**Manufacturing Innovation Advisory Board**

***Meeting Minutes***

**Department of Economic and Community Development**

April 21, 2022

1:00 -2:30 PM

***via Teams Meeting***

**Attendance**

* Board Members Present: Paul Lavoie, Colin Cooper, Mike Rocheleau, Kelli Vallieres, John Zoldy, Don Balducci, Mark Burzynski, Chris DiPentima
* Board Members Absent: Shane Eddy, Emir Redzic, Beverlee Dacey
* Quorum: Yes
* Stakeholders & Guests: Bernice Zampano (DOL), Ron Angelo (CCAT), John Glidden (CCAT), Jackie Garofano (CCAT), Mary Bidwell (CSCU), Lynn Byers (Quinnipiac University), Jennifer Widness (CCIC), Jessica Taylor (ACM), Beatriz Gutierrez (CONNSTEP), Jeff Orszak (CONNSTEP), Shelly Talley (CONNSTEP), Mike Stimson (CONNSTEP), April Paterno (CT Science Center)
* DECD Staff: Carmen Molina-Rios, Beth Trenchard

**Welcome**

Paul Lavoie opened the meeting at 1:02 PM.

**Minutes (Vote)**

Mike Rocheleau moved to have the February 17, 2022 meeting minutes approved. Don Balducci seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Developing Manufacturing Strategic Plan for CT (Vote)**

Paul Lavoie discussed the importance of developing a Manufacturing 2032, 10-year Strategic Plan for CT. In his ongoing visits with manufacturing companies throughout the state, manufacturers are focused on specific themes which will need to be addressed in the strategy to grow manufacturing in CT. Themes include workforce development (which is being driven by the Office of Workforce Strategy (OWS) and will be built into the Plan) as well as efficiencies in automation and innovation.

A multi-pronged approach will be necessary to grow the manufacturing workforce, including continuing to implement workforce initiatives; accelerating the adoption of Industry 4.0 technologies; making the manufacturing base in CT more efficient, resilient and ready to meet Dept. of Defense requests through the OEM’s to the supply chain; and retaining students in CT upon graduation.

Board members Rocheleau and Vallieres emphasized the importance of incorporating manufacturing strategies currently underway and engaging key constituents in developing the Plan, including the CT Manufacturing Collaborative (CMC), Manufacturing Regional Sector Partnerships (RSP’s), the Governor’s Workforce Council (GWC), and the CT community colleges.

Mr. Lavoie encouraged Board members to provide suggestions/recommendations on how to proceed with developing the Plan. Colin Cooper noted the efficient process utilized for the development of the GWC’s Strategic Plan – convening the major stakeholders and creating subcommittees to focus on specific areas. Paul Lavoie added that MIF administrative funding is available for resources to facilitate and manage the process of developing the Plan.

Mike Rocheleau suggested engaging companies not necessarily represented by either the CMC or the RSP’s, such as Stanley Black & Decker, Lockheed Martin and Raytheon; and ensuring that educational partners lean into the needs addressed in the Manufacturing Strategic Plan that is developed.

The process going forward will be discussed at the June Board meeting.

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

*Approval for the MIF Advisory Board to proceed with developing a Manufacturing Strategic Plan for Connecticut as an MIF initiative.*

Mike Rocheleau motioned and Colin Cooper seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Update on Programs**

Engineering Internship Program/Career Fair – Ron Angelo introduced Dr. Jackie Garofano who provided an update on the Engineering Internship Program. The cohort-based program is focused on attracting 50 rising sophomore through senior undergraduate engineering students to an internship experience within approximately 12 small to mid-sized manufacturing (SMM) companies in the Connecticut supply chain. The program was announced at the CT Manufacturing, Engineering & Technical (MET) Career Fair held at Quinnipiac University (QU) on April 5th and is planned to commence in June.

Dr. Lynn Byers provided highlights from the MET Career Fair – a statewide effort to bring technical employers and student candidates together for summer internships and full-time jobs.

66 employers with 145 representatives participated with 300 attendees:

* Students from UCONN, UNH, Fairfield U, Quinnipiac
* Job seekers from the community
* High School students & families exploring manufacturing careers
* High School teachers & administrators seeking to connect with the manufacturing sector

Positive feedback from employers, attendees and partners was received, and QU leadership has committed to making the MET Career Fair an annual event.

Paul Lavoie provided an update on the following MIF initiatives:

Manufacturing Voucher Program

Apprenticeship Program

Incumbent Worker Training Program

Hearts & Minds Advertising Campaign

Digital Transformation/Cyber Security Roadmaps

Manufacturing Website

Regional Career Fairs

CT Innovators/CT Manufacturers

Colin Cooper asked if CSCU will be providing the Board with an overview of the approach/content of the Hearts & Minds Advertising Campaign. Paul Lavoie responded that CSCU will present at the June Board meeting. Mr. Lavoie added that he has been meeting with OWS and the RSP’s to ensure an integrated plan for the Campaign.

Mr. Cooper inquired about the status of the timeline for the website – with CONNSTEP hoping to complete the survey as early as the end of April and the Dept. of Administrative Services (DAS) having something prepared by June. Jeff Orszak replied that CONNSTEP is having difficulty getting responses from service providers. They plan to send out a letter from Paul Lavoie to elevate the importance of collecting the information. He added that CONNSTEP continues to update DAS on its progress. Colin Cooper suggested reaching out to Board members for assistance in contacting organizations that have not yet responded to the survey.

**Portfolio**

**Review of Investments to Date**

Paul Lavoie provided an overview of the funding status of the major programs and administrative expenditures.

Mike Rocheleau suggested providing the Board with the current amounts available to spend for each MIF program.

**Planning for FY 22/23 Investments**

Total funding allocated for the Connecticut Manufacturing Innovation Fund (MIF) is now $100 million since the FY22/23 biennial budget provides $20 million over the next two fiscal years, 2022 and 2023 respectively. The first $10 million for Fiscal 2022 (7/1/2021 to 6/30/2022) was authorized at the 7/23/21 State Bond Commission (SBC) meeting. The additional $10 million will need to be authorized by the SBC after 7/1/22. Of the new $20 million, $1M (5%) will be allocated for administrative purposes (per statute).

Paul Lavoie encouraged Board members to begin thinking about ideas on how the additional $10 million will be invested. Mark Burzynski asked how to proceed with providing suggestions for new initiatives. Mr. Lavoie responded that the Board will discuss funding investment ideas at the June meeting.

Colin Cooper referenced previous Board discussions to shift funding for workforce development initiatives from MIF to OWS and suggested it would be helpful to provide the Board with an update on which programs/funding amounts will be transferred to OWS. This information will help inform the Board’s decisions on funding legacy and new programs going forward. Dr. Vallieres agreed that the conversation about the transition plan will be helpful at the June Board meeting.

**Meeting Adjournment**

Paul Lavoie requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mike Rocheleau moved the motion and Mark Burzynski seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Mr. Lavoie closed the meeting at 1:48 PM.