRY COUNCIL
CEDS Committee Meeting
Virtual Meeting
February 16, 2024
DRAFT MINUTES**

1. CALL TO ORDER/ POSTINGS

Kaela Tavares called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM. No challenges were made to the validity of the meeting.

2. ATTENDANCE

Members Present:

Tuesday Perkins, Michelle Beaudin, Steve Fortier, Stephanie Wiener, Chuck Henderson, Ben Belanger, Tim Josephson, Harrison Kranzler, Ericka Canales

Staff Present:

Glenn Coppelman, Cathlin Lord, Kaela Tavares

3. OLD BUSINESS

N/A

4. PARTICIPANT SHARE OUT

The meeting was kicked off with participant introductions and share out.

Tuesday Perkins (SBA) gave a share out for Miguel. SBA is looking to schedule visits with businesses, they are promoting their zero-fee program for loans less than \$1 million, and reduced fees for loans over \$1 million. SBA is holding info sessions on those programs, they are always looking to schedule in person events in the region to connect with businesses, in March they will be in the Mount Washington Valley.

Stephanie Wiener (Congresswoman Kuster's office) shared that Congresswoman Kuster remains very supportive of issues related to housing, workforce, and childcare as her three major priorities. If anyone is looking for letters of support for projects during this funding season, they are always happy to show support, and can provide assistance guiding projects toward funding sources and opportunities. Especially for projects closely tied to these areas.

Chuck Henderson (Senator Shaheen's office) The USDA Secretary was in Whitefield to discuss solar energy programming, and USDA co-sponsorship of Melissa Elander's (Clean Energy NH) services for energy circuit riding program which has been happening for a few years with great success. They also toured the

46 new Fairbanks Museum projects that used mass timber and were exposed to a
47 great story of support for the project from a successful businessperson (Oscar
48 Tang) with connections to the region. Grant season is upon us, reach out for any
49 info, connections, or letters of support.

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51 **Ben Belanger (U.S. Senate)** echoed what Stephanie and Chuck reported, the
52 Senator is always happy to provide letters of support and give assistance, as there
53 are some great projects out there right now.

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55 **Glenn Coppelman (North Country Council, Carroll County Broadband, CEDC)**
56 shared that Carroll County Broadband is starting engagement of professionals to
57 explore the build out of fiber to every premises. CEDC Hat: They have investment
58 tax credits to sell. It gives businesses with state tax liability the chance to invest
59 locally, and redirect some of that tax liability to projects in the area.

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61 **Tim Josephson (UVLSRPC)** shared that UVLSRPC is working as an LDD for
62 Northern Border Catalyst Program to help get programs in the area on track.

63
64 **Harrison Kranzler (AHEAD)** shared that mass timber is a topic that keeps coming
65 up. AHEAD is also looking at a community childcare project in Gorham, along with
66 several others, including a redevelopment of a downtown building in Whitefield.

67
68 Kaela jumped in to talk about additional housing programs including downpayment
69 assistance, Seed Grant, Investment Fund Exploration, and support for
70 organizations that are already doing housing work for them to keep going. These
71 programs will potentially roll out within the next six to eight months.

72
73 **Michelle Beaudin (GRDC)** is focused on their Microenterprise Program and is
74 looking to connect with small businesses in the area with five or fewer employees to
75 provide them with direct grants for equipment and expert consultants.

76
77 **Ericka Canales (CEDC)** shared that a new website has been launched for CEDC.
78 They are working on a workforce housing investment fund that they are looking
79 forward to discussing soon. Also working with Semester for Impact through the
80 National Service Award to bring additional staffing on.

81
82 **Alan Reetz (Hanover Food Co-op)** shared that his work is focused on affordable
83 workforce housing, equitable transportation, and agriculture. Currently he is focused
84 on legislation of housing bills and modernization of a farm slaughter to help small
85 agriculture.

86
87 **Kaela Tavares (North Country Council)** shared an update on the HOP Grants.
88 Each town has made progress on changing housing rules to improve housing
89 opportunities and hopefully affordability. Kaela also expanded on the Tillitson
90 projects that were mentioned during Harrison's share out. The North Country

91 Council is also involved in the Norther Boarder Catalyst Program and there is now a
92 pre application to complete that is due on March 15th.

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94 **5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

95 December 15, 2023 Minutes: Motion to approve by Tim Josephson. Second by
96 Harrison Kranzler.

97 Approved unanimously.

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99 **6. INDUSTRY SUPPLEMENT FOR CEDS UPDATE**

100 Kalea provided an update from the December meeting concerning the CEDS
101 document update and approval. The industry supplement for the CEDS update was
102 shared, which addresses needs and opportunities in the region.

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104 Discussion continued on the importance of addressing this within the CEDS and on
105 specific projects focused on industry, workforce, and housing.

106

107 After questions that arose, Kaela expressed that the supplement would be adopted
108 as a part of the CEDS and would contribute to the goals of the updated CEDS this
109 coming December, which is published on North Country Council's website.

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111 Ericka Canales motioned to adopt the industry supplement for incorporation into the
112 CEDS report. Second by Tuesday Perkins.

113 Unanimously approved.

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115 **7. PRESENTATION OF INDUSTRIAL SITE ANALYSIS**

116 After a brief introduction by Kaela on the need for infrastructure, Cathlin Lord
117 provided a presentation that covered potential industrial use in the Economic
118 Development District. In combination with the Council and completing her master's
119 degree, she produced a suitability analysis of the North Country for where industrial
120 development or reuse could occur.

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122 **8. TOPICS AND SPEAKERS**

123 Kaela introduced a survey to find topics of interest for the committee that can turn
124 into conversations or presentations in the future. These topics will not only be for
125 the CEDS committee, but outwardly facing what we are promoting. Kaela gives the
126 example of the Match Webinar recently held by North Country Council staff that
127 helped people understand and learn how to secure Match. The goal is to hold three
128 or four of these presentations a year.

129

130 Kaela then brought up CEDS committee participation. The goal is to have a more
131 targeted outreach to those that the group thinks would be good participants. The
132 opportunity to join was sent out to businesses throughout the region. If we are able
133 to plan out our topics for meetings in advance, it may be easier to get others to join
134 for one off meetings where the topic pertains to them. Allan suggests a report out
135 after the meeting in an easy-to-read format or "nuggets" on the topics to increase
136 engagement. Tim offers to talk to the Upper Valley Business Alignment to see who

137 we can connect with from there. Michelle brought up childcare representatives,
138 including the executive director of the Boys & Girls Club in Lisbon, to attend
139 meetings. Ericka and Michelle both offered to share information about the meetings
140 in their organization's newsletters. Glenn also suggested reaching out to the various
141 chambers of commerce throughout the region as a resource. Following that,
142 Stephanie suggested attending the Chamber of Commerce's Business After Hours
143 as an opportunity to network.

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145 **9. ADJOURN**

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147 Kaela Tavares declared the meeting adjourned at 11:50 AM.

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