

**MINUTES**  
**EDC-VC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

October 6, 2021

**Location:** EDC-VC, 4001 Mission Oaks Blvd., Founder’s Room, Suite A-1, Camarillo, CA 93012 and <https://zoom.us/j/8349665509>.

**Attendance:** Kristin Decas – Port of Hueneme/Oxnard Harbor District  
Nan Drake – E.J. Harrison Industries  
Bob Engler – City of Thousand Oaks  
Kelly Long, *Chair* – County of Ventura  
Rosie Ornelas – Economic Roundtable Representative, City of Oxnard  
Andy Sobel – City of Santa Paula  
Peter Zierhut, *Secretary/Treasurer* – Haas Automation

**Absent:** Dee Dee Cavanaugh – City of Simi Valley  
Harold Edwards, Vice-Chair – Limoneira Company

**Legal Counsel:** Nancy Kierstyn Schreiner – Law Offices of Nancy Kierstyn Schreiner

**Staff:** Marvin Boateng, Director of Lending  
Ray Bowman, SBDC Director  
Monica Estrella, Grants and Contracts Manager  
Kelly Noble, Office Manager  
Tracie Schneider, Communications and Marketing Manager  
Bruce Stenslie, President/CEO

**Call to Order:** 3:33 p.m. Chair Kelly Long thanked everyone for attending.

**Roll Call:** Kelly Noble

**Approval of Executive Committee Minutes** **Executive Committee Meeting, September 1, 2021**  
Chair Long requested a motion to approve the minutes from September 1, 2021, Executive Committee meeting. Peter Zierhut moved to approve and file the minutes from September 1, 2021, Executive Committee meeting. Bob Engler seconded the motion. Nan Drake was not in attendance for this item. All remaining Executive Members listed in attendance in favor, motion carried.

**Amendment to the Agenda:** None

**Public Comment:** None

**Administration    Consideration of a \$5 Million Contract with the California Workforce Development Board for the Term January 1, 2022 – December 31, 2024, for a Digital Upskilling Program. Recommendation to Delegate Authority to the President/CEO for Executing the Contract and Subcontract Agreements for Implementation.**

Stenslie noted for the Executive Committee that Assemblymember Jacqui Irwin has long been among the state’s leading advocates for investing in digital skills, promoting cyber-security and advancing for our region a robust and competitive high technology economy. She has been instrumental in securing resources for Cal State University Channel Islands to launch its own Engineering program, with a concentration in Mechatronics.

Early during the COVID-19 pandemic, Assemblymember Jacqui Irwin was introduced to a CARES Act funded digital skills training pilot program in the Sacramento area. She quickly organized discussions in Ventura County about replicating the program. While we were not able to turn around a program immediately, even better, she was able to secure a \$5 million Trailer Bill (AB/SB 129) allocation for the launch of a program in Ventura County.

At the request of Assemblymember Jacqui Irwin, the 2021-2022 State Budget allocated \$5 million to the Labor Agency for a Rapid Digital Upskilling and Workforce Development for Displaced Workers Pilot.

The Economic Development Collaborative (EDC), the Ventura County Community Foundation (VCCF), Ventura County Workforce Development Board (VCWDB) and California Lutheran University (CLU) and education partners are jointly launching a comprehensive program to equip workers with highly transferable digital literacy and technical skills via short-term certificate programs that will empower them for careers in multiple growth industries and sectors. These include but are not limited to:

- Information & communication tech (ICT)
- Education & knowledge creation
- Life & health sciences
- Advanced manufacturing and clean technology
- Public administration & critical infrastructure
- Ecommerce, small business & entrepreneurship

The pilot program in Ventura County will utilize upskilling platforms that include employer-driven curricula and industry appropriate credentials, as well as provide wrap-around support services such as career guidance and counseling. A robust community outreach campaign will focus on attracting candidates from underrepresented communities that are seeking a career in technology.

This investment in workforce skills will be accompanied by a regional industry cluster organizing effort, for the purpose of securing employer buy-in, participation and investment and for assuring the sustainability of the effort beyond the Pilot Program’s life span.

Disadvantaged workers are often forced to choose between taking whatever job they can get to provide for their family’s needs and taking the time to complete a training program. Providing benefits that support jobseekers while they complete upskilling programs leads to better overall job match quality and stability for both jobseekers and employers.

The pilot program will provide a stipend for high barrier job seekers that acts as a wage replacement, greatly increasing access to members of disadvantaged communities. As necessary the pilot will provide a laptop and internet service stipend as additional investments to promote equitable access and to improve completion rates.

All aspects of the program are subject to approval by Assemblymember Jacqui Irwin and per agreement with the CA Labor and Workforce Development Agency.

- EDC serves as the fiscal agent for overall program coordination and will launch—in collaboration with all partners noted in various capacities below—a regional industry cluster effort organized around ICT and the demand for digital skills across multiple sectors in our fast automating and globalizing economy. EDC will employ a program manager to oversee the initiative and a program assistant to help coordinate the partnership and client service activity.
- EDC will document through a comprehensive empirical examination of the region’s job postings and resumés to determine our gap between the most in-demand digital skills and labor supply.
- EDC will distribute funds to partner organizations for curriculum development and delivery; employer engagement; trainee outreach and recruitment, assessment and program enrollment; and case management and job placement services.
- Employer and trainee outreach will be a jointly shared responsibility, including EDC, WDB, VCCF, Cal Lutheran University, Cal State Channel Islands University, Ventura Community College District, and other partners in the Ventura County Work Based Learning Consortium.
- VCCF will lead an outreach and recruitment effort to educationally underserved and economically disadvantaged populations and to the region’s non-profit organizations that support them.

The program intent is to enroll not less than 250 workers over the course of the pilot, organized in three separate trainee cohorts:

- high barrier entry level workers;
- small business owners and employees seeking to adapt to on-line sales platforms, remote working arrangements and social media marketing;
- workers with some basic digital skills and experience but for whom additional core training is essential to qualify for industry demand opportunities.

The program’s measurable outcomes will include number of trainees completing the curriculum, job placements and wage at placement.

Our larger purpose is to contribute to the development of a competitive and resilient Information and Computer Technology industry sector initiative and for the sustained capacity to prepare workers at all levels for digital skills employment opportunities across all industry sectors.

EDC, in collaboration with project partners, will generate three reports through the project.

- Summary and status update after completing the study on the gap between industry demand and labor supply and at the launch of the first training cohort;

- mid-program summary of progress and barriers encountered and strategies for moving forward; and
- final report on the results of the training and placement and the industry cluster and skilled worker pathway capacity building and with a status report on sustainability including recommendations for replication of the pilot project.

EDC staff is currently in negotiation with the State Labor and Workforce Development Agency, Workforce Development Board Division, for a final contract agreement.

We anticipate contract approval for launch on January 1, 2022, for a three-year term ending December 31, 2024.

Chair Long requested a motion that the Executive Committee, subject to legal review and full board approval, delegate authority to the President/CEO to sign contract agreements with the California Workforce Development Board and subcontracts to implement a \$5 million Digital Upskilling Program, for the anticipated term of January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2024. Bob Engler motioned, subject to legal review and full board approval, to delegate authority to the President/CEO to sign contract agreements with the California Workforce Development Board and subcontracts to implement a \$5 million Digital Upskilling Program, for the anticipated term of January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2024. Andy Sobel seconded the motion. All Executive Members listed in attendance in favor, motion carried.

**Consideration of Grant Agreements with Long Beach City College, for the Term October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2022, for the Capital Infusion Program and Technical Assistance Expansion Program, in Support of Small Business Development Center Services. Recommendation to Delegate Authority to the President/CEO for Executing Grant Agreements.**

Stenslie noted, EDC has served as the Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties Small Business Development Center (SBDC) since 2010. The primary funding is through the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA). The core SBDC grant has generally ranged between \$375,000 and \$475,000 annually, on a calendar year term. The SBA requires that grantees provide a match to the federal funds, not less than half of the match in cash.

Over the last several years the Governor’s Office of Business and Economic Development has provided some share of the required cash match. That has mostly been in the form of the Capital Infusion Program (or CIP, the subject of recommendation #1 above), which for EDC has ranged from as low as \$45,000 up to \$140,000. These funds are specifically intended to improve local SBDC capacity to facilitate business access to capital. This year’s estimated funding of \$140,000 is the same as the prior year, all of which contributes to our SBDC program required cash match of an estimated \$240,000 annually.

The funding is delivered to us through the same regional structure as for our regular SBA funding, that is, through grant agreement from the regional lead center, Long Beach City College. The grant agreement has not yet been received, though we anticipate it to be presented some time in mid to late October. Today’s recommended action is to assure we can access the funding as soon as possible after they submit it for our review and signature.

Prior year program performance outcomes were to provide technical assistance to 300

firms seeking access to capital, resulting in \$18 million in new capital infusion. The outcomes are captured and reported under the single banner of our Small Business Development Center program. We have fully expended these funds and exceeded our outcome goals for this fund in prior years.

This was a new program starting in October 2018, also funded through the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development and also, like the CIP program noted above, with funding distributed through our lead SBDC center, Long Beach City College.

The program's purpose is to leverage and supplement existing federal programs, expanding its reach to a larger number of firms and resulting in more outcomes in capital infusion and new business starts. Program activity and outcomes are reported under the unified banner of the SBDC contract.

As noted above for CIP, today's recommended action is to help assure we can access the funding as soon as possible after receiving, reviewing and approving the proposed agreement.

Unlike the Capital Infusion Program noted above, the TAEP funds are not intended as cash match, rather are to augment and expand the work of Small Business Development Centers, Women's Business Centers, Minority Business Centers and other programs funded by the federal government to serve small business.

Our funding for the year ended September 30 was \$250,000, though preliminary estimates for this new year are for up to approximately \$450,000. Funding amounts have been volatile through the pandemic period, as we've also had access to federal CARES Act funds to cover our expanding levels of service.

Stenslie added that these two funds appear sustainable for the next couple of years, having been approved not only in the Governor's budget, but by legislative action, for a five-year term, 2018 through 2023.

Chair Long requested a motion that the Executive Committee delegate authority to the President/CEO to sign grant agreements and modifications with Long Beach City College, funding from the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GOBiz) for Small Business Development Center services, for the term October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2022, subject to full board and legal review, for consideration the following actions:

1. Approval of a Capital Infusion Program (CIP) Agreement, estimated at \$140,000.
2. Approval of a Technical Assistance Expansion Program (TAEP) Agreement, estimated at \$450,000.

Nan Drake Motioned to delegate authority to the President/CEO to sign grant agreements and modifications with Long Beach City College, funding from the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GOBiz) for Small Business Development Center services, for the term October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2022, subject to full board and legal review, for consideration the following actions:

3. Approval of a Capital Infusion Program (CIP) Agreement, estimated at \$140,000.
4. Approval of a Technical Assistance Expansion Program (TAEP) Agreement, estimated at \$450,000.

Andy Sobel seconded the motion. All Executive Members listed in attendance in favor, motion carried

**Strategic Planning Discussion**

Stenslie noted, as previously discussed, we are working with Eric Ryan of Mission Met for strategic planning services. Our notion is that after several years of organizational growth and regional (and global) economic disruption, now is a good time to step back, assess our condition, capacity and purpose, and initiate a strategic planning exercise to re-center the organization. For this, we have four outcomes intended:

- Vision: A clear multi-year vision to guide the organization, especially as it relates to the geographic area served and our programmatic direction.
- Strategic Plan: A practical and focused strategic plan to lead the EDC towards its vision.
- Alignment: An even stronger alignment between the staff and board.
- Execution: A documented process for ensuring that the strategic plan gets executed.

Our purpose in going forward is to assure our organizational sustainability as a public/private partnership, dedicated to enhancing regional economic competitiveness, and to optimize our efficiency and community value, while remaining committed to:

- quality customer service,
- a business-demand driven model of collaborative learning, and
- triple bottom-line, outcome oriented, transparent and data driven accountability.

We are looking to confirm Monday, November 1 or 8, first thing in the morning, as a mini-board retreat to review and discuss the draft Strategic Plan, as a preliminary step to full board consideration—and we hope adoption—at our board meeting on November 18.

**Membership Report**

Stenslie noted that assuming board approval, AT&T will be joining our Board with Monica Gibbs representing. This will be on our next Full Board agenda.

**President’s Report**

Stenslie mentioned that staff is still in dialog with the County Executive Office and getting positive feedback regarding access to a share of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Local Funds, for the support of our small business development and lending services. Chair Long offered to share a copy of the recent county staff report to the board on ARPA funds.

Stenslie also mentioned that the California Economic Summit is coming up on November 9-10.

New or  
Unfinished  
Business

None

Executive  
Committee  
Comments:

Kristin announced that the Port will be hosting Clean Air Day. She will send out a post and encourages everyone to repost. Kristin also mentioned that the ANTX Event at the port, part of Coastal Trident, was a successful event.

Closed Session     **Employee Performance Evaluation – Government Code Section 54957(b)(1)**  
                            **Title: President**  
                            Went into closed session at 4:19 pm.

Report Out of     The Committee came out of closed session at 4:53 with nothing to report.  
Closes Session

Adjournment     At 4:55 pm. Chair Long announced that the meeting is adjourned November 3, 2021.

                            Minutes taken by Kelly Noble.