

Southern Vermont Economy Pitch

March 9, 2015

Summary

Storm Petrel LLC

Christina Moore & Cody Peters

- Provide state-level support and involvement with elected officials in Washington, D.C., for government contracts that favor Vermont businesses
- Institute a scoring system when awarding contracts that benefit Vermont companies – More federal money would stay in Vermont and could be fed back into the statewide education system
- Emphasize STEM in our education system: Writing code, quantitative analysis and modeling

Vermont Technical College

Jeff Higgins

- Create a state-supported apprenticeship program
 - Support for such a program would meet the demand for “plug & play” employees that are in demand by small and large manufacturers
- Identify additional state-wide employment opportunities and develop programs with partners (i.e. manufactures, educational facilities)
 - Vermont has a need for Advanced Manufacturing Programs, and the education to support knowledge in STEM fields
- Support mobile classrooms and laboratory environments
- Assist VTC with long term expansion plans:
 - Funding of apprentice programs, legacy investment in classroom facilities and availability/infrastructure (Learning Spaces) at the institutional level

Bennington Area Chamber of Commerce

Ioann Erenhouse

- Develop a strategic plan at the state level to use land assets in a better fashion
- Utilize the land area surrounding the state’s airports in a consolidated fashion to establish bonded warehouses and the leasing of space for specific uses to others
- State investment in public warehouse leases
- Establish a Foreign Trade Zone: All airport properties would be as one commingled entity

Bellows Falls Downtown Development

Dutch Walsh

- Vermont should keep its focus at the regional level by supporting regional development corporations (SeVEDS)
- Support Regional Career Centers – “We need to prepare for the world of tomorrow”
 - Concentrate on training young people
 - The focus should be on workforce training by setting up working groups of no more than 10 people (8 people with fluid ideas, 2 financial experts) to work with state-sponsored programs/partnerships
- Vermont should emphasize policies for economic development

- Example: Waivers of statutory requirements and rules (sharing resources that lead toward collaboration)
- Vermont's students are our responsibility and they need support in preparing for the future (i.e. college options, entrepreneur support, advanced technical training)

Independent International Business Consultant

Eshagh Shaoul

- Vermont should have an incentives package, including \$37.8M to buy and prepare land for further opportunities (development)
- We need water and sewer preparation
- Create and implement job development tax credits
- Vermont should look at other states as a benchmark for future opportunities
 - South Carolina is a good point of reference (The state is beautiful and it has a high quality of life)

Youth Services

Julie Davenson

- Vermont needs to support a stronger youth workforce
- Vermont should support a "Pay for Success Initiative" Pilot Program in Southern Vermont for youth to become engaged and connected successfully
 - Invest in workforce development: social impact bonds via "Pay for Success Initiative"
 - <http://www.thirdsectorcap.org/pay-for-succes/what-is-pay-for-success/>

Southern Vermont Natural History Museum

Michael Clough

- Promote the Southern Vermont Natural History Museum as a landmark attraction for the state
 - Currently looking for direct connections to area resources throughout the state
 - Establish a hub to promote connections with local businesses and outdoor resources

DJ Engineering

Jan Van Eck

- Provide additional funding for heating assistance and emergency shelter assistance programs
- Vermont should establish a State Bank of Vermont for funding purposes
- Hire the unemployed and put them to work building new housing
- Vermont should emphasize growth in the banking and housing sector of the economy

Vernon Voters Alliance

Munson Hicks

- Vermont needs a better fiber-optic infrastructure, namely statewide broadband connectivity
- Broadband "will not be a luxury, but it will be a necessity for communities if they're going to attract people to live here and new businesses...People will say it's too expensive. But in reality, it is too expensive for communities not to have it." – Munson Hicks

- We need “Fiber to Home” for all businesses and residents via municipal broadband systems with state loan guarantees
 - Municipalities should take the lead

Green River

Michael Knapp

- Vermont, via a branding effort, should attract young people to the southern part of the state for high tech jobs in the software industry
 - Instead of Silicon Valley, “Green Valley,” to market businesses interested in promoting sustainability
- Take 5 percent of the Tourism and Agricultural budgets and invest that towards a green, high-tech promotional and development program

Vermont Distillers

Ed Metcalfe

- Implement small-business, low-interest loans, promote the availability of seed money and equity investment opportunities

West River Artists/Fulcrum Arts

Natalie Blake

- Vermont should restart its regional marketing program
- The state should support a one-stop web application, like www.southernvt.com, which supports regional and partnered marketing programs

Keene State College/Sustainable Energy Outreach

Richard Foley

- Vermont should establish a “Housing First Team” with representation from CEDS 3 clusters: green building, health care and precision manufacturing, to focus on and support sustainable housing manufacturing
 - Housing First is an opportunity to fix homelessness in Vermont

Ironwood Brand

Eli Gould

- The state should support, provide, and enhance financing opportunities for small-business owners
- Vermont should support a “Veterans to Work Program”
 - Veterans possess the skills sets in ‘green’ techniques as a result of military training
 - Vermont could be at the forefront of the intersection between veterans returning to work and green energy initiatives
- We should support IP Processes: Secure facilities
- Design state programs based around current entrepreneur initiatives, to better assist the growing business sectors

Independent Artist

Barre Pinsky

- Vermont should promote the arts with:
 - Incentives to licensed artists that would instill pride, legitimacy, importance, etc.
 - Establish an artist database (approximately 4,000 artists in Vermont) as a resource with partnership potentials, such as tourism
 - Provide benefits: Independent contractor status (tax issues/health insurance) for artists
- Artists augment the state's image, create a revenue source from fees, provide additional sales tax returns and added tourism benefits

Windham Regional Planning Commission

Chris Campany

- We need to talk about wastewater now
 - Problem may be creeping up on us
- Vermont needs to work toward addressing/keeping up with modern wastewater requirements
- The state should engage a profile of villages, via GIS, to look at wastewater requirements to determine the size of the problem
- Invest in villages to keep them alive