

Finger Lakes Workforce Investment Board
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
Finger Lakes Workforce Investment Board, Conference Room B
Via Zoom
Friday, December 18, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.

ATTENDANCE:

Members: K. Bailey, K. Bronson, J. Celso, J. Davis, S. Davis, S. Griffin, G. Maine, M. Manikowski, A. McGraw, R. Plympton, L. Principio, T. Sloane, M. Sykes, J. Vrabel

Staff: Lynn Freid, Karen Springmeier, Michael Woloson, Jennifer May

I. Remote/Independent Workers – Peter Fairweather of Fairweather Consulting

Mr. Fairweather provided a glimpse into the update to the Economic Development Strategic Plan for Ontario County, which stresses the need to focus on independent/remote workers. Mr. Fairweather shared that enticing existing remote workers to stay in the area and attracting remote workers to the area needs to be a paramount goal of the region. The Finger Lakes region, Ontario County especially, remains whole while the world economy has changed drastically due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Ontario County boasts superior location, leadership, economic diversity and high-value added technology development. The plan will be available on the Ontario County website once approved.

II. Economic Development Updates (State of the County – Impact from COVID-19)

Ontario County – Mr. Manikowski – COVID-19 numbers are high and getting worse and the number of hospitalizations are concerning. Mr. Manikowski shared that it may be many months before vaccines are widely distributed and effective, and he hopes that essential businesses remain stable in the meantime.

Seneca County – Ms. Davis – It has been a strong year for Seneca County IDA, better than last year. There has been an abundance of private dollars spent on projects in the county. Wineries are transitioning back to online sales and cutting back on staff.

Wayne County – Ms. Bronson – The county is strong with IDA projects and the 2nd annual Start Up Pitch is underway. The contest has seen an increase in applications and there are currently six finalists. Wayne Corp has offered another round of deferments for borrowers that are being utilized. Silver Hill is updating signage and new businesses are moving into the park. The park has partnered with the Eagle Scouts, who have helped rebuild bridges on the walking path.

Yates – Mr. Griffin – It has been a good year for IDA, and 2021 is looking even better. There are multiple solar projects planned and possibly two corporate park projects. Housing remains a challenge in the county due to people moving into the area. Yates County hopes for a regional collaboration for marketing strategy to combat COVID-19: masks, social distancing, etc. Mr. Griffin also mentioned that wineries have seen fewer visitors, but those visitors are spending more money.

WDI – Ms. Freid – WDI performed a short survey of wineries in the Southern Tier and found that wineries are shifting to yearlong marketing rather seasonal marketing and moving sales and tasting experiences online.

III. Workforce Development Updates

Ontario County – Ms. Bailey – Business Services remains active in the county, with OJTs and incumbent worker training with small manufactures. The county continues to add digital content for job seekers to access from home.

Wayne County – Mr. Celso – The county continues to support OJTs and classroom trainings and hopes to set up a virtual recruitment with the WIB.

Yates County – Mr. Davis – The website has been reworked to present more digital services and Ms. Principio has been working with the Chamber to notify public of paid sick leave. The county is promoting the OJT program.

IV. FLWIB Update

LinkedIn 101 virtual workshop scheduled for January 14th.

Virtual Veterans Employer Panel scheduled for January 21st.

FAME's scholarship account has regained lost value and added new contributions over the fall.

Next meeting: Friday, March 12, 2020, via Zoom.

The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 10:20 a.m.