**Minority Business Initiative Advisory Board**

***April Meeting Minutes***

**Thursday, April 17, 2022**

1:00 PM – 2:30 PM

Remotely Held by Teams Meeting Software

Hartford CT, Connecticut

**Attendance**

* Board Members Present: Howard Hill, David Lehman, Avery Gaddis, Roberta Hoskie and Doug McCrory
* Members Absent: Leticia Colon de Mejias, George Mathanool, Pedro Soto
* Quorum: Yes
* DECD Staff Present: Alvetta Spencer, Sheila Hummel, Deputy Commissioner Paul O. Robertson, George Norfleet and Kerron Vernon

**Welcome and Introductions:**

Howard Hill welcomed the group and opened the meeting at 1:07 p.m.

**Presentation/Flow Chart (HEDCO & SHEBA): Sonserae Cicero.**

* Led by the Society of Human Engagement & Business Alignment, LLC (SHEBA Consulting).
* SHEBA has developed a certification program called “RESTART” that provides opportunities to create new pathways for new and existing businesses to sustain, scale, and grow successfully.
* SHEBA’s 6–12-week certification program focuses on assessing small business needs with regards to business strategies, financial growth and projections, infrastructure, strategic plans for growth and development, training, coaching, and mentorship.
* The goal of the program is to move small businesses through a process of developing and outlining solid and sustainable practices to ultimately receive financial assistance.
* To effectively support a high level of service, SHEBA is requesting a state’s investment of $300,000 for “RESTART” to support small businesses.

Howard Hill: Would like to entertain a motion to vote on the SHEBA $300,000 project request.

David Lehman: Accepted the motion

Avery Gaddis: Seconded

Motioned passed

**Minutes:**

Avery Gaddis passed a motion to approve April minutes and minutes were approved.

**Financial Report:** - Sheila Hummel

Sheila Hummel presented the MBI Financial Report. The report was accepted.

* **Use $3M from the balance of the MBRLF – Forgivable Loans**
* **Restart - Certification Program** – Society of Human Engagement and Business Alignment (SHEBA) Assessing Small Business needs with regards to business strategies, financial growth and projections, IT Infrastructure, training, and mentorship; before the funding.
* $55,000 Balance in MBI .

**Program Update:** - Sheila Hummel

* Total Approved: 117
* Pipeline: 15
* HEDCO LOC: 486
* Jobs Created: 355
* Jobs Retained: 636

**Continuation of the MBI Strategy Discussion:**

Kerron Vernon read the minority business initiative strategic development template update

**Roberta Hoskie:** The strategy had a lot of different directions. We need to think about long-term measurable results. Examples include measuring generational impact, wealth creation and economic development in minority communities.

**David Lehman:** The mission statement is too broad and needs to narrow down the focus.

**Howard Hill:** We have broad issues, and we need to have multiple items that we narrow down on.

**Doug McCrory:** We can consolidate all the ideas into three broad categories and fine tune our strategy –economics, health and education.

**Sheila Hummel:** We should reach out to the other state departments to collaborate efforts.

**Roberta Hoskie:** We need to understand more detail and develop a stronger framework before we begin to collaborate with other organizations.

**Doug McCrory:** We need to create a formal business plan to capture the mission/vision plan to be prepared to seek additional CIF funding.

**Paul O. Robertson:** We need to create a timeline for mission/vision statements and business plan.

**Roberta Hoskie:** Volunteered to lead the efforts to develop a timeline and to consolidate the business plan.

**Doug McCrory:** We need to identify how we operationalize the board’s plans.

**Sheila Hummel:** Can we bring someone in to help organize and develop these documents?

**Roberta Hoskie:** Before we bring in a consultant, the board needs to identify clear and direct goals.

**David Lehman:** We need to ensure buy-in from the additional state department stakeholders (DOH, DOE, etc.…)

**Howard Hill:** Let’s build out the economic piece first and begin to bring in the other commissioners and departments as the strategy develops.

**Roberta Hoskie:** Develop a strategy in phases.

**Paul O. Robertson:** Continue to meet frequently to emphasize the sense of urgency.

**David Lehman:** Identify 2 or 3 mission statements as a start and develop a timeline.

**Adjourn:**

Howard Hill: Asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed and meeting was adjourned at 2:32 p.m.