

#### 4-Town Steering Committee Meeting Notes – January 5, 2022

- **UCONN – local business connections – intern assistance with 4 Town effort - potential projects – status**

Cara talked with the Deans of programs focusing on 4 key areas with goal of tapping into small businesses in 4 town area:

Provide info on internships

How to access students to fill open job openings

How to hire UConn grads for careers

How to tap into the University for project based initiatives but that is more specific to what the project is

Some student groups are stand alone, self-run and there are ways to get to those students too. These would be virtual programs that Cara's office would host, run the program, help with the marketing, online and facilitation needed.

The effort is to leverage your networks and show UConn is doing this. The focus is really for small businesses – the larger communities are already involved with UConn and know about them and their programs.

Envisioned as a series of virtual programs that are project based, either a panel or single person, about an hour with Q & A. The big question is what makes the most sense i.e., breakfast or lunch program may work better than an evening.

Cara heard back from career services and they really want to connect to small business and feel that's a gap they have that they could fill.

Size or sector of business? Cara says no limits.

Does Cara need anything else from us? She will be meeting with the Core 4 to discuss.

Cara had also talked with leadership about this – this will be a pilot and if good, they will approach Eastern to try the same project.

Separate from Dave Garvey program, students can do internships as part of their financial aid so we are not limited.

- **Grant opportunities – American Rescue Plan – FEMA – status**

We applied and did hear from CRCOG that they are sorting through to prioritize and still waiting to hear a final word.

- **Visibility – Marketing – 4 Town Plan – web presence, other materials**

Marketing of our initiative should start to happen. Maybe through our website, email blasts/bulletins, just create a more robust inventory of information. The Plan is 100 pages so we are trying to break things into themes so people can navigate the plan easier. – WOULD BE NICE TO HAVE A COORDINATED RESPONSE IN THE TOWNS, SAME MESSAGE.

Brenda Falusi 860-874-1278 [bfalusi@tolland.org](mailto:bfalusi@tolland.org) would be happy to help with a FB post or buzz weekly, monthly, whatever the timing could be. A specific type of trail event – wine trail, Breakfast lunch dinner desert wine/beer day?

ERTD funding – deadline is January 15, 2022. \$10k award, application submitted to Rachel Lenda at the Chamber [rlenda@chamberect.com](mailto:rlenda@chamberect.com) They really are looking to the Northeast Region. There is a match – Central Region has their own grant programs which aren't being offered now but 2 of our towns are in ERTD and 2 are in the CRTD, so why not apply to both?

\*Wendy has a drop in grant program email sent on December 9, 2021.  
Next meetings we want to continue with the Chambers.

- **Next meeting date, time, agenda items**

Next meeting date: January 26 at 2:00pm. Next Core 4 meeting date: January 19 at 2:00pm.

Northeast Region Rountable being held January 27 from noon-1:00 on Zoom, informal discussion with Elizabeth Shapiro, CT Humanities, and new Director of Tourism Noelle, Christine Custanguay – 4 speakers/guests – Arts, Culture and Tourism. Can spread word to businesses. Wendy will send invite to Eric to be shared.

Maybe apply for ERTD grant - Identity Creation and Marketing Materials. For match for ERTD grant – Eric will get back to group, Patrice will talk to Jim about any \$\$\$ that could put toward this.