

**HARTFORD BUSINESS REVOLVING LOAN FUND COMMITTEE/
HARTFORD VCDP REVOLVING LOAN FUND COMMITTEE**

Meeting Notes

March 5th, 2025 at 8:30 a.m.

Hartford Town Hall, Room 312

171 Bridge Street, White River Junction, VT

And via Zoom and by Conference Call

This meeting was conducted in compliance with the Vermont Open Meeting Law with electronic participation. The public was able to join the meeting from a computer, tablet or smartphone.

The HBRLF/ VDCP RLF Committee Members:

Crystal Pearson (term expires 6/26/2026)

Frank Klymn (term expires 2/21/2026)

Michael Gabriele (term expires 3/11/2027)

Jay Zanleoni – Chair (term expires 3/11/2027)

Members attending online/by phone: Vice-Chair Crystal Pearson and Michael Gabriele

Others attending online/by phone: Erika Hoffman-Kiess, GMEDC Executive Director, Jesse Pollard, member of the public

Others present in person: Lori Hirshfield, Town of Hartford Department of Planning and Development Director, Lexi Webster, Town of Hartford Housing and Development Specialist, and Mark Condon, GMEDC Executive Assistant

Call to Order: Quorum was not met for this meeting. Committee Vice-Chair Crystal Pearson called the meeting to order at 8:34 a.m.

Lori Hirshfield made a statement regarding the hybrid meeting.

Order of the Agenda: As there was not quorum, approval of the December 4th, 2025 meeting would have to wait until the March meeting.

Public Comments: Jesse Pollard called into the meeting. He stated that he was working with Anna Gunther of Vital Communities on a potential bid to purchase the Filling Station, a bar located in White River Junction. He has previously informed Committee Chair Jay Zanleoni about the project. Their plan for the business would be to be open more regular hours and to provide food service. Should the purchase go through, he will be considering approaching the Committee for a possible loan to cover some near-term capital expenditures, most likely to repair the building's roof.

Lori Hirshfield thanked Jesse for his interest in the Revolving Loan Fund and said that any future application should be through GMEDC, which will vet it and bring it to the Committee.

Jesse Pollard thanked the Committee and departed the meeting at 8:39 a.m.

Executive Session: Review of the Confidential Loan Summary Report for October 2024 and Updates on any Potential Loan Applications

Michael Gabriele made a **motion** to go into Executive Session due to the proprietary nature of the information in the January 2025 Loan Summary Report and to receive an update on any potential loan applications. Crystal Pearson seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

The Committee went into Executive Session at 8:39 a.m.

The Committee exited Executive Session at 8:54 a.m. No actions were taken for either the Hartford Business Revolving Loan Fund or that Hartford 2020 VCDP Revolving Loan Fund.

Erika Hoffman-Kiess departed the meeting at 8:54 a.m.

Approval of the 2025 Schedule of Meetings for the HBRLF Committee and Hartford VCDP Committee: The 2025 schedule of meetings will be the regular schedule of the first Wednesday of March, June, September and December at 8:30 a.m. A formal vote to approve this schedule can take place at the next meeting with quorum.

Outreach Plan for Both RLFs Development Discussion: Lori introduced Lexi Webster, the Town's new Housing and Development Specialist. As Lexi will be integrating her work with the RLF Committee. Lori asked Committee members to let Lexi know what they are looking for in an outreach plan. Crystal stated that in the four years she has been on the Committee and there have not been any new loans. We are looking to attract new loan applications. Word has to get out about the availability of these loans.

New Committee members are also needed. Lori said there is currently one opening and that you could also have additional "At-Large" positions. Crystal said it would be good to get an entrepreneur on the Committee, as it currently is made up of bankers. Crystal suggested that the Committee could be mentioned at the Town Meeting.

Mike Gabriele agreed that new applications and members were needed.

Lori stated that the Town was going through their website. They were setting up the over-all structure, but then the Committee could have their say over the pieces to be plugged-in and highlighted in regard to the revolving loan funds. She suggested the Committee members start thinking about what they would like to see on the website.

Crystal noted that there is a new VHIP grant specifically for ADUs in which the landlord can now pick their own tenant. Applications are open now.

Lori asked the Committee to explain to Lexi how they see the Committee's role in housing. Crystal said it is tied back to housing for employees in order to help businesses. It is difficult to recruit new employees if they are unable to find housing in the area. Mike agreed that affordable housing needed to be provided in town.

Other Business

Crystal asked if there was any other business. There was not.

Adjournment

Crystal Pearson made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Mike Gabriele seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 9:11 a.m.