PRESENT: Robert Werner, John Allen, Karl Kilduff (Town Manager), Chris Aniskovich (Chairman Town Council), Phil Williams (Kenyon International), Scott Law (ARGO EMS), Stephen West (National Sintered Alloys), Kathy Tanner (Bausch Advanced Technologies)

Guest: Colin Cooper, Chief Manufacturing Officer for State of Connecticut

The meeting was called to order at 9:02 a.m.

Introductions:

- Each business provided a brief description of their business and product(s)
- Clinton representatives provided
  - background information
  - positive reasons to have a business in Clinton
- C. Cooper provided background information about himself and provided the following information:
  - Understands having and growing a manufacturing business
  - Understands the tax environment and the need to create tax certainty
  - Discussed the bonding process and how the state used it for operating expenses rather than strictly capital expenses
  - Development of the work force with diverse set of skills
    - Jobs are being created, now they need to be filled

Voice of the Customer: Colin Cooper:

Highlights from his conversation with the Coalition are:

- Met with DEEP and trying to streamline the department and modify regulations
- Access to capital for small and mid-size businesses rather than giving large grants to the large companies
  - The state wants to help the small and mid-size businesses
  - Working on proving private and public capital to assist businesses
- Technology – need to look out into the future rather than day to day or month to month
- Work force development:
  - The work force in CT has been reduced with the large companies moving out of state
  - There are approximately 4,000 small manufacturing companies that employ about 20 employees
  - These small companies are normally located in office/industrial parks
  - There is a generation gap in employees – 35% are 55 or older and these employees are the most experienced and highly skilled
  - The Department of Labor agrees there are 6,000 to 8,000 people entering manufacturing a year however; there are 5,000 to 10,000 open positions
  - Tech High Schools, Community Colleges provide ½ of the demand for employees
  - Some bottlenecks to overcome are:
    - Need students to go into the tech programs
    - Need more space for these programs
    - Need trained faculty to teach these programs
      - Consider having the older employees do the training
      - Need programs to upskill new employees
  - Apprenticeship program – pipeline initiatives provide some level of skills
    - Trying to get funding for these programs
  - Consider multi-employer training: the state will pick up ½ of the cost for such training
  - Manufacturing Innovation Fund with 11 initiatives:
    - Incumbent worker training – apply for training – ½ cost paid
Voucher program up to $50,000 per employer as you see fit – business match once per employer
- Explained the training costs, stipend against wage cost and hours for program and number of employees per employer
  - Apprenticeship Program
  - Energy on the line – CT Green Bank – decreasing energy use/ cash flow positive
  - Discussed manufacturers competitors and the manufacturer multiplier that affects businesses
  - Introduce the Apprenticeship Program into the school system
    - A meeting is scheduled Thursday, January 9, 2020 with Superintendent O’Donnell
    - Begin this program in the Middle School

- Manufacturing coalition:
  - Run campaigns
  - Have lobbying
  - Do marketing
    - Have money to get students into the Pipeline Programs
    - Reported there are 9,000 students graduating yearly from Comprehensive High Schools that opt not to pursue a higher level of education or go into the service
  - There is a Connecticut Manufacturing Coalition: these have lobbyist working on needs to have's

Reports from Clinton and business representatives:
R. Werner:
- He has been invited to attend a CBIA meeting and will accept this invitation

Bausch Advanced Technology: Kathy Tanner discussed
- Meeting competing pay from larger companies
- Having to buy necessary parts from outside the country
- Wanting to fill a second shift
  - Need a critical mass of employees that want to work the second shift
- Has taken advantage of grants, apprenticeship program and workforce alliance

National Sintered Alloy: Stephen West discussed:
- Business is down due to pricing higher than competitors due to high cost of doing business in CT
- Trying to get into different markets, though entails long process for developments and approvals

Kenyon International: Phil Williams discussed:
- Taxes and work force are the most expensive and hardest to find in CT
- Need a good marketing program to educate local areas that these businesses are here with good paying jobs
  - Ways to advertise and where
  - Have high school students do tour of company
  - Have pictures of the companies and the parts they make and the salary
  - C. Cooper explained:
    - Schools are a great place to facilitate information and get local people to hire
    - Have a tuition reimbursement program with stipulation that if leave early have to pay it back

ARGO EMS: Scott Law discussed:
- Large companies have moved out of state
- Is the state doing anything to bring companies back into CT
- C. Cooper explained:
  - Need to get a good work force – developing programs in Community Colleges
Need access to capital

National Sintered Alloys: Stephen West discussed:
- Southern states coming to him and offering many items to make the move attractive
- Consider partnering with Eversource regarding energy

C. Aniskovich, Chairman Town Council discussed:
- The change in Clinton’s Town Government to a Town Manager will be beneficial
- He supports the STEM program in the Clinton school system
  - Need to promote and provide other avenues/options for students who do not want to go to college

K. Kilduff, Town Manager discussed:
- Has experience as Town Manager
- Questioned what the state is going to do to support economic development
- Tax credits will reduce working expenses
- UI and Eversource had a tax credit program, but since have eliminated it
- If mass small companies leave, CT will be crippled, the state needs economic development discipline

J. Allen discussed:
- 25% of well-trained skilled people do not pass drug test, could that be a pool of people for other companies
  - Some companies have used these skilled people and they do fine with some help with their dependency
  - C. Cooper added that the work release program is also a good labor pool

Other points of interest:
- Wallingford school system has partnered with AARP
- Work Force Alliance sends out announcements that graduates are still available for jobs

The meeting was adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy McDermott
Clerk