

COMMISSION ON SCIENCE, INNOVATION, AND TECHNOLOGY

May 16, 2019

BOARD ROOM
NJEDA OFFICES, 36 WEST STATE STREET, TRENTON

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Members of the Commission present: Chairman Gunjan Doshi, CEO Tim Sullivan of the New Jersey Economic Development Authority; Linda Eno representing Commissioner Lamont Repollet of the Department of Education; Diana Gonzalez representing Secretary Zakiya Smith Ellis of the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education; Public Members Dr. Joel Bloom, Charlene Brown, Debbie Hart, Beth Noveck, and David Pascrell, Non-voting Members: Assemblyman Christopher DePhillips, Assemblyman Andrew Zwicker, and Dr. Nariman Farvardin.

Members present via conference call: Senator Robert Singer, non-voting member.

Absent: Dr. Robert Barchi, and Senator Paul Sarlo, non-voting members.

Also present: Dr. Chris Molloy from Rutgers University; Deputy Attorney General Elizabeth Tillou; Joe Kelley, Phillip Loureiro, and Dennis Zeveloff, Office of the Governor; and staff.

Chairman Doshi called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm with a quorum of the Commission present. Chairman Doshi read the Open Public Meetings announcement and performed the roll call of the Commission.

Chairman Doshi announced that Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin was in attendance and invited him to address the Commission. Speaker Coughlin thanked the members for their time and talent and added that great things will come out of the Commission. He said that New Jersey has immensely talented young people, and we must make innovators feel at home to keep them in the State. He stated that he's counting on the Commission to figure out a way to do that.

The next item was the approval of the March 28, 2019 minutes. On a motion by Ms. Gonzalez, and seconded by Ms. Hart, the minutes were approved by the voting members present.

Chairman Doshi stated that the biggest hurdle facing the Commission is how to make an impact, not just for five years, but for 20 years. He said the Commission needs to get off the ground, find a space, find the right support staff.

Chairman Doshi stated that prior work was done to support these decisions. Kathleen Coviello was very helpful in providing him background materials on the former Commission on Science and Technology.

The Members reviewed several options regarding obtaining support staff:

1. CSIT board members do everything themselves; the downside to this option is that it would be a longer process;
2. Enter into an MOU with the EDA for support services; or

3. Hire a contractor to set up the Commission and hire appropriate staff.

Senator Singer stated that it's important to work with someone who understands the Commission's functions.

Dennis Zeveloff, Governor's Policy Advisor, made some clarifications to the options available to the Commission, as follows:

1. CSIT could move forward without support;
2. CSIT could decide to issue an RFP for support services, but could not pre-select an individual or a specific company;
3. CSIT could go with one of the two different version of a pre-drafted MOU with the EDA;
or
4. Any combination of the above.

Ms. Noveck suggested the Commission have EDA build a temporary infrastructure.

Chairman Doshi added that it's important to bring on a consultant or Executive Director to make sure that the Commission is set up properly.

Ms. Brown stated that the process of establishing the Commission's operations, including hiring an Executive Director, seemed to be taking longer than anticipated and asked if the EDA could support the Commission until the process was finished. Mr. Sullivan stated yes.

Assemblyman Zwicker asked how long the process would take for EDA to do.

Mr. Sullivan said that an Executive Director could be hired as an EDA employee on behalf of the CSIT to accelerate the Commission's progress. He talked about the need to confirm this formally through an MOU with the EDA Board.

The group discussed two options as it pertained to entering an MOU with the EDA:

- Option A: MOU with EDA where the EDA would hire Executive Director as staff of EDA, but reporting directly to the CSIT; or
- Option B: MOU with EDA, where the Executive Director was not staff of EDA and instead was hired directly by the Commission.

Several individuals on the Commission stated preference for Option B and pursuing an RFP to pursue consulting services/a personal services contract to support the Commission until such time as an Executive Director is in place.

Mr. Bloom suggested option B and suggested removing any mention of an Executive Director from the MOU. He also stated that CSIT should pursue the MOU with EDA as that would allow the EDA to encumber the Commission's funds from Treasury so that they would not lapse at the end of the state fiscal year, June 30, 2019.

The consensus of the group was to move forward with the Option B MOU and remove any mention of hiring an Executive Director from the document.

Brian Sabina worked with the DAG Elizabeth Tillou to make the changes to the MOU for the Board's consideration. Beth Noveck made a motion to accept the MOU as amended, second by Joel Bloom. Voice vote passed. Tim Sullivan abstained.

Motion for EDA to encumber CSIT funds as per the memo and resolution prepared for the Board, moved by Joel Bloom, second by Charlene Brown. Voice vote all in favor passed. Tim Sullivan abstained.

Motion for EDA to prepare and issue an RFP for consulting services contract to support CSIT and help search for an Executive Director. Motion by Joel Bloom, second by David Pascrell, voice vote passed, Tim Sullivan abstained.

The Chairman appointed a hiring committee to work with EDA staff on procuring a consultant and begin the search for an Executive Director. This committee to be comprised of Debbie Hart, Joel Bloom, David Pascrell, and Tim Sullivan.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

The next meeting date for the Commission on Science, Innovation, and Technology was scheduled for June 30 with a start time of 10:00 am at the Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken. Details forthcoming.

A motion was made to adjourn by Joel Bloom, second by Charlene Brown. Voice vote passed.

CERTIFICATION:

The foregoing and attachments represent a true and complete summary of the actions taken by the Commission on Science, Innovation, and Technology at its Meeting on May 16, 2019.



Signature Line
Title of Signor