



# Franklin Regional Council of Governments Economic Development District (EDD) Governing Board

Date:	May 4, 2017
Time:	3:00 p.m.
Location:	12 Olive Street, Greenfield, MA
Duration:	0.5 hours
Facilitator:	Nan Riebschlaeger, Chair

### EDD Governing Board Attendees:

- Patricia Crosby, Franklin Hampshire Regional Employment Board
- Gary Dillensneider, Franklin County Community Development Corporation
- Linda Dunlavy, Franklin Regional Council of Governments
- John Lunt, Town of Greenfield
- Michael McCusker, Town of Buckland
- Nan Riebschlaeger, Governing Board Chair, Town of Wendell
- Art Schwenger, Town of Heath

### FRCOG Staff:

- Jessica Atwood, Economic Development Program Manager
- Peggy Sloan, Director of Planning and Development
- Alyssa Larose, Land Use Planner

### **1 – Call the meeting to order.**

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Chair Nan Riebschlaeger.

### **2 – Vote to approve minutes from May 24, 2016**

N. Riebschlaeger asked for a vote to approve the May 24, 2016 meeting minutes. A. Schwenger MOVED to approve the May 24, 2016 minutes. G. Dillensneider SECONDED. The motion PASSED unanimously.

### **3 – Economic Development District (EDD) updates: Status of EDA contract and processes; Report from statewide meeting of regional planning agency staff to EDDs.**

J. Atwood presented EDD updates to the Board. She explained that FRCOG was designated an Economic Development District (EDD) in 2006. This designation expands opportunities to access federal funding, including the planning partnership grant to fund staff time to work on the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) program. In October 2016, FRCOG received its contract for the second of a three-year planning grant cycle. FRCOG uses in-kind funds to provide a 50% match, including Linda Dunlavy's time and a state District Local Technical Assistance grant. This new contract reverted to a June 30 deadline for the CEDS Annual Report, and switched back to a reimbursement grant rather than an advance. All contract reporting must be submitted online using a federal government website.

Looking forward, the President's administration recommended eliminating the EDA, however, the short-term continuing resolution to fund federal programs through September 30<sup>th</sup> includes funding for the EDA. FRCOG hopes to receive an invitation letter for FY18 in late May or early June. Atwood noted she anticipates the same funding levels and contract terms as FY17, but cannot be sure until the invitation letter is received.

P. Crosby asked what happened prior to 2006, when the region was designated an EDD. Atwood answered that the CEDS program existed, but funds were cobbled together from FRCOG resources, which was difficult. Of the state's 14 Regional Planning Agencies, eight are EDDs; two are not but have a CEDS program anyway. Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) is not an EDD, and this has been a real challenge for them. Due to lack of funding BRPC staff can't participate in some projects. FRCOG has been very fortunate to have this funding. Various federal administrations have dealt with regions wanting to become an EDD differently.

A question was asked about the timeframe for the current round of funding. Atwood answered that it goes through September 30. After September 30, the worst case scenario will be that FRCOG would have to cobble together funding again. It is not unusual for EDA to be on the chopping block. Annually, FRCOG must submit a report, called the GPRA report, to demonstrate investments made and jobs created or retained as related to the CEDS program.

Recently EDD staff from across the Commonwealth's regions have gotten together to share information on how they operate their respective EDD and CEDS programs. Atwood noted that each program is administered slightly different. One EDD no longer does a CEDS project list now that it is not required. Atwood stated that FRCOG does an open solicitation for projects, others regions only do an invitation based on the likelihood of getting funding. Some EDD Boards and CEDS Committees meet monthly, some only twice a year. Membership composition also differs. Some Regional Planning Agencies use their Executive Council as their EDD and use their regional planning board as their CEDS Committee. It has been interesting to see what works well, what doesn't, and to learn some best practices.

M. McCusker asked if there has been any thought about reconstituting the current setup? Atwood answered that the procedural rules were updated from having specific categories of appointments to more flexible appointments made by the FRCOG Executive Committee. What could change over time is to shift the EDD Governing Board membership to the FRCOG Executive Committee. According to the regulations, EDD Governing Boards are responsible for contract and staff oversight. Some boards fundraise for their match. PVPC receives some of its match from industry contributions, but this is becoming more challenging. Atwood noted that FRCOG does not fundraise from industry. Atwood asked for the Board members' thoughts on EDD Governing Board membership.

M. McCusker asked about utilizing the FRCOG Executive Committee. L. Dunlavy explained that the Executive Committee is her direct boss. She consults with the committee if a project is in trouble, or to decide whether a contract is worth pursuing. The committee has general oversight of the organization. It is a five member board, with two regionally elected members, one Franklin Regional Planning Board member, and two appointed members from the larger 29-member board.

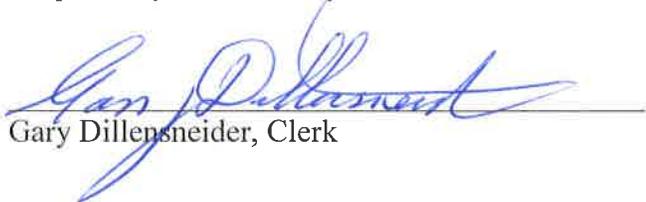
Atwood stated that another format being used by other regions is to have the CEDS Committee and the EDD Governing Board be the same group. She noted normally we do a dual meeting to vote on the

CEDS Plan or Annual Report to avoid duplicative meetings. The regulations say we have to have two different groups, however, the membership requirements are not as strict as in the past.

**4 - Other Business not reasonably anticipated 48 hours in advance, and Adjourn**

N. Riebschlaeger asked if there is any other business. Being none, she asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. A. Schwenger MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 3:20 p.m. G. Dillensneider SECONDED the motion. The motion PASSED.

Respectfully submitted by:



Gary Dillensneider, Clerk