

**City of Keene**  
**New Hampshire**

**AD-HOC COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**  
**COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**Tuesday, March 19, 2019**

**1:00 PM**

**Conference Room 2nd Floor**

**Members Present:**

Mitchell Greenwald, Chair  
George Hansel, Councilor  
George Foscett, BHG Masiello Real Estate  
Joseph Walier, Walier Chevrolet  
Phil Suter, Chamber of Commerce  
Bill Hutwelker, Swanzey Selectman  
Timothy Murphy, SWRPC  
Keith Thibault, SCS  
Jack Dugan, MEDC  
Jordan Benik, People's Linen  
Elizabeth Dragon, City Manager  
Dominic Perkins, Savings Bank of Walpole  
Kendall Lane, Mayor

**Members Not Present:**

Gary Lamoureux, Councilor  
Rebecca Hamilton, Machina Arts  
Chris McIntosh, Clark-Mortenson  
Melinda Treadwell, President KSC

**Staff Present:**

Med Kopczynski, Economic Development,  
Initiatives, and Special Projects Director

**Others:**

Michael Burnett, Cheshire Career Center  
Jim DuMond, Franklin Pierce  
Dan Osborn, River Valley Com. College  
John Raffensberger, Business owner  
Rachel Dattilo, KSC student  
Rod Bouchard, Asst. County  
Administrator

**1. Call to Order- Roll Call**

Chair Greenwald called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM and read the Committee Charge.

**2. Introduction of Guest(s) and New Members**

Chair Greenwald welcomed everyone and introductions were made.

**3. Approval of Minutes- February 19,2019**

Councilor Hansel motioned to approve the minutes of February 19, 2019 as submitted. Mr. Foscett seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

**4. Specific Topic(s)- Workforce Development**

**a. Dr. James DuMond, Franklin Pierce University**

Chair Greenwald referred to the discussion with President Treadwell last month regarding what Keene State College is doing and added that is why we have other educational representatives here today.

Jim DuMond, Provost and Vice-President of Academic Affairs said one of the President's major initiatives is to look at how Franklin Pierce can better support the community and the Monadnock Region. She started a Business Relations Taskforce within the University with the key focus of trying to build our relationships more with the partners in this region. We came up with a number of initiatives and things we are doing. Mr. DuMond noted the importance of being involved and shared that President Mooney was recently appointed as the President of the Board for Hannah Grimes. Mr. DuMond said President Mooney encourages her staff to be involved in the community; Mr. DuMond serves on the Board for the Peterborough Chamber of Commerce. He continued we reach out as much as we can; we sponsor the Radically Rural program and the Trendsetters Awards. We believe in giving back to the community as much as we can.

Mr. DuMond said our current efforts center on developing partnerships with Corporate America in this region. We currently have four area agencies, 17 hospitals, 13 municipalities including Keene, and six New Hampshire based corporations that are all partners with us. What does that partnership mean- it means their employees can come to us for various trainings. One of those trainings can be at the request of the employer- partners can request these trainings free of charge from us. If an employer/partner needs an employee workshop in a specific area we will develop it and deliver it free of charge. Classes can be taken traditionally or online; over the past four years employees have taken over 1500 courses from Franklin Pierce. He noted the savings to employers/employees of over a quarter million dollars over that same period of time. Mr. DuMond addressed competency based learning called PLA noting Franklin Pierce is almost the pioneer for this type of learning in the state.

Continuing, Mr. DuMond said we have a great partnership with C&S Wholesale Grocers; we call it the C&S Scholars Program. Mr. DuMond outlined the program including the internship and full-time co-op experience if selected. Mr. DuMond said Franklin Pierce is looking to replicate this program with other corporations in the region. We listen to the employers' needs. This experience helps them build the soft skills everyone talks about. Mr. DuMond noted Franklin Pierce developed an internship manual that will help employers who want to offer an internship. He continued it is available free of charge and we will walk you through all the steps if anyone is interested.

Mr. DuMond said we also have a Small Business Advisory group made up of students who take on a semester long project under the guidance of faculty. These students help small business to figure out their business plan or readjust it if necessary. He provided examples of small businesses who utilized this service such as Copper Cannon Distillery, Spiral Airfoil, and Customer Skills for the Keene Chamber of Commerce. We also have a relationship with the Score Program and we have Business Finds (this is the club model for students).

Mr. DuMond noted the recent development of the College of Business Advisory Board. He noted members from local businesses who serve on the Board.

Lastly Mr. DuMond addressed academics- what is new on the horizon. He said we are going through a bit of reorganization at the moment. Franklin Pierce was setup horizontally- we had graduate students and undergrad students; we did not think about the alignment from undergrad to graduate student. So we now have the College of Business, College of Health and Natural Sciences, and the College of Justice and Society. We have also created the School of Professional Programs which is designed to be our entrepreneurial arm. Right now we are developing courses for cyber security even though we do not know how long that bubble will last/be in demand. We are also bringing in badging and other certificate programs in addition to those mentioned earlier.

Mr. Walier asked how a new company would become a partner. Mr. DuMond replied it is a very simple process (Articulation Agreement) and we would probably be reaching out to a new company coming to Keene.

Chair Greenwald commented he likes the fact you are reaching out with young students and are reaching out to existing workforce for retraining. He asked what Franklin Pierce has going on to encourage retention in the region. Mr. DuMond replied we spend millions bringing students to this region and we are highly vested in seeing them stay in this region. If we are able to attract them to our University we want them to have the internship opportunities and become part of the workforce here. Another program we are developing that may help the region is an entry levels Masters Nursing Program. We are looking at developing a partnership with Dartmouth Hitchcock for this 15 month program.

The City Manager shared a meeting she, the Mayor, and President Mooney had last week where they discussed retention. The City Manager noted President Mooney had some good ideas and they had a good brainstorming session. The City Manager noted discussion of a workforce connect event. Students could be matched with employers through some type of application and we could make it a fun event. She also shared discussion regarding looking at benefits differently. The City Manager said perhaps we hold a benefits structure workshop as students are always talking about their student loan debt. President Mooney had some great ideas about how to connect the resources we have in the region with employers and then maybe how to look at how we attract our employees by looking at our benefits package. Mayor Lane agreed noting one of the biggest issues students have when they finish college is the student debt. They need jobs that will pay them enough to deal with the debt they have acquired going to school. The Mayor said one of the things we talked about was how to restructure benefits packages that are attractive to younger people. Current benefit packages are outdated- based on a model that goes back 40 years and is related to employees staying with one company their entire working career. That idea is outdated with today's workers. A benefits package that deals with student debt may be a way to attract young people. Mr. DuMond agreed with the Mayor's comments and shared the data we see now supports the fact young people change jobs seven times in their careers. He said it would be money well spent by employers to try and figure out how to link student debt to retention.

**b. Michael Burnett, Director Cheshire Career Center**

Michael Burnett, Director Cheshire Career Center asked how many in the room were familiar with the Center and what they do. He distributed two handouts 1. The Cheshire Career Center and 2.3 Functions of Work Based Learning (WBL) Overview. Mr. Burnett said he would provide an overview of what they do at the Career Center.

Mr. Burnett said we have 16 CT cited programs at the Career Center. They range from automotive, to fire science, to culinary, to EMT, construction trades and culinary. Mr. Burnett shared how committed and dedicated the staff at the Career Center are about what they do on a daily basis to help our students become prepared for the workforce or secondary education. Mr. Burnett shared his work history noting his passion is to help kids find their career paths in life.

Mr. Burnett said they now serve about 927 students along with students from Monadnock High School and Fall Mountain High School. He would like to see both High Schools numbers go up; they are currently at 50 to 60. Mr. Burnett noted difficulties for students to get on the buses to attend their programs. He explained the students are very successful, they are learning the soft skills mentioned earlier, and the hard skills of their programs. The students are applying these skills out in the workforce. He said right now our numbers are extremely low for work-based opportunities; we have about 20 and we need to increase that number. We can provide students workforce skills and the opportunity to take college level classes. Mr. Burnett said we have an agreement with Running Start at all the Community Colleges in New Hampshire. He added all of our programs offer college credit.

Mr. Burnett continued it is not the vocational education of our grandparents' days; we offer industry recognized credentials. Mr. Burnett said is asking today is how we can work together and how can we get more students out in the business community. We are the liaison between the students and the business world. Mr. Burnett said parents do not understand what opportunities things like manufacturing have to offer in this region. He noted he is planning a lot of outreach to help educate parents and students at a younger age. Mr. Burnett said they are reaching out to Middle School students to show them what it is available when they get to High School.

Mr. Burnett said another thing they are doing is implementing counselors within the Counseling Department knowing and understanding the linkages between careers and workforce.

Chair Greenwald asked how is the connection between the Career Center, River Valley, Keene State, and Franklin Pierce. Mr. Burnett replied we work with River Valley for our Running Start Program and we are talking to Keene State College.

Mr. Foskett shared that he and two others started the Build a House Program 40 years ago and asked if it was still being done. Mr. Burnett replied in the affirmative noting how successful it is, in addition to being self-sufficient. He said students learn a construction career pathway and our goal is to create more of a pathway in construction trades- electrical, plumbing, and HVAC for example. Mr. DuMond offered to speak to students at the Career Center as he also started out in a program like this.

Rod Bouchard shared his experience developing a small industrial park where one of the clients had an internal internship program and asked if there were any programs like that now in the area. Mr. Osborn replied the Community College system of New Hampshire is operating under a statewide

apprenticeship grant. The state funding was obtained through the federal Department of Labor and it seeks to partner with businesses looking to develop a registered apprenticeship program. Mr. Osborn continued it has been very successful and noted Teleflex Medical, in Jaffrey, as an example. The grant hopes to put businesses and the regulations around registered apprenticeships together; it also helps defray tuition costs if they need to go to school. Councilor Hansel commented on Filtrine's welding apprenticeship that was developed through Keene Community Education. Mr. Osborn shared anecdotal evidence of the success of these programs and employee retention. Councilor Hansel commented on the value of the apprenticeship certificates internationally in the trades.

Mr. Walier asked if the Career Center was tied into New Hampshire Vo-Tech. Mr. Burnett replied in the affirmative. Mr. Walier commended the Career Center for its work.

**c. Dan Osborn, Coordinator of Workforce Development River Valley Community College**

Dan Osborn, Coordinator of Workforce Development noted River Valley is celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> year. He referred to the partnership President Treadwell outlined at the last meeting adding this can only be a great positive.

Mr. Osborn said workforce is largely what we do at the Community College. He referred to the Nursing Program which is kind of their big calling card with locations in Keene and Claremont which is always full. Mr. Osborn said we had only been accepting students every other year to the program in Keene; we are hoping in the years to come to have enough faculty to run the program every year and double the number of nurses we put out. Addressing the pipeline with Dartmouth and Cheshire Medical Mr. Osborn said they have noted incredible attrition in all of their departments. Many are working well below their education. As a solution they see increasing the pipeline for a career trajectory from the Career Center, to the Community College into a four year program through the employer. The employee sees a well-paying career trajectory mostly paid for so the student debt becomes less, and they can continue on to whatever they feel is their ceiling. Mr. Osborn continued we are trying to build that model with all of our Allied Nursing Programs. He noted trying to build connections with employers around the shortages of medical assistants. This has been a successful apprenticeship program within the grant project he spoke about earlier. Mr. Osborn also noted the role River Valley plans in manufacturing. He added we will continue to produce Articulation Agreements with the Career Center and Keene States programs so the students can continue on to a four-year degree.

Addressing River Valley's role as a college, Mr. Osborn said we are sort of the middle ground between CTE centers and the four year schools, and acts as a bridge that is hopefully more affordable to students. He reiterated earlier comments that many students are just not ready for a four-year school even if they can afford it. He also said we try to meet the needs of the community.

Mr. Osborn touched on the partnership with the Career Center- Running Start. This is a dual enrollment for High School students who get a reduced cost per class credit. Students can receive college credit for their classes. Student enrollment has continued to increase over the years with 223 students enrolled in 2019. He continued the focus is generally on the IT/computer science areas, business and accounting, and medical terminology and the Allied Health Program. Linking this to the employers finalizes the deal in the eyes of the students and parents.

Mr. Bouchard asked Mr. Osborn to touch on the LPN Program noting the County Nursing Home is short about 50 staff members. Mr. Osborn said this is a problem we hear about all the way from Massachusetts to our Lebanon service area. He continued we had a program four or five years ago; it was discontinued because of the market and losing our ASN accreditation. Getting certified teachers was also a big challenge for us. Our Nursing Program is back and we have heard the call for the LPN need so the Community College system has stepped up and said we will develop that program. Mr. Osborn noted River Valley would be taking that lead. He hopes the programs will be starting by 2020 and outlined that process. He also noted there is some state money set aside to start the program. Mr. Bouchard said if you are looking for any input our senior staff would be willing to contribute. Mr. Osborn agreed to pass the offer on.

Mr. Kopczynski mentioned Building Inspectors and asked if any of the speakers had thought about that aspect of the trades. He noted the traditional trades and suggested the scarcer market today is probably the people who do controls. He does not see any training for people doing energy codes and things like that. Mr. Bouchard commented this is a huge problem the County sees with the HVAC vendors. Mr. Bouchard suggested the number of people who are competent in the controls is small. Mr. Osborn commented if there is a need within the state we are certainly willing to look at any viable certificate program.

Chair Greenwald commented he is impressed with the reach out to non-traditional students that River Valley does. Mr. Osborn commented they make up over 50 percent of our total students. He continued our average student age is about 28 years old with women being our largest population (28-30 years old) mostly in the Healthcare fields. Chair Greenwald also mentioned the popularity of the massage therapy program.

Mr. Benik referred to Mr. Kopczynski's comments saying he thinks it can sometimes be the salability of the major and the job to the person who is trying to decide what they are going to do. He continued when you are talking about a Building Inspector and energy codes how are we able to repackage this for younger people who love the idea of a green world. How do we link those two concepts together? Mr. Benik suggested there is a real competition right now between the Career Centers, Community Colleges and more real world methods of pursuing a career and the old school Liberal Arts method.

## **5. Future Topics-**

April 16<sup>th</sup> 2019- Financial Resources- Available for existing or potential businesses  
Opportunity Zone, 79E, NMTC, CDBG  
May 21<sup>st</sup> 2019- Housing  
June 18<sup>th</sup> 2019 –Compensation

## **6. Topics Discussed and Parked**

- a. Arts and Culture**
- b. Energy, Use and Supply**
- c. County Economic Development Efforts**
- d. Current and Future Airport Economic Development Efforts – Jack Wozmak, Airport Manager**
- e. Current and Future MEDC Economic Development Efforts – Jack Dugan,**

**President**

**f. Workforce Development Training and Education- Dr. Melinda Treadwell, President  
Keene State College**

**7. Draft Report Goal -Workforce Development**

**i. Training and Education**

**ii. Housing**

**iii. Culture**

**iv. Compensation**

**8. Next Meeting Date – April 16, 2019**

**9. Adjournment - There being no further business Chair Greenwald adjourned the meeting at 1:57 PM.**

Respectfully submitted by,  
Mary Lou Sheats- Hall, Minute taker  
March 22, 2019

Reviewed- M.K. Kopczynski March 27, 2019