Northwest Colorado Council of Governments
Economic Development District (EDD) Board Meeting
January 27, 2022
Conference Call Only (“Present” means on the call”)

Council & EDD Board Members Present:
Thomas Fridstein, Town of Snowmass Village
Corry Mihm, Summit Prosperity Initiative
DiAnn Butler, Grand County EDD
Jeanne McQueeney, Eagle County
Josh Blanchard, Summit County
Melanie Leaverton, Jackson County Tourism
Kristen Brownson, Town of Breckenridge
Coby Corkle, Jackson County
Skippy Mesirow, City of Aspen
John Bristol, Routt County EDD
Tim Redmond, Routt County
Mark Hoblitzell, CDLE

Others Present:
Christina Oxley, CDLE
Erin McCuskey, SBDC
Carolyn Tucker, Co Workforce
Jamie Hackbarth, EDA
Trent Thompson, EDA
Jessica Valand, CDLE

NWCCOG Staff:
Becky Walter
Talai Shirey
Jon Stavney
Rachel Tuyn

Call to Order:
DiAnn Butler, EDD Chair, called the Economic Development District (EDD) Board meeting to order at 12:31 pm. Roundtable introductions were completed, and a quorum was present for the group.

Approval of October EDD Board Meeting Minutes
M/S: Thomas Fridstein/Kristin Brownson to approve the August 2021 EDD Board Meeting Minutes as presented. Passed: Yes

EDA Denver Regional Office Update
Trent Thompson, Economic Development Representative, provided an updates on EDA Funding.

- American Rescue Act funding. Colorado won funding from Build Back Better Phase I which was awarded to front range communities. Phase II awardees starts in March and finalist can be viewed at https://eda.gov/news/press-releases/2021/12/13/build-back-better-regional-challenge-finalists.htm.
- The Good Job’s challenge deadline is coming up this month.
- US Treasury recently decided that specific funds for government services may be used for matching other funds including ARPA.
- EDA and Congress have discussed reauthorization of eligibility as emergency is coming to end. To view EDA Investment priorities https://www.eda.gov/about/investment-priorities/
- University Center Grants are available for all higher learning education economic development initiatives. Interested parties should contact EDA before this spring. The Kansas RedTire program is interested in expanding to other universities and should be contacted if interested.
- Region 9 is administering a new loan program funded by the EDA on behalf of the NWCCOG Region.
- Colorado received $9 million for tourism and recreation. It has not been confirmed how these funds will be dispersed yet.
- The Colorado Tourism Office’s Tourism Management Grant provides funding for tourism-related projects that develop, enhance, or manage visitor experience in Colorado. The maximum grant amount is $20,000 and the required match is 4:1. For every $1 the qualifying grantee allocates to the proposed project; the Colorado Tourism Office will provide $4 in matching funds. Applications open February 1, 2022 and will close at 4pm on March 3, 2022. https://oedit.colorado.gov/tourism-management-grant
Workforce Update - Resignations and the Pandemic
Christina Oxley, CDLE and Mark Hoblitzell, CDLE provided a EDD Board Workforce Update. The presentation focused on finding solutions to provide quality positions for the limited workforce as 45% of the current NWCCOG region workforce is nearing retirement age. Slowing US birth rates and declining return to workforce combined with the effects of the pandemic have limited the workforce. Defining the Great Shuffle opposed to Great Resignation as the workforce moves to jobs with better pay, work-life balance, better housing options and situations that better fit their needs. Retention is key for strong staffing; a lot comes down to owner/managements willingness to change and make employee accommodations. Several resources provided:

- National hiring gains and losses by industry by sub-sector: https://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.t17.htm
- In-depth look at shifts within the healthcare industry: https://www.healthsystemtracker.org/chart-collection/what-impact-has-the-coronavirus-pandemic-had-on-healthcare-employment/

Discussion was made regarding cost of living and competing with other states for employees. It was recommended the NW regions work together for Best Practices in our community. Success stories from the Good Jobs sessions with the Aspen Institute include employee survey as a retention strategy and updating technology to assist the lack of employees. Additional data from the Good Jobs pilot will be shared as soon as available.

Additional resources:
- https://www.aspeninstitute.org,longform/job-quality-tools-library/index/employers/
- https://goodjobs.pacificcommunityventures.or

New Business, Round Table Conversations
Rachel Tuyn, EDD Director reminded the Regional Economic Summit on May 5th at the Silverthorne Pavilion.

Corry Mihm, Summit Prosperity Initiative shared success with entrepreneur programs that assisted current business owners who need to pivot, new lines of business and new business start-ups. The biggest challenge is housing and childcare shortages.

DiAnn Butler, Grand County EDD started a job share in Grand County which include incentive packages and housing for different businesses and encouraging flexibility in management of staff.

Tim Redmond, Routt County has combined with Moffit and Rio Blanca counties to create a regional cooperative and are establishing common goals. Some of the new regional projects include Craig moving forward with solar garden; Hayden is looking at building a outdoor manufacturing complex and Meeker is expanding the hospital and medical services.

Adjournment:
M/S: Mark Hoblitzell / Christina Oxley adjourned the EDD meeting at 2:02 pm.
Passed: Yes

DiAnn Butler
DiAnn Butler, EDD Chair

Date