

# **Manufacturing Innovation Fund (MIF) Advisory Board**

## *Meeting Minutes*

### **Department of Economic and Community Development**

June 4, 2020

9:00-10:30 AM

*via Teams Meeting*

#### **Attendance**

- Board Members Present: Colin Cooper, Kelli Vallieres, Don Balducci, John Zoldy, Chris DiPentima, Beverlee Dacey
- Board Members Absent: Shane Eddy, Emir Redzic
- Quorum: Yes
- Presenters: Chris Kurker-Stewart (DECD), Paul Striebel (CCAT), Ron Angelo (CCAT), Nicholas Zuba (CT Green Bank)
- Stakeholders: Eric Brown (CBIA), Bonnie Delconte (Connstep), Todd Berch (DOL), Bernice Zampano (DOL)
- DECD Staff: Carmen Molina-Rios, Beth Trenchard

#### **Welcome & Introductions**

Colin Cooper opened the meeting at 9:03 AM.

#### **Minutes**

Chris DiPentima moved to have the March minutes approved. Kelli Vallieres seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **MIF Advisory Board Participation Guide – Public Meetings**

Chris Kurker-Stewart provided information regarding conducting Board meetings in compliance with the Freedom of Information statutes. Highlights included: definition of a public meeting, description of the three types of meetings and specific requirements for each, and procedures to convene an executive session. He also discussed Executive Order 7B which Governor Lamont issued on March 14, 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Executive Order modified some of the requirements for public access to meetings.

#### **COVID-19 Economic Impacts**

Colin Cooper provided an overview of the economic impact due to COVID-19. He noted that the impact to the manufacturing industry varies depending upon the company's products. Current

phased re-opening has been challenging but appears to be going well. With employees not in the workplace, activity has slowed for some of the MIF programs, including Energy on the Line and Incumbent Worker Training (IWT). However, the trends impacting the need for new entrants into manufacturing and upskilling incumbent workers will continue, along with the demand for the IWT, Manufacturing Voucher Program (MVP) and Apprenticeship programs. The grant components of the High Rate Additive Manufacturing (HRAM) and Industry 4.0 programs will also be key in providing assistance to the manufacturing sector.

### **Portfolio Update**

Carmen Molina-Rios provided an update on the MIF Financial Portfolio noting that there have been no additional expenditures since the previous report. There remains a current balance of unexpended administrative funding of approximately \$2.7 million. Colin Cooper suggested a potential use of these funds would be to undertake a study to position CT manufacturers for the upcoming major activities in off-shore wind energy in the state. Since there will be major ports in New London and Bridgeport, there will be an opportunity to develop a supply base selling into those industries. The study would look at the supply bases in the most mature markets of Europe and Asia.

### **Program Updates**

#### **MVP - COVID -19/Traditional**

Paul Striebel provided an update on both the COVID-19 and traditional MVP programs. In response to the COVID-19 impact, the MVP gave priority and focus to manufacturers realigning or expanding capacity and capabilities to respond to the shortages of critical medical equipment and supplies. Applications were accepted from April 7 to May 1 - with a total of 24 grant awards. There were over 2,800 hits on the MVP website in the month of April and 44 new applications that month – of which 39 were COVID related. Current MVP pipeline has 61 applicants requesting \$2.4 million.

#### **Proposed Program Parameters (\$5 million - Vote)**

Colin Cooper informed the Board that an additional \$5 million has been allocated by DECD for continuing the MVP. He presented proposed adjustments to the program parameters required for

the MVP. A discussion ensued among Board members. As a result of the discussion, the following was voted upon:

Approval of the following program parameters for the MVP:

- \$5 million is available for the program
- Grant amounts up to \$49,000
- Maximum company size 100; goal of 70% of grant funds to companies < 50 employees
- Company Match 1:1 for the first \$25,000; 2:1 for the remainder up to the cap (higher match required for prior grant recipients, see below)
- Any company that has received a grant subsequent to June 30, 2018 is ineligible.
- Companies that received a grant prior to June 30, 2018 are eligible for grants up to \$49,000; however, the match requirement will be 3:1
- Applicable uses of funds is consistent with legacy practice – except working capital, real estate and construction related activities are excluded.

John Zoldy motioned and Beverlee Dacey seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

### **HRAM – CCAT Implementation Plan (Vote)**

Ron Angelo provided an overview of CCAT's implementation plan for the High Rate Additive Manufacturing program. He reviewed the timeline of activities, resources and expenditures required to implement the program over the next 36 months in the areas of: SMM Additive Manufacturing Outreach and Education; SMM Technology Application Demonstration Projects; and AM Adoption Program (AMAP) and Technology Transfer.

Chris DiPentima asked if any potential applicants have provided information to CCAT to help guide the implementation plan. Mr. Angelo replied that the development of the program has been industry-driven, including input from advisory committees, hosting workshops and getting feedback from all segments of CT's industrial base.

Mr. DiPentima asked if any adjustments have been made with regard to the healthcare industry in light of the demand for medical equipment and supplies due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Ron Angelo responded that nothing specific has been added; however, the intent of the program is to

provide guidance and assistance to companies from all segments of manufacturing to adopt AM technology at this critical time.

Don Balducci inquired if CCAT will be able to provide the services and deliverables of the program with its existing staff. Mr. Angelo stated that CCAT currently has an engineering and technical staff in place but perhaps may need another skill set in the future. They are also partnering with CMC, ACM and Connstep for effective outreach efforts.

Beverlee Dacey expressed concern regarding the availability of state universities to be engaged in participating in the program in light of COVID-19. Ron Angelo replied that the universities are currently engaged with CCAT on several projects and participation in webinars has been well attended.

Colin Cooper emphasized that we are under uncertain times; however, the interest in additive is palpable. As the landscape changes, the MIF Board may need its partners to pivot and modify.

As a result of the discussion, the following was voted upon:

Approval of CCAT's Implementation Plan for the High Rate Additive Manufacturing program. Kelli Vallieres motioned and John Zoldy seconded. The motion passed with a count of 5-yes and 1-no.

### **Industry 4.0 Supply Chain Initiative**

Due to time constraints, CCAT will provide an update on the Industry 4.0 Supply Chain Initiative at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting.

### **Energy on the Line - Mid Year Review**

Nicholas Zuba provided an update on the Energy on the Line program. Highlights included: to date, there have been 23 closed and completed projects and 3 projects are currently in the pipeline. The MIF funds have been leveraged with over \$13 million in additional funding and 71 jobs have been created.

**Meeting Adjournment**

Colin Cooper requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Chris DiPentima moved the motion and John Zoldy seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Mr. Cooper closed the meeting at 10:54 AM

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