

Chautauqua Region Economic Development Corporation (CREDC)

BWB Building
201 West Third Street, Jamestown, NY
2nd Floor Board Room

&
Electronically via Live Stream on YouTube & Zoom

February 25, 2025
11:15 a.m.

PRESENT:

Gary Henry	Chairman
Dan Heitzenrater	Vice Chairman
Sagan Sheffield-Smith	Treasurer
Amy Harding	Member
Daniel DeMarte	Member
Tom Harmon	Member
John Healy	Member

Also in attendance:

Mark Geise	Administrative Director/CEO
Richard E. Dixon	Chief Financial Officer
Shelby Bilskie	Successor CFO
Milan K. Tyler, Esq.	Counsel
Gregory L. Peterson, Esq.	Counsel
Lisa Cole	Counsel
Kristine Morabito	IDA Staff
Rosie Strandburg	IDA Staff
Kayla Strandburg	IDA Staff
Nate Aldrich	IDA Staff
Jeanette Lo Bello	IDA Staff
Jason Sample	IDA Staff
Crystal Erhard	IDA Staff
James Feldmann	County Executive Staff

Absent Board Members:

Kevin Muldowney	Member
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Meeting was called to order by Gary Henry, Chairman, at 11:15 a.m.

Gary Henry

We'll go ahead and move right into Chautauqua Region Economic Development Corporation Board of Director's Meeting. We are at the BWB Building, 201 West Third Street, Jamestown NY. We are streaming live via YouTube and Zoom. It's February 25, 2025 at 11:15 a.m. We'll go ahead and do Roll Call.

Board

Aye – Unanimous. (7 Members in Attendance)

Gary Henry

You should have already received the minutes from the November 19, 2025 meeting and had a chance to review those. Do we have a motion to accept those minutes?

Daniel DeMarte

Motion to accept.

Gary Henry

Dan. Do we have a second?

Tom Harmon

I can second it.

Gary Henry

Thank you Tom. All those in favor say Aye.

Board

Aye – Unanimous

Gary Henry

Opposed? The minutes have been approved. Do we have any New Business to come before the Board? Hearing none we will move right into the Executive Director's Presentation for CCPEG.

Mark Geise

So in the years past. I've provided this report on how the Partnership for Economic Growth has performed, but you know, really Nate manages this group and so we talked to Nate about him presenting this year. He said he would beat me in terms of time. No, I'm just kidding, but Nate, if you want to run with this.

Nate Aldrich

Absolutely. So, I think by now all of you kind of understand what partnerships mission and what sort of projects we're working on. We saw a lot of success in 2024 and the five years since we created this.

First and foremost want to thank our Investors and Funders. They have really helped us do two things. One is to extend the capacity of the IDA and the County by providing a small and capable team to help advance some of these projects, our own initiatives, but also to support partners throughout the County and the other part of our funding goes to actual project implementation. So, we've been really fortunate the Wilson Foundation, the County and IDA that provided in kind support and then the Northern Chautauqua Community Foundation and Gebbie Foundation for their commitment.

In 2024 we worked in various ways on almost 60 individual projects. That's CCPEG Zone Initiatives, as well as I mentioned, supporting those of our partners, helped to leverage upwards of 4 million dollars, and that is a conservative figure in both grant funding and total project costs or priority projects that fall within the five work group categories, Business Development, Housing, Infrastructure, Placemaking, Workforce Readiness and Development. We have approximately 110 active partners within those five work groups that meet quarterly - do really collaborate, share updates - what's going on. We have guest speakers that discuss best practices and how to approach difficult projects -and we also really, in those work groups, prioritize opportunities and discuss projects that are competitive for applicable State, Federal other funding opportunities.

So in 2024, the Partnership brought in about \$2.4 million dollars in direct funding to CREDC and we invested \$487,000 almost \$488,000 to advance 35 individual projects again, our own and those of our partners. One quick figure, I'll add, that isn't in here, but looking back at five years of the Partnership, we've helped more than \$50 million dollars be invested in these project priorities.

Mark already touched on some of these, but flipping to the next page, just itemized list of the Grant Awards. Again, we're most of all excited by the three year commitment by the Wilson Foundation, which will really help allow us to do what we're doing for the next three plus years. I'll also just draw your attention to two Department of State Grants we're able to obtain in the last year or so, both to advance Brownfield Planning efforts in Jamestown and Countywide.

The following table is just a list of the funding that we've allocated to help various projects get over the finish line and then flipping to the next page Mark already touched on some of these, but again the Chadakoin River Activation -this has taken some time, but again, as Mark said, we have an award winning plan, and \$2 million dollars or more secured to advance five individual projects, behind us in the basin adjacent to the Comedy Center to activate that area of the city.

We completed a \$150,000 Marketing Campaign to promote the Grape and Grain Trail and that promotes the existing wineries as part of Lake Erie Wine Country, but also the breweries, distilleries, and tourism assets of the County. Mark mentioned the trails map, a lot of work went into that thanks to our Planning Department - Rebecca and Jacob Bodeway for leading that effort.

Chadakoin River, Central and East Brownfield Opportunity Area project I just mentioned - we'll be kicking that off hopefully this spring - looking at five sites and keying up hopefully a private investment and reactivating, redeveloping key sites adjacent to the Chadakoin.

Continued support for the city of Dunkirk in their \$10 million dollar DRI award. We're involved in several individual projects and helping the City implement those.

Mark already mentioned, but a lot of work went in last year to develop kind of a two phase housing strategy. The first phase was looking at, what's the market today? And then five years from now - and the second part, what are actions, projects, initiatives within our control? - that the County IDA, Partnership, and our partners can influence to build more housing throughout the county.

You all know well about the LIVE CHQ Initiative by now, but really just wanted to recognize Jason again. When we brought Jason on almost a year and a half ago or so, we had a concept, consultant, and some resources, and Jason really took the bull by the horns and implemented that. Not only did he lead the creation of this campaign, but the reconstruction of our two websites last year was a huge undertaking, and Jason and team did a great job with that.

New York Forward support - again, we're helping our communities be more competitive for State funding. We assisted Westfield, Falconer, Findley Lake and Sherman submit applications to the State's \$4.5 million dollar really it's a competition regionally for New York Forward funds for downtown revitalization. We're hopeful that one Chautauqua County community will be announced as successful four and a half million dollar grant awardee hopefully within the next couple of weeks.

A lot went in - we continue to advance Trail Development last year, focusing on Phase 4 of the Overland Trail Reconstruction that in and of itself was a hundred and forty thousand dollar plus effort, but in the last five years, Jacob Bodeway our trail guy has helped us secure more than \$850,000 of investments to maintain our trails and develop that trail.

We already spoke about Shovel Ready Site Development, but the Partnership team supports the IDA on those efforts.

Then finally related to LIVE CHQ Monica Simpson took the lead in developing and launching this Workforce Ambassadors Program. It's basically our County welcome wagon to help new employees, you know, become part of our community and to help encourage those on the fence about accepting the job or moving here - what assets we have in our community, and why they should do that.

So again, just in closing happy to answer any questions about projects. This isn't an exhaustive list of everything we're working on there the highlights. Thanks again to our team again, Rebecca Monica, Jason, Kristy, Crystal, Jacob, but also huge amount of work goes into administering all these grants and funding. So, thank you again to Kayla and Shelby. Jeanette's also helpful with setting up meetings and helping us do what we do and again to our more than a hundred -hundred and ten active engaged Partners, and our funders, the County, the IDA, and the Foundations to help us do what we do. Any questions?

Gary Henry

It's impressive, it's dizzying. I don't know how you keep it all straight. Very, good, very good.

Nate Aldrich

Thank you.

Gary Henry

Who is going to be doing the Treasurer's Report for CREDC?

Kayla Strandburg

I will. Kayla reviewed and discussed the Treasurer's Report.

Gary Henry

Any questions on the Treasurer's Report? Do we have a motion to accept it?

Sagan Sheffield-Smith

So moved.

Gary Henry

Thank you Sagan. Do we have a second?

Dan Heitzenrater

Second.

Gary Henry

Dan. All those in favor say Aye.

Board

Aye Unanimous.

Gary Henry

Opposed? The Report has been accepted. Any Old Business to come before the CREDC? Hearing none we will consider the CREDC Meeting adjourned. Thank you.

Meeting adjourned at 11:32 a.m.

Amy S. Hardin
(Assistant) Secretary

Gary Henry
(Vice) Chairman