**North Country Alliance Local Development Corporation**

**Education and Outreach Committee**

**February 2, 2021**

**Minutes**

The North Country Alliance Local Development Corporation held a meeting of the Education and Outreach Committee on Tuesday, February 2, 2021 at 2:00 PM via conference call.

**Present:** Michelle Capone, Leigh Rodriguez, Dave Zembiec, Matt Siver, Rob Aiken, Greg Hart, Aviva Gold, Garry Douglas, Carol Calabrese, Jeremy Evans, Donna Wadsworth, Ben Dixon, Steven Lockwood

The meeting began at 2:00 PM.

M. Capone emailed ahead the Issue Survey received from G. Douglas, a draft support letter from G. Hart on behalf of the WDI, as well as the NCA’s 2020 Education and Outreach Agenda.

It was agreed that the formatting worked.

The group discussed opposition to increasing taxes in order to close the budget gap. Everyone on the call agreed that higher taxes are detrimental to business development and growth in the North Country.

The group then discussed the need for quality, high-speed broadband in rural communities in the North Country. This is critical to support the influx of people looking to leave urban areas and telecommute. We discussed the unintended impacts that fees and rate limits will have on service providers. The committee agreed that the necessity for high quality broadband in rural communities be identified as a critical issue

The group discussed the need to support community colleges as they are the backbone for many of our communities. In addition, we acknowledged the need for technical schools and trade programs, along with our community colleges, to train the workforce that we need to recover from the COVID-19 recession.

G. Hart presented the draft letter of support on behalf of the Workforce Development Institute. In the past, organizations have provided these support letters to elected officials on behalf of the WDI in support of funding. G. Hart has reached out to the NCA to provide similar letters on behalf of the WDI. On a motion by D. Zembiec and second by D. Wadsworth, the committee supports continued funding of the WDI. All in favor; motion carried. M. Capone stated that she would present this motion to the Executive Committee for their approval and, once received, forward to the elected officials.

M. Capone stated that she would revise the Agenda and circulate a draft to the committee by Friday. Once the committee signs off on it, she will present it to the Executive Committee for acceptance.

We agreed that once accepted, the agenda be circulated to our elected officials. We discussed the potential for a meeting later in the year to meet with members of the majority to brief them on the North Country and our diverse needs.

The meeting adjourned at 2:40 PM.