

**Make It Easier To Do Business/Customer Focus
Subcommittee**

Public Session

Minutes

Monday, December 15, 2014

**Rhode Island Commerce Corporation
315 Iron Horse Way, Providence, RI**

The following were in attendance:

Appointees/Delegates

Roland Fiore
Timothy Hebert
George Nee
Karl Wadensten

Commerce RI Staff

Marcel Valois
John Pagliarini
Christopher Cannata
Peg Degnan

Others

Representative Patricia Serpa
David Salvatore
Nancy Scarduzio
Derrick Pelletier
Malcom Baxter

Mr. Wadensten called the meeting to order at 4:01 PM. Minutes from the November 17, 2014 meeting were approved.

Mr. Wadensten asked Mr. Fiore if he would like to start the discussion. Mr. Fiore stated that he would like to defer to Representative Serpa the Chairwoman of the House Committee on Small Business to start the meeting with an overview of what her committee does and the concerns they have.

Representative Serpa stated that the House Committee on Small Business has had some meetings with representatives from the Office of Regulatory Reform and the small business community. Representative Serpa stated that she and the Speaker are very concerned about the progress coming out of this regulatory work.

Mr. Wadensten stated that the Office of Regulatory Reform (ORR) is a great place to start this discussion. Mr. Wadensten asked Mr. Fiore to say a few words regarding getting some clarity to that concern. Mr. Fiore and Representative Serpa discussed municipalities versus the state regulations on development to property. Representative Serpa had another concern regarding Action Centers. Representative Serpa stated as an example that the Zoning Board in Coventry is going to disallow the action center to open.

Mr. Wadensten started the discussion on the manufacturing side of this issue. Mr. Wadensten stated that manufacturing has a long tail effect on unemployment and one of the first things is the voice of the customer. Mr. Wadensten said that there are 74 regulatory agencies in the state. Mr. Wadensten stated that ORR is responsible to get the clarity and predictability on what is going on and who is responsible to help. Mr. Wadensten also said that it is critical to get the correct Director of Regulatory Reform to make the agency work.

Mr. Wadensten started the discussion regarding the bi-weekly pay period. Mr. Wadensten gave an example of a person he met that has stopped any kind of expansion for his company in the state of Rhode Island due to the bi-weekly pay period cost. Ms. Scarduzio explained the process, getting insurance or bond, if a union company, getting permission from the union representative and also they have to apply to DLT.

Mr. Nee stated that RIDEM is a tremendous success story regarding customer service. Mr. Wadensten said that RIDEM was disengaged because of the criticism they received. Mr. Wadensten stated the agency completely turned themselves around. Mr. Wadensten stated that the Department of Transportation has a customer service problem. Mr. Pagliarini stated that special attention should be given to any cases where there are multiple jurisdictions which DEM and DOH have oversight of these issues.

Mr. Hebert asked Representative Serpa how this committee could help more. Representative Serpa stated that she would like to have Governor-elect Raimondo attend one of these meetings. Mr. Pagliarini said that Commerce RI would be in touch with the Governor-elect to invite her, the Director of Administration and the Chief of Staff to attend a future meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 4:56 PM.