

Manufacturing Innovation Fund Advisory Board

Meeting Minutes

Department of Economic and Community Development

October 3, 2019

9:00-10:30 AM

Attendance

- Board Members
 - Present: Beatriz Gutierrez, Don Balducci, Chris DiPentima, John Zoldy, Colin Cooper, Kelli Vallieres, John Zoldy
 - Board Members Participated via Conference call: None
 - Absent: Beverlee Dacey, Emir Redzic, Shane Eddy, Todd Pihl
- Quorum: Yes
- Stakeholders:
 - Ron Angelo, (CCAT), Paul Striebel (CCAT), Natalie Real (CCAT), Bonnie DelConte (CONNSTEP), Eric Brown (CBIA)
 - Stakeholders Participated Via Conference Call: Bernice Zampano (DOL), Nicholas Zuba (CT Green Bank), Martha Paluch Prou (Phoenix Manufacturing)
- DECD Staff: Carmen Molina-Rios, Barbara Fernandez, Alvetta L. Spencer

Welcome & Introductions

Beatriz Gutierrez opened the meeting at 9:00 and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

August Minutes (Vote):

Beatriz asked if everyone had an opportunity to review the minutes and requested a motion to approve. Don Balducci moved to have the August minutes approved. Chris DiPentima seconded the motion. The minutes were approved and passed.

Public Session: Beatriz inquired if there was anyone in the room or on the phone that had any comments and questions that they would like to board to hear. There were none and closed the public session.

Portfolio Update: Carmen Molina Rios provided an update on the MIF Portfolio. She stated that not a lot has changed since the last meeting. All the money has been bonded. The only outstanding payment to be made is for the CT Center for Excellence for Composites. All other programs have been paid to date. Beatriz commented that the use of the unobligated balance and the CCAT earmarks are what the board has to direct and come to an agreement with. Colin Cooper pointed out that, along with the unobligated balance, there are some obligated funding that hasn't been spent by the programs. Beatriz noted that DECD has been hearing great feedback on the Incumbent Worker Training Program and the Manufacturing Voucher Program from industry and the stakeholder community. In addition, she highlighted there is administration funding available to the board to bring on a third party to help the board think strategic, if desired. Chris DiPentima indicated that CBIA undertook a survey that confirmed the community is highly supported of Incumbent Worker Training, Voucher and Apprenticeship.

Manufacturing Officer Update: Beatriz stated that we can expect a decision on the Chief Manufacturing Officer shortly. She highlighted the interview process including the selection committee consisting of key state agencies, i.e. DECD, UCONN, Dept. of Labor, Dept. of Higher Education, Dept. of Education, and Board of Regents. There were very qualified candidates with depth in their field and very impressive with great vision. Commissioner Lehman expects to make a decision next week. He apologizes that it is taking a little long but we want to make sure there is an agreement on who best can help us move forward. DECD is excited to have this person on the team and is eager to move forward into a more strategic direction. Chris DiPentima asked if there has been thought as to how this person will interact with the board. Beatriz replied that she is unsure but we can expect that the Manufacturing Officer will be part of the board and have interaction with the board.

MVP Update: Paul Striebel gave an update on MVP. He stated that it is a very popular program and he continues to get inquiries of the program. He shared details about the availability of funds and the number of applications received and

how many applications are pending approval. Concerns were raised that the program is oversubscribed and that we align the businesses expectations. Colin Cooper asked about the timing of accepting applications, processing and when the funding is ready to go out to the client. Right now there are applications in the pipeline and notices are provided to the companies letting them know that they are in the queue and will be processed based on availability of funding. Paul provided a highlight of the metrics that are reported monthly to the board.

Advanced Composites Update

Ron Angelo reviewed the letter he provided the board sharing the history, background dating back to 2015 and projects of the composite machining cell program. The Zimmerman is a very unique piece of equipment for potential unique projects. After survey and asking a lot of questions of companies, Natalie Real of CCAT has worked with a few companies, large and supply chain companies, and identified a very critical part that was well suited for the machine. This work is currently being performed out of state. The companies came together on the utilization of the machine and CCAT has agreements in place. Commissioner Lehman wanted to make sure CCAT briefed the board.

Barbara Fernandez stated that Commissioner Lehman did send CCAT a letter confined to the contract and took no position as to whether or not this is a route he supports. The obligations remain covered by the DECD contract and he wanted the board to be informed. CCAT is not absolving itself of its obligations to the equipment and program.

There was some discussion regarding: 1) development versus production, 2) exclusivity of use; and 3) the potential revenue stream. In response Beatriz stated according to the contract it is up to CCAT to determine the use of the equipment as long as they meet the intent of the program and obligations of the contract.

Other Business

Energy on the Line: Carmen stated that the MOU expires in December 30, 2019 and the CT Green Bank is requesting a no cost one-year extension until December 2020. There are 9 projects in the pipeline. Due to the length of timing and the engagement of the business it is a longer process. The Energy on Line program they feel that a year will get them to fully extend the money and be able to move the projects through the process. The request to the board is to approve a no cost extension. Colin Cooper asked if the board doesn't approve the extension will the funding can come back to the MIF. Beatriz, responded yes. Nicholas Zuba of CT Green Bank confirmed the request, number of projects in the pipeline and added that contractors are seeing more interests from manufacturers. Since the board requires additional information, the board will take the vote on a later date. Beatriz asked the board to provide Carmen or Beth any questions they may have so that the board can be informed prior to the vote.

Executive Session

Meeting Adjourned

Ms. Gutierrez requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Don Balducci moved the motion and Chris DiPentima seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Ms. Gutierrez closed the meeting at 10:36 a.m.