



**ROCKVILLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, INC.
WORKFORCE EDUCATION COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

Wednesday, August 26, 2020

1:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Via Zoom

ATTENDEES: Raquel Bunai, Kathryn Davis, Ryan Gandy, Steve Greenfield, Whitney Harmel, Ed Harrington, Kim Kelley, Carla Merritt, Julie Monshemvula, Cindy Stewart, Annica Wayman

SEPTEMBER 30 ROUNDTABLE

Dr. Kelley discussed that the goal for this meeting is to finalize the topic for the roundtable, confirm the facilitators, and invite them to the September 30 REDI roundtable event.

At the July 29, REDI meeting, there was discussion to extend an invitation to Mr. Mark Drury and Mr. Leonard Howie, who are new leaders in Montgomery County and who the group thought would be of interest to employers in the City of Rockville. Since the hospitality industry has been so hard hit due to COVID19, there was also a suggestion at the last meeting to invite Mr. Patrick Cimerola, from Choice Hotels to facilitate. However, he is unable to attend so we could contact him again and see if someone else from Choice Hotels could attend. Ryan Gandy has reached out to Mr. Drury and Mr. Leonard and is waiting to hear back from them. He will let the committee know when they respond.

Dr. Kelley mentioned that if Mr. Cimerola or his designee would be able to attend, she/he could talk about renewal and a comeback for the hospitality industry. Mr. Drury and Mr. Howie could discuss resiliency and coming back from COVID19 from their perspective. Dr. Kelley asked the committee what are the kinds of things we would like for the facilitators to discuss. The task force members suggested:

- What is their vision?
- What do they see the role of Workforce Montgomery and other economic development engines in the county?
- What are their major initiatives and strategic vision in their new leaderships roles in Montgomery County?
- Since hospitality is in such flux, perhaps Mr. Cimerola could attend a future roundtable.
- If Mr. Cimerola attended the September roundtable, there could be discussion regarding resiliency and reenergizing the hospitality industry.
 - What are the services they'll engage in?
 - Talent attraction. How are they going to seek their talent and train them in a post COVID19 world?

- Steve Greenfield mentioned that Mr. Howie led the county pandemic workforce sub-committee and participated on the pandemic economic development committee. Good questions to ask him would be:
 - How is he applying his vision to these times of the pandemic?
 - What has changed?
 - What are they doing that is new?
 - How is he addressing the pandemic on the talent attraction side and economic development side of the industry?
- There was an article in the Washington Business Journal that discussed that Montgomery County is not living up to the standards and prosperity it should be having during COVID19. It compared Northern Virginia job creation to Montgomery County unfavorably.
- Dr. Kathryn Davis discussed that she would like to provide a little pushback on hospitality at this time because if we're talking about workforce and how to attract it, people have been furloughed and there is no problem with attracting talent because people want to get back to work as soon as they can, particularly in the hospitality industry. Their challenge might be how to determine out of this plethora or potential workers who to choose. Hospitality might not provide the most important insight at this time. She thinks that getting information from hospitality at this time might not be the most significant need and thinks it should be discussed at a roundtable at another time.
 - How do you pivot and take these furloughed workers into other industries?
 - Dr. Kelley is in agreement with Dr. Davis because hospitality is of major importance to our region and we need to figure out alternatives. A focused roundtable on this issue could be another useful alternative.
 - Dr. Davis mentioned that a lot of the core tenets of hospitality will remain the same in terms of food provision, services provisions, hotels, and managing the front desk. Many of these aspects of hospitality will remain the same and she doesn't envision a great deal of change. However, the concern that she has is people trying to pull employees out of that industry to the point where the industry won't have enough to prospective employees available to attract later on.
 - How do we handle the pipeline today versus what happens to the pipeline in eight months and what are those implications?
- Dr. Kelley thinks there is plenty of time to have a conversation at the September 30 roundtable with Mr. Drury and Mr. Howie and we don't need to have hospitality at this roundtable.
 - Cindy Stewart agrees and thinks that when we promote the roundtable we could say that this is an opportunity for hiring managers and business leaders to talk with the board about their needs.
 - Carla Merritt mentioned that it would be great if it could be tied into somebody that is seeking a lot of talent because she's a little hesitant to believe that is being done right now.
 - Cindy mentioned that MS is hiring right now.
 - Dr. Kelley asked Ed Harrington if banking is hiring at the moment. Ed responded that many students that have graduated from college think of Wall Street as banking but there is a dire need for underwriters and junior lenders at the moment. He's happy to hire the "C" students right now, he doesn't need the "A" students that want to go to

New York and said that a lot of community banks would love to interface with what we're trying to do here.

- Dr. Kelley said that we have three possibilities with Ed Harrington, Jose Ochoa, and a biotech or cyber person. She mentioned asking Jennifer Hester to speak on behalf of the biotech industry and the three of them could ask questions from the perspectives of their industries in response to the statements by Mr. Drury and Mr. Howie.
 - Have a panel with five people and the employers will speak about their plans to support, for example, community banking and the fact that we have a huge gap in people who are lending at a time when lending is exploding.
 - Should there be a moderator? Carla mentioned having Dr. Ernesto Chanona who is the director of Biotech at the Maryland Department of Commerce could moderate because when we start talking highly technical topics about education he has good questions to ask and could easily speak with Mr. Drury and Mr. Howie with a Montgomery County focus. She also mentioned either the possibly of having Annica Wayman speak or ask Annica if Dr. Kizzmekia Corbett could be on the panel to discuss recruiting for NIH. Annica responded that Dr. Corbett does not do recruiting for NIH. Carla mentioned that Dr. Corbett is speaking for the National Museum of African American History and Culture and discussing professionals in STEM. Annica mentioned that Dr. Corbett is discussing her career and encouraging students to go into STEM but wouldn't be able to discuss the nuts and bolts of recruitment.
 - Dr. Kelley wasn't sure if it would be on-topic to have Dr. Corbett on the panel because she's not sure what questions she would ask that would directly relate to our employers in this employer-reaction panel.
 - Dr. Davis recommended having a chat moderator for the next roundtable. Dr. Kelley said she would be glad to monitor the chat.

NEXT STEPS

- Need to get confirmation from Mr. Drury and Mr. Howie to be on the panel.
- We are not going to follow up with Mr. Cimerola for September but will ask him to be on a future panel in either October or November with a hospitality focus.
- We will have Dr. Chanona, Mr. Harrington, Jennifer Hester, and Jose Ochoa who will take questions from the audience and comment on the questions.
- The committee needs to put together a list of questions for Mr. Drury and Mr. Howie.
- There are gaps in the Avalanche/CAEL report and show that we have talent acquisition problems in Montgomery County. We could refer to the CAEL data that was commissioned on our workforce.
- We could mention the article in The Washington Business Journal regarding Montgomery County and what are the future plans to address those issues.
- Cindy mentioned distributing the questions ahead of time.
- Steve mentioned that when they talk about the vision and new initiatives for the workforce board we may see some overlap with what has been going on with REDI.
- Cindy mentioned having a conversation with MCEDC to find out what their role is.

- If either Mr. Drury or Mr. Howie cannot attend we should still move forward with the September roundtable.
- Questions for panel include:
 - Roles and their vision as new leaders in the county
 - Role of Workforce Montgomery from their perspective
 - What are their strategic plans and major initiatives for Montgomery County?
 - What is happening with the Workforce Development board?
 - Where is Mr. Howie on defining tasks for the Workforce Development board?
 - How are you applying your vision within this pandemic environment? What has been emphasized? What has changed? What do you think is important for employers to know?
 - What are the insights from these county committees?
- Get the invitation completed
- Get confirmation on the speakers
- Get bios from the speakers
- No breakout rooms for the roundtable in September
- Have each speaker speak for 30 minutes, questions for half an hour, and Dr. Kelley will monitor the chat.