

Manufacturing Innovation Fund Advisory Board

Meeting Minutes

Department of Economic and Community Development

April 4, 2019

9:00-10:30 AM

450 Columbus Boulevard, Plaza South Tower, Conference Room B, Hartford, CT 06103

Attendance

- Board Members Present: Commissioner David Lehman, Beatriz Gutierrez, Don Balducci, John Zoldy, Kelli Vallieres, Beverlee Dacey, Colin Cooper
- Board Members via phone: Shane Eddy, Todd Phil, Chris DiPentima
- Quorum: Yes
- Absent: Emir Redzic, Todd Phil
- Stakeholders Present: Natalie Real, Paul Striebel, Tom Maloney, Ron Angelo, Jeff Crandall, Bernice Zampano, Bonnie DelConte, Eric Brown (CBIA)
- DECD Staff: Carmen Molina-Rios, Barbara Fernandez

Minutes

David Lehman opened the meeting at 9:15 AM. Commissioner Lehman mentioned his background is in finance but he is very excited about learning about manufacturing. Though the state is facing some financial constraints he pledged to do all he could- along with Governor Lamont- to support the industry in Connecticut. Commissioner Lehman told the board he was designating Executive Director Beatriz Gutierrez as the chair of the Manufacturing Innovation Fund. Ms. Gutierrez, who is an engineer and spent the bulk of her career in manufacturing, discussed her background with the board.

Ms. Gutierrez moved to have the January minutes approved. Kelli Vallieres seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

MIF Portfolio

Commissioner Lehman presented the current MIF portfolio. The MIF was authorized for \$75,000,000; of that amount \$70,000,000 has been bonded. The remaining \$5,000,000 is expected to be bonded this fiscal year. After accounting for the earmarks the MIF has \$2,750,000 from the current authorization, assuming no new authorization is received. Todd Phil asked if we are over obligated, he wanted to make sure that they are not making funding commitments to companies with no funding availability. He was assured that the MIF is not over obligated and there is funding in place to cover the current programs. Kellie Vallieres said that it was time to re-think the use of the funds that have not been contracted for; specifically the earmarks.

High Rate Additive Program Discussion

Ron Angelo stated that the program was presented in January, the board had a lot of questions of which CCAT has answered and addressed the board's reservations. Colin Cooper said that the reservations were about the HRAM program in general. He didn't think it was a good idea for the MIF to put funding into

one large machine that would benefit the big companies mostly and not the majority of the supply chain. He said he was not convinced this was the best investment for the MIF. Ron Angelo said that the HRAM program was not for one single piece of equipment; it was a whole cell. He said page two of their presentation addressed that concern. Beverlee Dacey asked why this is not being done at UCONN since they have the tech park. Mr. Angelo said the program is appropriate at CCAT because they work directly with the companies. Jeff Crandall commented that CCAT is working with UCONN on the research, and CCAT uses that information to apply it to specific projects in high rate. He said that there was a great interest in high rate, especially in shipbuilding. Beverlee Dacey asked how much private money will be part of this program. Ron Angelo stated that currently there are no private investors in the program; only state funds. Colin Cooper replied that he did not understand that because there are private companies doing this and that the companies are paying for their own research and development with no state funds. Mr. Cooper stated if the MIF moves forward with this investment we are in fact competing with private industry. Beverlee Dacey pointed out that if this technology is so important to a company then they should pay for it. Todd Phil suggested that if there are private companies in CT currently doing this work they could utilize the voucher model as a way to help develop solutions that work. Ms. Gutierrez suggested that the board have a separate sub-committee to work with CCAT and develop a resolution that everyone can agree with. John Zoldy said that they have a lot of concerns about this program. Kelli Vallieres suggested the sub-committee contact the legislature to determine if this earmark can be changed. The sub-committee members are: Beverlee Dacey, John Zoldy, and Kelli Vallieres.

Program updates: MVP and IWT

Paul Striebel of CCAT presented an MVP program update. He stated that there was still a market need for this program since we have reached less than 15% of the market. Bernice Zampano of DOL presented the IWT program and stated that the program is not over obligated. The demand for the program is steadily increasing. She is giving priority to companies that have not applied in the past.

Other Business: Staff will send out a survey to get input on how frequently the board should meet.

Executive Session-Mobile Lab

Meeting Closed

Ms. Gutierrez requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Don Balducci seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Ms. Gutierrez closed the meeting at 10:45 AM

