

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

November 28, 2017

MINUTES

Present: George Sterling, Chubb Whitten, Cy Gregg, Martha Schaefer, James Kelly, Barbara Miller and Dave Smith

Also Present: Peter Throop, Director and Laura Norton, Administrative Assistant, Office of Community Development.

Chair Sterling called the meeting to order at 7:30 beginning with introductions.

Minutes:

A motion was made/seconded (Smith/Whitton) to approve the Minutes of October 24, 2017 as written with all in favor.

Guest Presentation:

Ted Geary of First Light Communications (a provider of high speed data, Internet, data center, cloud and voice services to enterprise and carrier customers in New Hampshire over the company's own fiber optic network) spoke to the members about their goal to bring dedicated fiber services and expanded networks to Peterborough. He told the members he had previously been with Comcast and their Enterprise Group adding "this company is actively building fiber optics in Peterborough and has the financial wherewithal to do it." When asked about the distribution of the network locally (specifically home-based businesses) Mr. Geary told the members "we don't and we are not looking to, our focus has been commercial." A brief discussion about the potential to reach home-based businesses followed with Mr. Geary noting a business plan could be submitted for a home-based business and if approved they would service on a case by case basis. "We could do a small nibble company as long as we have a main artery to tee off of and it is a commercial account" adding "it will be easier to deploy services as we continue to connect the dots."

Mr. Geary went on to note the fundamental changes in how small, medium and large companies do their business using the Internet and central cloud-based services. "Coaxial and modem structures will not continue to support them in the future as they are oversubscribed and their capacity is being taxed." He noted degradation of services and outages and told the members "it is a known fact, it is not a question of *if* but *when* companies shift to enterprise providers for dedicated services. First Light cloud service provides a secure, geographically redundant and high availability environment for servers, storage, backup and recovery and disaster recovery. The change is coming." He noted 15 to 20 buildings in

Peterborough “already with a version of fiber” adding “and you as EDA Members are obviously trying to entice companies to come here. We offer carrier diversity and redundancy with no hiccup outages because we are cloud based. We are established, we have been around a long time and we are excited to be here.”

A brief discussion about the main First Light arteries (along Route 202) as well as upload/download symmetry, attracting larger companies (Millipore, NHBB), redundancy and diversity and easily accessible Data Centers followed.

Peterborough Mobile Walking Tour App Update:

Tracy Messer noted the walking tour had been created for the Town’s 275th birthday celebration in 2014. He told the members the town was co-hosting the Third Annual International Thornton Wilder Conference (July of 2018) with the Monadnock Center for History & Culture and that he would like to update the walking tour of Wilder-related and Our Town-related sites in Peterborough. “To see Grover’s Corners and what it looks like today” he said adding “we’d like to shift away from the 275th and be ready to greet the members of the Thornton Wilder Society.” From the audience Ms. Miller interjected “Peterborough is the only town in New Hampshire with a walking tour.” “That is correct” replied Mr. Messer adding “we used the Newport Rhode Island model to create it. I have spent over 250 hours perfecting it.” He went on to explain the need to update the tour with new business coming to town and noted his goal of having the walking tour app be self-sustaining with funding support, business sponsors and grants. He told the members the app consisted of over 175 pages that needed to be reviewed for broken links and business updates. “It is cloud based with very little overhead” he said as he offered a list of ten recommendations for the update.

Mr. Smith asked “what are your needs?” “Your awareness” replied Mr. Messer adding “and to have the town fund the app moving forward.” He told the members the current cost of maintaining the app was about \$100.00 a month but with support from sponsorships “it could be self-supporting.” Mr. Messer briefly described his goal to move on and devote his time to growing another cloud-based business that would benefit veterans and disabled people “to be able to work from home and give employment to local people without other job opportunities.”

Ms. Miller noted the updates were important and suggested they talked about hiring Mr. Messer to do the work. Ms. Dietsch interjected “that is odd, Tracy owns the app. It is reasonable for him to update the app for future marketing.” She went on to say “it is reasonable to update the app for future marketing” and suggested they budget something toward that marketing effort. Ms. Miller reiterated the 250

hours Mr. Messer had already invested in the app and again suggested compensation for his time. Mr. Messer reiterated his goal of moving on, leaving the app ultimately self-sustaining. When Mr. Throop sked about a dollar commitment Mr. Messer replied he could provide an estimate. “Two days of my time should get this done” he said.

Strategic Planning Subcommittee Update – Goals Review:

As Mr. Throop projected the EDA 3-Year Goals (priorities including vacancy, entrepreneurship, tourism, marketing, branding, workforce) he told the members they were working on a proposal from Fire Brand International but no action was needed from the members at this time.

Employer/Educator Forum Update: Mr. Throop noted Mr. Galus was not present but the next Employer Forum was December 4th from 12:00 to 4:00 p.m. at Franklin Pierce University. He told the members Franklin Pierce University President Dr. Kim Mooney would address the group.

Strategic Marketing/Branding Contractor Update: Addressed by Mr. Throop earlier.

Website Update:

Mr. Throop noted they had received a quote they would follow up on.

EDA Operating Budget Proposal for FY 2019:

“We just need a motion for the proposed budget” said Mr. Throop adding “this includes monies to support the Welcome Team’s *Meet & Greet* events and the *Why Move to Peterborough* brochures.”

A motion was made/seconded (Smith/Kelly) to present the budget request of \$5,000.00 to the Budget Committee with all in favor.

Other Business:

Chair Sterling noted the Planning Board Workshop the night before on a new zoning ordinance. He complimented Planning Board Chairman Ivy Vann for an enlightening workshop. “She is not here but I would like to thank her for a great job” he said.

From the audience, Martha Schaefer gave the members an update of the Chamber of Commerce’s activities that included a winter banner program (three months, December through February, banners will hang from the light poles in the downtown. They will have only a snowflake design with the word “welcome” and

a business sponsor on it). “I have two banners available if anyone is interested” she said. She also described a full day of programming and events for the Town Tree Lighting Ceremony (scavenger hunt, cookie baking contest, window dressing contest hay rides, meet & greet at the Monadnock Center for History & Culture, Christmas caroling and of course the arrival of Santa Claus for the tree lighting in Putnam Park).

Chamber of Commerce Director Sean Ryan gave the members a thorough description of the activities noting he was quite pleased with the participation of the merchants.

Mr. Throop brought up a request related to the Marketing Subcommittee. “We have Christine Dennler here and she has volunteered to chair the sub-committee” he said. He noted Pelagia Vincent was also interested and as he looked around the room he asked “anyone else?” Ms. Schaefer replied she would be interested. With several members absent Chair Sterling suggested they poll the entire Committee.

A motion was made/seconded (Kelly/Gregg) to formally reinstitute the Marketing Subcommittee with all in favor.

Next Meeting: No December meeting

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Norton

Administrative Assistant