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New Hampshire Department of  
**BUSINESS AND  
ECONOMIC AFFAIRS**



July 1, 2021

His Excellency, Governor Christopher T. Sununu  
and the Honorable Executive Council  
New Hampshire Statehouse  
107 North Main St.  
Concord, NH 03301

Re: Council of Partner Agencies

### INFORMATIONAL ITEM

Pursuant to RSA 12-O:8, the following report details activity for the Council of Partner Agencies, administered by the Department of Business and Economic Affairs, for calendar year 2019-20.

The Council of Partner Agencies was established in RSA 12-O:7. The council's purpose is to consult with, and advise, the commissioner of Business and Economic Affairs regarding policy, programs, and operations of the department and to establish a framework for communication and coordinated activities among its members.

#### **Mission**

*"The Council of Partner Agencies is a multi-organizational forum that develops, coordinates, and implements broad economic policy initiatives that, through both systemic and specific changes, lead to sustained and expanded economic improvements for New Hampshire."*

The council meets monthly and all meetings are properly noticed to comply with RSA 91-A. The council moved to virtual meetings in 2020 in response to the pandemic, with notice and access provided to the public.

The council is comprised of the following statewide organizations, as noted in RSA 12-O:7:

- New Hampshire Department of Business and Economic Affairs
- New Hampshire Business Finance Authority
- New Hampshire Community Development Finance Authority
- New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority
- Community College System of New Hampshire
- University System of New Hampshire (added through legislation passed in June 2020)

During the past two years, the council has undertaken the following activities:

- Joint awareness and promotion of each organization's activities, resources, and efforts.
- Organizational coordination of grant activities resulting from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding and the Governor's Office for Emergency Relief and Recovery (GOFFER), including the Main Street Relief Program; the New Hampshire Non-Profit

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Emergency Relief Fund, and the New Hampshire Housing Relief Fund. Members aided in the rollout of other federal grants and financing programs, including the Paycheck Protection Program and the Economic Injury Disaster Loan program.

- Input and assistance for the upcoming State Economic Development Plan as required by RSA 12-O:24, including interviews, review of drafts, and recommendations for launching the report. As of 2021, the plan is under revision to include ecosystem mapping and a blueprint for COVID-19 recovery.
- Engaging the council to promote the state's talent attraction and visitor marketing campaigns.
  - Members' recommendations and expertise provided valuable feedback.
  - Sharing digital platforms encourages members to adopt a message in their social media platforms to complement the state's efforts.
- Updates to the council from the Governor's Economic Reopening Task Force ensured members awareness of Universal Guidance to leverage resources that could assist businesses challenged by the pandemic.
- Mutual support for council member's individual activities, such as the New Market Tax Credit Program; vouchers for the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority; Community College curriculum development, and financing for key sectors, such as childcare, among others.
- Housing initiative, which included:
  - Presentations informing the council about the status and inventory of housing, as well as the impact to the economy on availability and pricing.
  - Council members support of Governor Sununu's 2020 companion bills, encouraging affordable housing, and legislation to create a housing appeals board.
  - Members assumed a leadership role in the Council on Housing Stability, which issued its action report in December 2020.

In 2021, the council will play a critical role in the State's efforts to assist New Hampshire businesses to recover from the impacts of COVID-19, and to create policies and resources within its own organizations to add further opportunities to support reopening and recovery.

Please let me know if there is any additional information we can provide.

Sincerely,



Taylor Caswell  
Commissioner