



REGIONAL COVID-19 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOVERY PLAN

MEETING MINUTES 12/15/21

Steering Committee Meeting #6

Meeting Attendees: Andrea O'Brien, Brian Groth, David Hennessy, Dean Shankle, Jennifer Kimball, Karon Walker, Lincoln Daley, Theresa Pinto, Tim Thompson, Wendy Hunt, Mike Reid, Allison McLean, Liz Callabria, Jay Minkarah, Camille Pattison, and Ryan Friedman.

1. Survey Results

Ryan Friedman and Camille Pattison presented results of the three surveys.

The presentation slide deck can be found here:

https://www.nashuarpc.org/files/5516/4002/8008/Steering_Comm_-_Survey_Results_12-15-21.pdf

Mike Reid, UPS noted that they provide an array of business consultant services to support small businesses, including help with Mobile commerce, affiliate marketing, online marketing, marketplace management, search optimization, etc.

Eversource also provides similar services and support for small/med businesses. They have a small business contact center with a dedicated team to help those businesses with an array of program/needs from Eversource. It also provides resources on all kinds of topics/resources including state & fed that some business owners might not be aware of.

SBDC and the Nashua Chamber also offer small business support.

The Nashua Chamber & NH SBDC offer Business Basics.

Are you thinking about or are you are starting a business in NH? Or did you already start one and aren't sure you did it right? So...what do you do now? Find out at the new workshop series Business Basics for New Entrepreneurs.

Join the Nashua Chamber, Adult Learning Center and NH Small Business Development Center business advisors who will present on business basics such as planning, financial management, and marketing. We've invited a business owner to share their experience starting their businesses in New Hampshire and what they wish they'd known when they started. Hear their stories and get expert advice from SBDC advisors during this series. Business Basics has a limit of 30 attendees so that there will be plenty of time for Q&A.

Part of the Chamber's Diversity and Inclusion series. Sponsored by Enterprise Bank. 2 info sessions, Tues Jan 11 10-11:30 am or Thurs, Jan 13 5 to 6:30pm. At the Nashua Library.

2. Focus Group Input

Camille Pattison will provide a summary of key findings.

Key to Success – Resiliency, Hustle and Flexibility

Key Findings – Woman Owned Business

- *Lack of rapid testing; unreliable childcare; quarantining impacts revenue.*

- *More challenging to obtain funding that similar qualified male counterparts.*
- *Tough to be respected and taken seriously in the professional world.*

Key Findings – Minority Business Owners

- *Black Lives Matter movement*
- *As a black business owner, it can be challenging to “find the space in the room and have access to capital.”*
- *Highlight minority-owned businesses*
- *Integrate minority groups into community*

Key Findings – Entrepreneurs

- *Need assistance learning the business side – Regulations, taxes, HR rules, finances, insurance, commercial rent agreements, and legal advice.*
- *Commercial kitchen space in the region.*
- *Challenging renting space on Main Street in Nashua.*
- *Increased financing options to assist with cash flow.*
- *Hard work, stay positive and you get what you put into it.*

Key Findings – Restaurants

- *Online list of restaurants*
- *Improved access to parking and dedicated employee parking*
- *Increasing homeless population*
- *Need funding beyond banks and access to low interest loans*
- *Supply chain issues and increases in food prices have cut into revenue*
- *Wages have had to be increased to stay competitive and retain or hire new staff*

Key Findings – Retail

- *Need more exposure to generate customers*
- *Trying to keep a steady customer base is hard*
- *Lack of cash flow is impacting inventory.*
- *Using Facebook as a key marketing tool*
- *Challenging finding time to manage a store and maintain another job*
- *In-person tasting events are still challenging*

Key Findings – Workforce

- *Reduced hours of operation resulting in a loss of revenue*
- *Great benefits and sign on bonuses cannot compete with a higher wage*



- *The lack of workforce housing is a major barrier to hiring retail, restaurant, and hourly positions and is disproportionately impacting small businesses*
- *Workforce housing is much less of a barrier to higher paying, salaried positions generally found in larger employers in the region*
- *Try us out for a day and get paid*
- *Employee sharing for seasonal businesses*

3. Website Update

Staff are currently working with Revize on creating a microsite for this project in conjunction with an overhaul of the NRPC website. A contract was recently signed with Kelly Creative to development branding for the project and some final print pieces.

4. Next Steps

- 1) *Microsite development*
- 2) *Refine key findings and develop recommendations*
- 3) *Final products*
- 4) *Plan Development*

5. Next Meeting Date – January 11th 1pm

Feel free to reach out with comments and concerns:

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