

OPPPORTUNITY ZONE STEERING COMMITTEE

May 12, 2020
11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Meeting Date

May 12, 2020

Participants: Karen Blumenstein, Trish Thibodo, Rob Brown, Jeff Kraft, Kim Woodworth, Trent Thompson, Kate Guibert

Staff: Jack Tiebout, Mike Landes

Meeting Summary: The meeting was called to order at 11:05 am.

A. Meeting Minutes – March 12, 2020

- a. Landes calls for a motion to approve, Brown moves, Blumenstein seconds. Motion passed unanimously.

B. Program updates

a. Introducing new program director Mike Landes

- i. Landes introduces himself. He comes to OEDIT from North Carolina, where he worked on political campaigns and economic development for the state's real estate industry group. Helped build OZ awareness in North Carolina, which has helped make for an easy transition to OEDIT.
- ii. Kraft added that Landes will be key in figuring out how OZs will fit into coronavirus recovery efforts. Both Landes and Tiebout will be working other recovery related OEDIT initiatives outside of their OZ work.

b. Updates on Opportunity Zone business program

- i. Tiebout shared that applications had just been launched for OEDIT's Opportunity Zone Capital Accelerator Program, which was created to support businesses considering taking on OZ capital and intended to create a template for future OZ operating business deals throughout the state.
- ii. Kraft asked the committee for suggestions for channels to promote the program. Woodworth suggested Delaney Keating at Startup Colorado. Thompson and Brown offered to forward the program info to economic development partners throughout the state. Woodworth also suggested Energize Colorado.

c. Grant updates

- i. Tiebout gave an update on OZ grants. Two mini-grants for projects in Gunnison (a sustainable hotel and a workforce housing project), had received \$2000 grants for marketing materials. These purchase orders were executed on May 1.

d. Webinar

- i. Tiebout shared that he and Landes are preparing a webinar on Opportunity Zones and the Covid recovery. Confirmed speakers representing The Governance Project, Polsinelli, and Four Points Funding.
- ii. Blumenstein asked what is altering the way we see OZs at OEDIT. Landes shared the sentiment he has heard that investors who are moving capital gains from stocks to more tangible, local projects, but that overall investment appears to be slowing due to the pandemic. Kraft added that he expects to see more people and companies moving to rural Colorado, which could be a boon to rural OZs.
- iii. Blumenstein suggested that OEDIT include a lender or broker on the panel, and Woodworth agreed that now is a good time to re-engage with community banks.

e. **Other updates**

- i. Tiebout summarized how disaster declarations have affected OZ deadlines: working capital safe harbor plans can be extended by up to 24 months and time for funds to meet 90% asset test can be extended up to 12 months.
- ii. Blumenstein commented that these timeline updates are especially important to rural EDCs where projects may take a bit longer. Tiebout and Landes agreed to spread the word to rural partners.