

**Regional Center Partnership of Somerset County
Approved
Wednesday, May 20, 2020 Meeting Minutes**

The meeting was convened by means of video conference.

Name/Organization

Voting Members

Troy Fischer, Chair, Regional Center Partnership (RCP)
Jason Dameo, Vice-Chair, RCP
Victoria Allen, RWJBarnabas Health
Anthony Tufaro, Ethicon Somerville
Matt Moench, Mayor, Bridgewater
Michael Pappas, Bridgewater Administrator
Andrew Fresco, Bridgewater
Michael Patente, Raritan Borough Council
Angela Knowles, Raritan Borough Planner
Nick Zamora, Raritan Borough
Jane Kobuta, Somerville Borough Council
Deirdre Rosinski, Somerville Planning Board
Richard St. Pierre, Somerville
Brian Gallagher, Somerset County (SC) Board of Chosen Freeholders
Bernie Navatto, SC Planning Board
Walter Lane, SC Planning Division
Cindie Sullivan, SC Park Commission (Alternate)
Chris Edwards, SC Business Partnership

Non-voting County Support Staff

James Ruggieri, SC Planning Division

Non-Voting Guests

Barry Ableman, NJ Office of Planning Advocacy
Donna Allison, RideWise
Kyle Clonan, NJ Water Supply Authority (NJWSA)
Phil Decker, Somerville Resident
Rich Reitman, The Reitman Group
Tim Pino, Somerset County Undersheriff
Michelle Royer, Somerset County Sheriff's Office

The meeting commenced at 5:00 PM.

Business Items

Call to Order

RCP Chair Troy Fischer called the meeting to order.

Attendance Roll Call

Principal Planner James Ruggieri read through the roll call and noted for the record the voting members that were in attendance.

Chair's Remarks

Chair Fischer welcomed everyone to the meeting. Chair Fischer expressed appreciation for everyone's understanding regarding the decision to cancel the March 18, 2020 Regional Center Partnership (RCP) Business Meeting as a measure of precaution in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, adding that fortunately technology has made it possible to conduct a virtual meeting and carry on the business of the Regional Center.

Chair Fischer shared that on March 13 former Somerset County Business Partnership President & CEO Mike Kerwin retired after ten years of service leading the Somerset County Business Partnership, adding that Mr. Kerwin was a long-time member of the RCP since September 2006 when he began serving as RCP Vice-Chairman. Chair Fischer noted that, consistent with past practice in recognizing outgoing leaders of the RCP, we plan to recognize Mike Kerwin at an upcoming meeting by presenting him with a resolution and Certificate of Appreciation for his years of service and Regional Center support.

Chair Fischer then welcomed Somerset County Business Partnership President & CEO Chris Edwards to the meeting. Chair Fischer noted that in February 2020 Mr. Edwards was named President and CEO of the Business Partnership succeeding Mr. Kerwin. Mr. Edwards joined the Business Partnership in 2013 serving as Director of Business Development until 2018 when he became Vice-President of Business Services. During his tenure, Mr. Edwards helped the Business Partnership significantly increase membership and participation, created the Nonprofit Council which serves the Business Partnership's 80-plus nonprofit members, led the task force to create a new website featuring the Business Resource Hub, and worked closely with the Economic Development and Tourism Divisions to develop a toolkit of services to support Somerset County employers. Mr. Edwards expressed appreciation for the warm welcome.

Adoption of Meeting Minutes

(Since the March 18 meeting was cancelled, there were no March 18 meeting minutes.) Chair Fischer asked if there were any corrections to the January 15 meeting minutes; Mr. Ruggieri noted he corrected a misspelling of Bridgewater Township Local private/institutional sector representative Andrew Fresco's name. There being no other corrections, Chair Fischer asked for a motion to approve the January 15, 2020 meeting minutes; Somerset County Planning Director Walter Lane moved and Vice-Chair Jason Dameo seconded the motion.

A voice vote was taken resulting in the following voting record:

Ayes:	18
Nays:	0
Abstentions:	0

The motion to approve the minutes was approved.

Treasurer Reports for January-February 2020 and March-April 2020

Mr. Ruggieri reported that Suplee Clooney & Company completed the audit report for the year ending December 31, 2019 and found everything to be in order. Mr. Ruggieri noted that copies of the audit

report are available for anyone interested in reviewing the report. As per the contract, they also completed IRS Form 990 and provided the information for filing NJ CRI-200 for 2019.

There being no questions or comments, Chair Fischer asked for a motion to approve the Treasurer Reports for January-February and March-April, 2020; Somerset County Planning Board Chair Bernie Navatto moved and Mr. Dameo seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken resulting in the following voting record:

Ayes: Troy Fischer, Jason Dameo, Vicky Allen, Tony Tufaro, Matt Moench, Michael Pappas, Andrew Fresco, Michael Patente, Angela Knowles, Nick Zamora, Jane Kobuta, Deirdre Rosinski, Rick St. Pierre, Brian Gallagher, Bernie Navatto, Walter Lane, Cindie Sullivan, and Chris Edwards.

Nays: none

Abstentions: none

The motion was approved.

Public Comment Period

(There were no public comments concerning the Action item on the agenda.)

Action Item

Award Competitive Contract to Provide Principal Marketing Services

(Marketing consultant Rich Reitman was moved into a “waiting room” before any discussion commenced about the Awarding of Competitive Contract to Provide Principal Marketing Services agenda item.)

Mr. Ruggieri summarized the nine principal marketing Scope of Work tasks to be performed for a not to exceed amount of \$19,000 per year. The Request for Proposals (RFP) was based on the County’s template used for soliciting proposals through the competitive contracting process. Pursuant to the January 15 RCP meeting, staff ensured the SOW clearly state that the public outreach efforts are to utilize social and digital media outlets. Staff also confirmed with County Purchasing that the competitive contracting process allows the contract to be renewed for the second year.

On February 11 the RFP was advertised on the County and RCP’s websites and in two newspapers with six firms being notified about the RFP pursuant to a list of marketing firms provided by the Business Partnership. Three proposals were received by the March 5 deadline which were reviewed by County Purchasing and deemed technically complete. The proposals were The Reitman Group of Somerville for \$19,000 per year; Park Circle Technologies of Short Hills for \$18,700 per year; and Positive Solutions of Robbinsville for \$18,500 for year 1 and \$18,955 for year 2. In light of the need to cancel the March 18 RCP meeting due to COVID-19, after conferring with County Purchasing, on March 13 a letter was sent to the three vendors requesting if they would be willing to extend their cost proposal beyond the required 60-day timeframe to May 20; all three vendors agreed to extend their proposal to May 20. The three proposals were evaluated and scored by the Review Team using weighted scoring criteria resulting in The Reitman Group receiving the highest score. The score results were shared with the Marketing Committee and the Executive Committee.

Chair Fischer shared the key points from the Executive Committee meeting regarding the marketing proposal results. Among other factors, the Executive Committee felt strongly that it is imperative the consultant have a strong understanding of the Regional Center given the uncertainty of COVID-19’s impact on the economy. Chair Fischer and Somerset County Freeholder Brian Gallagher also noted having a strong working knowledge

of the Regional Center is important to understand how the Regional Center can have a role in the County's current Marketing Review Initiative, a collaborative effort with County-affiliated agencies to cross-market and bring additional value to the collective marketing effort.

Chair Fischer stated based upon the proposal score results, the Executive Committee recommends the competitive contract to provide principal marketing services be awarded to The Reitman Group for a not to exceed amount of \$19,000.00 per year. There being no further discussion, Chair Fischer asked for a motion to award the competitive contract to The Reitman Group for a not to exceed amount of \$19,000.00; Mr. Dameo moved and Bridgewater Mayor Matt Moench seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken resulting in the following voting record:

Ayes: Troy Fischer, Jason Dameo, Vicky Allen, Tony Tufaro, Matt Moench, Michael Pappas, Andrew Fresco, Michael Patente, Angela Knowles, Nick Zamora, Jane Kobuta, Deirdre Rosinski, Rick St. Pierre, Brian Gallagher, Bernie Navatto, Walter Lane, Cindie Sullivan, and Chris Edwards.

Nays: none

Abstentions: none

The motion was approved.

Information Items

Strategic Economic Development Activities Update

Mr. Lane reported that Deputy Freeholder Director Sara Sooy is organizing an Economic Development Task Force which is looking at possibly updating the Somerset County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). Regarding the Suburban Disadvantage issue, there is still discussion at the legislative level of possibly restarting a statewide economic development incentives program as part of a long-term COVID-19 economic recovery effort. Mr. Lane noted that in 2019 RCP set aside funding for use in 2019 and 2020 for economic development strategy work but the uncertainty caused by the COVID-19 shutdown has made it difficult to determine which direction to take. Mr. Lane added that the County and Business Partnership will be looking for RCP's ideas to consider in the coming months or year.

Mr. Edwards described the Business Partnership's work with the County Board of Chosen Freeholders on short-term strategies to support local businesses, restaurants and non-profit organizations through focus groups and coming up with some strategies and endorsements. The Business Partnership is in the early stages of setting a direction for developing a long-term economic recovery strategy; setting a timeframe is difficult as each week requires a new assessment. Mr. Lane added Somerset County is the first County to begin looking at this issue and that we will be looking at coordinating this effort with RCP and the Business Partnership.

Website Design/Development & Implementation Update

Mr. Ruggieri reported the final draft of the new website was forwarded to the Marketing Committee for final input. Staff is now responding to some comments from the Marketing Committee and will be forwarding the website to everyone shortly. Chair Fischer commented that, while some tweaking remains, the new website is a significant improvement with very smoother operation. Mr. Lane commended Mr. Ruggieri and the consultant for preparing the content for the new website.

Marketing Update

Mr. Reitman reported that he completed the rack brochure, provided weekly analytics reports, prepared an annual year-end analytics summary report, drafted a May newsletter, and drafted a press release about two Regional Center-based pharmaceutical companies that developed a COVID-19 antibody test. Mr. Ruggieri noted The Reitman Group completed the work tasks under the previous contract which ended in March and that RCP did not ask for any additional marketing services from The Reitman Group in the interim.

Municipal and Other Reports:

Somerset County Board of Chosen Freeholders Freeholder Brian Gallagher reported the Board of Chosen Freeholders are moving through the budget review and adoption process. Like many of our municipalities, revenue has decreased while expenses have increased caused by the economic impact of COVID-19.

The County's COVID-19 task force has seen the daily conference call meetings with municipal administrators and mayors drop from seven meetings a week to five and now two a week as we transition to the recovery phase of COVID-19.

Freeholder Gallagher reported Freeholder Resolution 20-499 was adopted which requests Governor Phil Murphy to relinquish control back to Somerset County regarding county parks and to restore the County's ability to regulate public access. The resolution was sent to Trenton and has been shared with other counties.

Bridgewater Reporting on behalf of Mayor Matt Moench who had to step away from the meeting, Township Administrator Michael Pappas reported that Mayor Moench and several other mayors have established the "Mayors for Main Street Alliance" in response to an ongoing discussion and concern about the condition of local businesses in light of COVID-19.

Raritan Borough Planner Angela Knowles reported Raritan's Economic Development Committee has been working hard to encourage residents to come out and support the local businesses. In April the Borough held the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) Sustainable Economic Development Plan kickoff meeting for the Somerset Street Economic Development Plan; the first Technical Advisory Committee meeting will be held in the coming week.

Raritan applied for a NJ Economic Development Authority "21-Century Redevelopment Challenge" grant for the Raritan Mall site. The grant focuses on "stranded assets" and the Borough's application focuses on implementing one of Somerset County's Investment Framework scenarios as the project deliverable.

The Comprehensive Downtown Revitalization and Redevelopment Strategy (the "\$1 million TAP grant") has gone through some design proposals and is now in the implementation stage with surveying work along Anderson Street underway by the consultant.

From a construction standpoint the redevelopment of Block 81 is progressing.

Somerset County Park Commission Assistant Director Cindie Sullivan shared that residents have been enjoying the County parks since they reopened while being socially responsible per COVID-19. The Park Commission has worked hard to keep the restrooms clean and sanitized. A few visitors from outside the County have given Park Rangers a hard time. Freeholder Gallagher noted that he has been visiting the County parks and the Park Commission Rangers are doing a tremendous job and there is plenty of space for people to enjoy the park while maintaining social distancing.

Somerset County Planning Board Mr. Lane reminded everyone to be sure to complete the U.S. Census return and asked the municipalities to remind residents to do same. While the Regional Center towns' response rate has been very good, the uncertainty of these times underscores how important it is to ensure we get a high rate of response possible to maximize federal funding eligibility.

Somerville Councilwoman Jane Kobuta reported that, in light of COVID-19, the Borough stopped Cruise Night this year due to the size of crowds that are attracted.

Somerset County Business Partnership Mr. Edwards reported the Business Partnership has been offering an educational webcam program for the business community which has grown to a 250-person GoTo meeting event; the program will continue for the foreseeable future. Mr. Edwards asked if anyone wants to cover a certain topic to let him know. Mr. Edwards shared that, in the face of COVID-19, Somerset County Tourism is shifting its focus for this summer to a "stay-cation" with a deep emphasis to promote local businesses. Mr. Edwards added that if there is anything the Business Partnership can do to help your local organization to let him know.

New Jersey Office for Planning Advocacy Principal Planner Barry Ableman commented that he was glad the RCP found a way to still meet despite the current circumstances.

Public Comment Period

There were no public comments regarding any items not on the agenda.

Adjournment

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned.

Regional Center Partnership of Somerset County

**Treasurer's Report for
January 1 thru February 29, 2020**

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Business Checking			Money Market Account		
	1/1/20 thru 2/29/20			<u>1/1/20 thru 2/29/20</u>	
Starting Bal. as of 1/1/2020:		\$64,581.76	Starting Bal. as of 1/1/2020:		\$154,636.22
	less expenses:				
<u>Date</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Date*</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Amount</u>
1/21/20	The Reitman Group	\$1,500.00			
2/19/20	J Ruggieri reimbursemt for NJ Div of Revenue annual report filing fee	\$33.00	1/31/20	interest	\$9.84
2/19/20	Park Circle Technologies LLC	\$3,500.00	2/29/20	interest	\$9.80
2/19/20	Somerville St Patrick's Parade	\$150.00			
2/19/20	J Ruggieri reimb -GoDaddy Website Security Ultimate	\$935.69			
2/19/20	J Ruggieri reimb -GoDaddy SSL Certificate	\$93.83	ending bal as of 2/29/20:		\$154,655.86
2/19/20	The Reitman Group	\$1,500.00			
2/19/20	RWJ Somerset- Healthier Somerset	\$100.00			
2/19/20	NJ Press Media Solutions	\$27.09			
	subtotal of expenses:	\$7,839.61			
Deposits	1/1/20 thru 2/29/20				
	subtotal of deposits:	\$0.00			
Ending Checking Balance:		\$56,742.15			
Sum of checking & money market accts:		\$211,398.01			
Less total Committed But Not Expend:		<u>\$120,025.00</u>			
Uncommitted Funds		\$91,373.01			

**interest earned in the money market account is not reported by bank until after the end of the previous month*

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**Treasurer's Report for
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Table Showing Amounts Committed but Not Expended

<u>Budget Year</u>	<u>Project Initiation Year</u>	<u>Munic or RC</u>	<u>Committed Account Name</u>	<u>Current Balance</u>
2017		BW	(reserved for Bridgewater Creative Placemakg Grant)	\$15,000.00
2017	2018	RT	Raritan Ped Safety Chall Grant StreetSmart Campaign	\$5,375.00
2017	2018	RT	Raritan Ped Safety Chall Grant Traffic Striping Imp	\$4,250.00
2018	2019	RC	Allocation for Website Upgrade	\$5,000.00
2018		RC	Strategic Marketing Plan & Implementation Activities	\$30,000.00
2018	2019	RC	Strategic Initiatives	\$30,000.00
2018	2019	BW	Phase 2 Pedestrian Safety Enhancmt Challenge Grants	\$7,500.00
2018	2019	RT	Phase 2 Pedestrian Safety Enhancmt Challenge Grants	\$7,500.00
2018	2019	SV	Phase 2 Pedestrian Safety Enhancmt Challenge Grants	\$7,500.00
2019	2019	RC	Principal Marketing Services (contract Year 2)	\$4,500.00
2019	2020	RC	Audit and tax services for year 2019	\$3,400.00
TOTAL:				\$120,025.00

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Anticipated Revenue for 2020
(excluding interest payments from Money Mkt acct)

Somerset Co	\$65,792.25
Bridgewater	\$10,890.00
Raritan	\$10,890.00
Somerville	\$10,890.00
Total Anticipated Revenue	\$98,462.25

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Raritan River Rain Barrel Rebate Program
1/1/20 thru 2/29/20

Starting Bal. as of 1/1/2020:

\$3,727.35

<u>Date</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Amount of Deductions</u>
		\$0.00

subtotal of deductions: \$0.00

ending balance after deductions **\$3,727.35**

Deposit (if any) | |

subtotal of any Deposits \$0.00

ending Balance after any Deposits: **\$3,727.35**

Regional Center Partnership of Somerset County

**Treasurer's Report for
March 1 thru April 30, 2020**

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Business Checking

3/1/20 thru 4/30/20

Starting Bal. as of 3/1/2020: \$56,742.15

less expenses:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Amount</u>
3/5/20	NJ Advance Media	\$90.16
3/5/20	J. Ruggieri reimb. <i>GoDaddy Domain Name Protection</i>	\$124.98
3/11/20	<i>cancelled lost check #1660 for Park Circle Technologies</i>	-\$3,500.00
3/16/20	replacement check for Park Circle Technologies	\$3,500.00
3/20/20	The Reitman Group	\$1,500.00
4/27/20	The Reitman Group	\$1,500.00
4/27/20	Suplee Clooney & Company	\$3,400.00
	subtotal of expenses:	\$6,615.14

Deposits 3/1/20 thru 4/30/20

subtotal of deposits **\$0.00**

Ending Balance (checking)
after expenses and deposits: **\$50,127.01**

Sum of checking and money market accts: **\$216,096.35**

Less total Committed But Not Expend: \$112,125.00

Uncommitted Funds **\$103,971.35**

Money Market Account

3/1/20 thru 4/30/20

Starting Bal. as of 3/1/2020: \$154,655.86

<u>Date</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Amount</u>
3/18/20	J. Ruggieri <i>return excess amt of reimbursement paid to J Ruggieri on 2/29/20 for out-of-pocket expense incurred to obtain Ultimate Website Security protection from GoDaddy</i>	\$402.80
3/31/20	interest	\$10.49
4/29/20	Twp of Bridgewater	\$10,890.00
4/30/20	interest	\$10.19
	ending bal as of 4/30/20:	\$165,969.34

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Table Showing Amounts Committed but Not Expended

<u>Budget</u> <u>Year</u>	<u>Project</u> <u>Initiation Year</u>	<u>Munic</u> <u>or RC</u>	<u>Committed Account Name</u>	<u>Current</u> <u>Balance</u>
2017		BW	(reserved for Bridgewater Creative Placemakg Grant)	\$15,000.00
2017	2018	RT	Raritan Ped Safety Chall Grant StreetSmart Campaign	\$5,375.00
2017	2018	RT	Raritan Ped Safety Chall Grant Traffic Striping Imp	\$4,250.00
2018	2019	RC	Allocation for Website Upgrade	\$5,000.00
2018		RC	Strategic Marketing Plan & Implementation Activities	\$30,000.00
2018	2019	RC	Strategic Initiatives	\$30,000.00
2018	2019	BW	Phase 2 Pedestrian Safety Enhancmt Challenge Grants	\$7,500.00
2018	2019	RT	Phase 2 Pedestrian Safety Enhancmt Challenge Grants	\$7,500.00
2018	2019	SV	Phase 2 Pedestrian Safety Enhancmt Challenge Grants	\$7,500.00
TOTAL:				\$112,125.00

Regional Center Partnership of Somerset County

**Treasurer's Report for
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Anticipated Revenue for 2020
(excluding interest payments from Money Mkt acct)

Somerset Co	\$65,792.25
Raritan	\$10,890.00
Somerville	\$10,890.00
Total Anticipated Revenue	\$87,572.25

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Treasurer's Report for
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Raritan River Rain Barrel Rebate Program
3/1/20 thru 4/30/20

Starting Bal. as of 3/1/2020:

\$3,727.35

<u>Date</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Amount of Deductions</u>
		\$0.00

subtotal of deductions: \$0.00

ending balance after deductions \$3,727.35

Deposit (if any) | |

subtotal of any Deposits \$0.00

ending Balance after any Deposits: \$3,727.35

REGIONAL CENTER PARTNERSHIP OF SOMERSET COUNTY

Business Meeting of May 20, 2020

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81639816028>

Meeting ID: 816 3981 6028

One tap mobile

+19292056099,,81639816028# US (New York)

AGENDA

BUSINESS ITEMS

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Chair's Remarks:
4. Adoption of Meeting Minutes: January 15, 2020
5. Adoption of Treasurer's Report for January-February 2020
6. Adoption of Treasurer's Report for March-April 2020

ACTION ITEMS

"Public comments will be entertained at this time regarding any action item. All comments shall be directed to the Chair and limited to three (3) minutes per speaker."

7. Award Competitive Contract to Provide Principal Marketing Services

INFORMATION ITEMS

8. Strategic Economic Development Activities Update
9. Website Design/Development & Implementation Update
10. Marketing Update
11. Municipal and Other Reports

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Public comments will be entertained at this time regarding any items not on the agenda. All comments shall be directed to the Chair and limited to three (3) minutes per speaker.

Next Meeting Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 at 5:00PM