

North Carolina State Disaster Recovery Task Force
Business and Workforce RSF
March 17, 2020, 10:00a - 10:30a
Conference Call, Call-In Number: (877) 402-9753; 1928766#

Meeting Minutes

In attendance

Leads: Susan Fleetwood and Liz Crabill, NC Dept of Commerce
Staff: Marlena Byrne for Amanda Martin, NCORR

Hillary Sherman, US Economic Development Administration (EDA)
Jonathan Brereton, Thread Capital
Carol McLaurin, Small Business Technology Development Center (SBTDC)
Barry Ryan, NC Rural Center
Kasey Ginsberg, Golden Leaf Foundation
Patrick Rodriguez, Small Business Administration (SBA)
Jess Whitehead, NC Office of Recovery and Resiliency (NCORR)
Holly Yanker, Business Leadership NC (BLNC)
Patrick Woodie, Rural Center
Leslie Lewis, SBTDC
Tammie Hall, NC Office of Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUB)
Russell Doles, Commerce
Scott Daugherty, SBTDC
Anne Shaw, SBTDC
Ruseena Johnson, NCORR
Jeff DeBellis, Commerce
John Loyack, Economic Development Partnership of NC (EDPNC)

Welcome, Introductions, and Overview of Agenda

Susan Fleetwood called the meeting to order, welcomed attendees and provided an overview of the meeting.

Review of Two Primary Goals

Website:

Carol – After conferencing with Barry and their respective teams, they have concluded that the Rural Center will guide on the initial marketing. They also agreed that the scope of the website will need to increase from hurricanes to cover additional types of disasters. They are hoping that this is something that could reside within the state system. This project will remain a longer-term project in order to ensure that it includes disaster that are not hurricanes. The prototypes will be sent out once it is more concrete.

Training module (led by Barry's team):

Barry – The training is designed to inform community leaders about the Small Business Association (SBA) recovery process so that people will have a better understanding of SBA as a resource. This initiative is

completed as part of homegrown leaders starting in late July/early august. Complete by early summer. Hope to stay on track but have needed to divert attention to covid19.

Next Steps

Do we want to have our next regularly scheduled RSF meeting in 6 weeks, April 28? Resolved to play this by ear since covid19 has taken top priority. Nevertheless, the Recovery Support Function will be sure to keep the two long-term projects moving via small groups.

Jessica advised that she could assist with video conferencing. Please let her know if the RSF can use this resource.

COVID19 Updates

Loan Intakes and roundtable

Susan opened the floor to discuss the emergency loan intake process in light of covid19. Note was made that businesses do better with the loan process when they have coaching. BLNC is doing some intake and triage to connect callers with business counselors at Thread Capital and/or other resources as needed. The floor was opened for organizations to explain how clients are being assisted through the loan process.

- Department of Commerce: They have received a handful of calls from small businesses that are interested in SBA funding and other resources that are available.
- SBTDC: Carol, Scott, and Anne are present on the call.
 - The team has met with directors. They are in the process of assessing staffing capacity, cash flow, and training needs. Once analyses are complete, they will be able to determine which services they can continue to provide as is and which will need to be modified to accommodate groups or teleconferencing. In addition, they are working to create a centralized and consistent support and information base for clients in lieu of each campus sending separate alerts to clients.
 - Field folks are getting a few inquiries. It's been a bit quiet for now.
 - SBA declaration made about availability of loans on 03/17/20

 - SCOTT: SBTDC is a university systems based program. However, with the majority of campuses being shut down, they are looking for alternative work sites especially for communities that are having a harder time adjusting. They have been able to move into chambers to set up work.

 - ANNE: Her team has received new inquiries. Many people are still in preparation mode and figuring out how to deal with day-to-day situations. Anne's team is gearing up similarly to figure out how to best utilize their assets in terms of capacity. They are putting together tools and resources to make available on the organization's website; and collaborating with team members to have consistent approach to support businesses as they have needs, particularly loan prep, cash flow projection. Anne confirmed that not all of the community colleges are closed. Some are closed to students but not to staff members.
- HUB has not had an increase in calls but has requested to be included in the Business Workforce Collaborative Call to be initiated by SBTDC and Commerce.

- Business Leaders of NC (BLNC): Reported that their call volume has stayed the same. Based on the calls they've received people are trying to digest everything; her team has met and discussed intake forms.
- SBA Raleigh: They too have had an increase in calls. His team is putting together a master list of incoming calls related to disaster assistance containing: first and last name, business name, city, county, and type of business that is being maintained in the Charlotte office.

Discussion of BLNC becoming point of contact for SBA Loan and related inquiries

There was discussion about whether members of this RSF and the community at large should forward clients to BLNC as the organization to populate inquiries and guide to resources. It was determined that there are many uncertainties, including some of the details needed by SBTDC on their forms and having enough phone operators, that would prevent BLNC from being the first point of contact for SBTDC and related organizations. Instead, BLNC will be sure to record very basic client information and advise clients of available resources. In the meantime, SBTDC will continue working on their website.

- Rural Center offered to redirect the 800 number to cell phones so that their staff members could assist with call volume.
- Leslie volunteered to assist with counseling projections
- Carol mentioned that she had sent a high-level email to her clients to guide them on the SBA loan process. **She will send this email to Susan.** Carol noted that none of the information in the email is proprietary to her organization as much of it came from the SBA notice that was recently sent out.

Additional SBA Loan Questions

- Questions to Patrick (SBA):
 - Do you have a sense of what the process for SBA is at this point? He knows that the governor has to submit at least five businesses for this event to qualify as a disaster area. Director McCoy has volunteered to assist with this. Read in the paper that the Governor has submitted disaster recovery to the federal government. He is waiting for the SBA to determine which counties have been affected. To date four states have been declared covid19 disaster areas. North Carolina is not on that list at this time.
 - SBA deployment will look very different due to social distancing, how will this affect how people will get service? From what he is seen thus far they will work to have a virtual presence. People who will be deployed to NC will be connected with our NC team so that they can better acclimate to the culture in NC. They will virtually get people help with training on working with NC client base.
- Suggestion to create a Business Recovery Collaborative Team that will meet weekly on Thursdays.
- Final Questions:
 - The Client Intake form is on BLNC's website. **Holly will forward a copy to Susan.**
 - It was determined that Holly can make use of a fillable pdf and provide this to the rural center, as they are unable to scan these to his team.

Meeting adjourned