

MINUTES
EDC-VC BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
June 20, 2024

Location: 4001 Mission Oaks Blvd, Suite A-1, Camarillo, Ca 93012

Attendance: Albert Mendez – City of Fillmore

Bob Engler – City of Thousand Oaks

Bryan MacDonald – City of Oxnard

Chris Meissner – Meissner Filtration Products, Inc.

Cynthia Herrera – Ventura County Community College District

Daniel Groff – City of Moorpark

David Tennessen – City of Camarillo

Henry Dubroff – Pacific Coast Business Times

Janice Parvin – County of Ventura, Board Supervisor

Jeff Gorell – County of Ventura, Board Supervisor

Jeremy Goldberg – Central Coast Labor Council

Joe Schroeder – City of Ventura

Kristin Decas – The Port of Hueneme / Oxnard Harbor District, Board Vice – Chair

Pedro Chavez – City of Santa Paula, Board Vice – Chair

Rachel Lang – City of Ojai

Sarah McLelland – Montecito Bank & Trust

Sim Tang-Paradis – City National Bank

Stephanie Caldwell – Ventura Chamber of Commerce

Ursula Moran – AT&T

Absent:

Alan Jaeger – Naval Surface Warfare Center Port Hueneme

Alex Schneider – The Trade Desk

Amy Fonzo – Aera Energy

Barry Wolfman – St. John’s Regional Medical Center / Dignity Health

Brian Tucker – Ventura County Coast

Dee Dee Cavanaugh – City of Simi Valley

Gerhard Apfelthaler, PHD – California Lutheran University

Harold S. Edwards – Limoneira Company

Jim Scanlon – Arthur J. Gallagher & Co. Insurance

Martin Erickson – Ventura County Transportation Commission

Misty Perez – City of Port Hueneme

Nan Drake – E.J. Harrison Industries

Peter Zierhut – Haas Automation, Inc.

Rosie Ornelas – City of Oxnard

Skyler Ditchfield – GeoLinks

Trace Stevenson – AeroVironment, Inc.

Staff:

Bruce Stenslie, President/CEO

Shalene Hayman, EDC Controller

Iriany Sánchez, Uplift Community Engagement Coordinator

Guests:

John Bandek—City of Moorpark

Mike Silacci—VCCF

Jim Eubanks—KPMG

Sevet Johnson – County of Ventura

David Tennessen – City of Camarillo

Call to Order:

Board Chair Kristin Decas welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 3:38pm. Kristin asked all to share introductions.

Amendment to the Agenda: None

Public Comment: None

Approval of Meeting Minutes: Board Chair Kristin Decas opened discussion and invited comments from members of the board regarding the May 16, 2024, board minutes. Kristin Decas called a motion to approve the minutes. Stephanie Caldwell moved the motion and Janice Parvin seconded. All Board members listed in attendance in favor, motion carried.

Financial Report: Approval of April 2024 Financials

Bruce Stenslie introduced Shalene Hayman EDC Controller to provide an overview of the EDC's financial standing for April 2024. Board Chair Kristin Decas called a motion to approve the financials from January 2024- April 2024, Pedro Chavez moved the motion and Bob Engler seconded. All Board members listed in attendance in favor, motion carried.

Administration:

A. Bruce Stenslie provided background on EDC acting as the Fiscal Agent and Co-Convener for Uplift Central Coast, funded by California's Community Economic Resilience Fund (CERF), now known as California Jobs First. This initiative aims to diversify local economies and create sustainable, high-quality jobs, emphasizing economic, equity, and environmental principles. The funds are distributed across 13 regions by three state agencies, with EDC handling the six central coast counties. EDC has partnered with REACH and Monterey Bay Economic Partnership (MBEP) for this initiative. Each region, called a High Road Transition Collaborative (HRTC), receives \$5 million for planning. EDC's role includes gathering stakeholder input and creating a regional economic resiliency plan. After state approval, local entities can apply for project funding with HRTC endorsement. The Catalyst Program, part of this initiative, provides up to \$14 million per region to jump-start economic recovery. EDC manages \$1.5 million for fiscal responsibilities and oversees \$9 million for exploratory projects, with \$3.5 million allocated for ongoing outreach. The agreement, effective mid-June, runs until September 2026, with potential extensions. EDC recommends board ratification of the staff's approval. **The Agreement and Today's Recommendation:** EDC received the draft agreement in mid-May and are in discussions with the Employment Development Department on several details. The contract is to be effective immediately upon our signature, which at the time of this writing we are estimating to be by mid-June. As the state is pushing for the agreements to be signed as soon as possible we are recommending the board's ratification of the staff's approval. The term ending date is currently September 30, 2026, though it is possible there may be extensions. Board Chair Kristin Decas called a motion to **Ratify the President/CEO's Signature to an Agreement with the CA Employment Development Department, \$13 Million for the Term 6/1/24 – 9/30/26, EDC to Serve as Fiscal Agent for the Uplift Central Coast.** Joe Schroeder moved to approve the motion, and Janice Parvin seconded the motion. All board members listed in attendance in favor, motion carried.

B. Bruce Stenslie provided background on the EDC bylaws, established in 1996 and amended several times, currently allow the President to authorize expenditures up to \$2,000. Amounts over \$2,000 require a board member's signature. Due to the organization's growth and inflation over 28 years, many disbursements now need a second signature, causing payment delays and straining staff and board resources. For example, in May 2024, over 50 checks exceeded \$2,000, each requiring a second signature. This situation particularly affects EDC's role as fiscal agent for Uplift Central Coast and the CA Jobs First program. **The staff's recommended** adjustment is to increase the limit to \$10,000. The change, if approved, would require a bylaws amendment as follows: Section 7.1 Disbursements: The President is authorized to execute any expenditure or disbursement up to \$2,000.00 \$10,000.00. Any expenditure or disbursement in excess of \$2,000.00 \$10,000.00 requires the signature of an authorized Board member. The Executive Committee reviewed and approved this recommended action at its meeting of June 5. If approved by the full board, we will also make the adjustment to the EDC administrative manual. Board Chair Kristin Decas called a motion to **Ratify the President/CEO's Signature to an Agreement with the CA Employment Development Department, \$13 Million for the Term 6/1/24 – 9/30/26, EDC to Serve as Fiscal Agent for the Uplift Central Coast.** Joe Schroeder moved to approve the motion, and Daniel Groff seconded the motion. All board members listed in attendance in favor, motion carried.

C. Bruce Stenslie provided background on the State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI), administered by the U.S. Treasury and distributed to states, tribes, and territories, aims to provide capital and technical assistance to support entrepreneurship and small business growth. With \$10 billion in national funding, the program includes business technical assistance through the SBA Small Business Development Center (SBDC) network and offers credit support and equity/venture capital programs to encourage investment. California received \$25.3 million for technical assistance over five years, awarded to the Governor's Office of Business & Economic Development, Office of the Small Business Advocate (OSBA), and \$1.1 billion for capital support. A portion of the \$25.3 million is granted to Long Beach City College, the regional lead center, which will distribute funds to service centers like our SBDC. We expect to receive annual funding of \$140,000 to \$200,000 to enhance our business technical assistance, particularly in connecting clients to SSBCI capital lenders. The recommended action is to delegate authority to the President/CEO to implement the project upon contract receipt, a recommendation approved by the Executive Committee on June 5. **It Is Recommended** that the Board of Directors delegate authority to the President/ CEO to negotiate and approve a one-year agreement with Long Beach City College, estimated not to exceed \$200,000, of Federal State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI) funding. Board Chair Kristin Decas called a motion to **Delegate Authority to the President/CEO to Negotiate and Approve a One-Year Agreement with Long Beach City College, Estimated Not to Exceed \$200,000, of Federal State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI) Funding.** Supervisor Jeff Gorell moved to approve the motion, and Rachel Lang seconded the motion. All board members listed in attendance in favor, motion carried.

D. Bruce Stenslie provided background on the California Employment Training Panel (ETP) securing funding through employer surcharges on the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund to support workforce upskilling. The training is primarily for incumbent workers and customized to meet specific employer needs. Businesses can apply directly for funding

through a competitive process or work with intermediaries like EDC, which acts as a "Multiple Employer Contractor" to facilitate access to training reimbursements. The training curriculum, often focused on continuous improvement or operational efficiency, is tailored to each participating employer, primarily targeting manufacturing firms. The program aims to enhance local employers' and employees' competitiveness against out-of-state and global competition. ETP funding covers training costs, mainly for front-line workers, generally up to 80 hours, while employers provide in-kind contributions through paid release time for employees attending the training, typically conducted on-site. EDC's role includes promoting state funding availability, identifying training needs, selecting trainers, and covering training expenses, integrated with Small Business Development Center services. EDC has extensive experience with this fund, having completed a \$100,000 contract and recently receiving a \$226,800 contract for a workplace literacy project. The proposed funding aligns with EDC's ongoing initiatives, such as a \$5 million Digital Upskilling project, emphasizing the critical role of workforce skills and investments in the region's economic competitiveness. **Today's Recommendation** is a follow-up to the board's authorization to apply for the funds, approved last September. The Panel just approved the funding at its meeting on May 31. The Executive Committee approved today's recommendation for the delegation of authority at its meeting on June 5. Board Chair Kristin Decas called a motion to **Delegate Authority to the President/CEO to Approve an Agreement with the CA Employment Training Panel, \$236,160 to Serve as a Multiple Employer Contractor, for a Two-Year Term, June 3, 2024 – June 2, 2026**. Pedro Chavez moved to approve the motion, and Celina Zacarias seconded the motion. All board members listed in attendance in favor, motion carried.

E. Bruce Stenslie provided background on the Ventura County Children and Families First Commission (First 5 Ventura County) being established by the Ventura County Board of Supervisors under the Children and Families First Act of 1998 (Prop 10). Its mission is to promote early childhood development from prenatal stages to age five. Funded by tobacco tax allocations and additional grants, First 5 Ventura County created the Community Investment Loan Fund in 2009 to enhance programs serving young children through affordable capital for child care and preschool facilities. EDC-VC manages this loan program, a contract recently extended through June 30, 2025. Approved on May 16, the program's budget includes \$20,000 for operational costs covering business outreach, loan underwriting, and servicing, supplemented by Small Business Development Center resources. This year, the loan pool is capitalized at \$300,000, part of the original \$1.3 million set in 2009. EDC has issued five loans totaling \$1,196,868, leveraging an additional \$568,132, creating 343 new child care slots, including 97 for infants and toddlers. Responsibilities under the contract include loan consultation, risk assessment, technical assistance, loan evaluation, management of a loan board, monitoring of loan use and repayment, and outreach to other lenders for co-investment. The motivation for this project includes addressing the local shortfall in licensed child care slots, limited access to capital for child care providers, and the economic impact of the child care sector. Quality child care supports parents' workforce participation and prepares children for future success, foundational to the region's long-term economic competitiveness. Summary: This program falls into alignment with our organization's capacity and experience for the provision of small business technical support and assistance with access to capital. Our board's approval of the agreement assures continuous service. **This recommended action** was approved for recommendation to the full board by the Executive Committee on June 5. Board Chair Kristin

Decas called a motion to **continue EDC's Management of the Community Investment Loan Fund Program for the Term 7/1/2024 – 6/30/2025, Up to \$300,000 in Loan Capital and \$20,000 for Operations.** Joe Schroeder moved to approve the motion, and Rachel Lang seconded the motion. All board members listed in attendance in favor, motion carried.

F. Bruce Stenslie provided background on EDC's current website, developed in 2018, needing an update due to the Thomas and Hill/Woolsey wildfires. Since 2019, EDC has worked with GTK Analytics (now Stratosphere), but Stratosphere's relocation and internal changes prompted EDC to seek a new service provider. EDC aims to integrate management of its broadband consortium website with its other sites for better cohesion. In April, EDC released a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for a new provider to support website development, maintenance, optimization, analytics, compliance, and security. The ideal partner would be a strategic collaborator, capable of managing multiple brands, offering innovative ideas, and providing ongoing support and insights. They should be experienced in economic development websites and based in Los Angeles, Ventura, Santa Barbara, or San Luis Obispo counties. EDC received 10 proposals, eight of which met the baseline conditions. After evaluating against selection criteria, a panel interviewed four finalists and recommended Fall Communications, based in Ventura County. Established in 1997, Fall Communications has extensive experience in website development, marketing, data analytics, and digital transformation, with a strong track record of collaboration and responsiveness. The panel's unanimous decision was based on Fall Communications' strength, alignment with EDC's principles, and positive client references. Other proposals, while strong, had concerns like unclear pricing and lack of commitment to partnership, making Fall Communications the best option for EDC's needs. **The recommended** action is to initiate contract services immediately and for a term ending June 30, 2025, with a delegation of authority to the President/CEO for annual vendor renewals, subject to budget and funding availability and contractor performance. Initial expense includes \$7,250 for audits and backend cleanup of all the above listed websites, \$7,500 for updates to <https://pcbroadband.org/>, \$5,250 for updates to <https://www.venturacountyfilm.com/>, and consideration to rebuild www.vcindustrycouncil.org/. Beyond the \$20,000 fixed expense staff will negotiate with Fall Communications on monthly maintenance costs and for content management for website and social media, marketing and advertising services, and for staff training. The "not to exceed" \$100,000 is intentionally high, allowing for the potential this year for more comprehensive changes to our websites. Board Chair Kristin Decas called a motion to **delegate Authority to the President/CEO for Approving a Contract and Amendments Thereto with Fall Communications, for Website Management and Communications Services, for an Initial Term of June 21, 2024 – June 30, 2025, and for an Initial Annual Cost Not to Exceed \$100,000.** Jeff Gorell moved to approve the motion, and Joe Schroeder seconded the motion. All board members listed in attendance in favor, motion carried.

G. Bruce Stenslie provided background on EDC, since 2002, effectively providing business retention and layoff aversion services funded by the Workforce Development Board through federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Rapid Response funds. These services help stabilize at-risk businesses and retain employees. The current program year ends on June 30, 2024, and EDC has been approved for a new \$120,000 contract for July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025, with potential renewal based on performance.

The contract aims to assist at least 40 businesses and retain 160 at-risk jobs annually. EDC exceeded these goals in 2023-24, serving 77 firms and retaining 165 jobs by April. The budget is \$120,000, subject to federal fund allocations, and any changes will adjust the outcome goals. This funding was anticipated in EDC's 2024 budget, with about 50% expected to be used by December and the rest in 2025. The Executive Committee recommended the contract for full board approval on June 5. **It is recommended** that the Board of Directors, subject to legal review, delegate authority to the President/CEO for signing a contract and any amendments thereto with the County of Ventura, Workforce Development Board (WDB) for Business Assistance and Layoff Aversion Services, for \$120,000, for the period July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025. Board Chair Kristin Decas called a motion to for **EDC to Continue Provision of Layoff Aversion Services, \$120,000 for the Term 7/1/2024 – 6/30/2025**. Pedro Chavez moved to approve the motion, and Sim Tang-Paradis seconded the motion. Except for County Supervisors Parvin and Gorell recusing, all other board members listed in attendance in favor, motion carried.

H. Bruce Stenslie provided background on the EDC-VC managing loan programs for the City of Ventura since 2000, providing 110 loans totaling approximately \$4.5 million and creating over 360 sustained jobs at an average cost of \$13,000 per job. The recommended action is to continue this service for another year starting July 1, 2024, subject to approvals. The loan programs aim to foster business growth, support entrepreneurship, and expand the city's employment pool. There are two contracts: **1. Microloan Contract:** Funded by federal Community Development Block Grant funds, targeting small business entrepreneurs to create jobs for low- and moderate-income workers. The contract includes approximately \$90,000 in new loan capital and an estimated \$150,000 carry-in from the previous year. Loans are capped at \$50,000 each, with a management fee of \$25,000 for EDC. **2. Rehabilitation and Code Compliance Loan Contract:** Funded by the city's general fund set-aside pool, supporting businesses rehabilitating properties or addressing code compliance issues. The fund includes an estimated \$680,000 for commercial rehabilitation and \$190,000 for code compliance. Loans range from \$10,000 to \$50,000 for commercial rehab and \$10,000 to \$25,000 for code compliance, with EDC's management fee at \$25,000. Services provided include technical assistance to applicants, loan development and funding, and portfolio servicing, all aiming to support job creation and retention. The city leads in identifying eligible recipients, with EDC supporting through outreach, underwriting, and administration. Loans have a maximum term of seven years and are made at the prime rate (currently 8.5%). The lending programs aim to create at least one job per \$25,000 loaned. Cumulatively, they have created one job per \$13,000 loaned and retained over 100 additional jobs. The loan program maintains a low-risk profile with less than 5% charged off. The loan portfolio is available for board member review upon request. **Our staff recommendation** for a delegated authority to sign the agreements is to assure our timely execution and a seamless continuation of service starting in July. Board Chair Kristin Decas called a motion to **Delegate Authority to the President/CEO to Negotiate and Approve Renewal Agreements with the City of Ventura, for the Provisions of a CDBG Micro-Enterprise Loan Program and a Rehabilitation, Code and Compliance Loan Program, Both for the term 7/1/2024 – 6/30/2025**. Rachel Lang moved to approve the motion, and Janice Parvin seconded the motion. Except for Joe Schroeder recusing, all other board members listed in attendance in favor, motion carried.

President's Report

I. **President's Report:** Bruce Stenslie provided an overview of the Audit Activity: Though we are regularly and routinely reviewed/monitored/audited by several organizations relating to grant funds, we are currently extremely busy. Our annual organization-wide/single audit is currently underway and starting the week of May 28 we are hosting the CA Employment Development Department audit team, reviewing our CA Jobs First/Uplift Central Coast funding and activity. Local, Regional and Other Community Meetings/Partnerships:

Board member discussion/ liaison reports:

As presented by Bruce Stenslie and Stephanie Caldwell on VCEDA and Stenslie sharing information on behalf of Brian Tucker for Ventura County Coast; by Council Member Bryan McDonald for VCTC.

Board member comments

N/A

Meeting Adjourned at: 4:59 pm

Board chair Kristin Decas thanked everyone for coming and adjourned to August 15, 2023.