

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

September 20, 2016

MINUTES

Present: James Kelly, George Sterling, Jason Garland, James Kelly, Peter Robinson, Adam Hamilton, Gary Carpenter and Cy Gregg

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

Chair Sterling called the meeting to order at 7:30 noting “we have a quorum but not a full Board so I will appoint Gary (Mr. Carpenter) to sit.”

Minutes:

A motion was made/seconded (Robinson/Hamilton) to approve the Minutes of August 23, 2016 as written with all in favor.

Discussion - Peterborough Welcome Team:

Karen Hatcher was present and gave a brief review of the funding request she had presented at last month’s meeting.

Chair Sterling interjected “the consensus was very favorable but we did not have a quorum.” Ms. Hatcher reviewed the budget for baskets, printing expenses, meet and greets and postage for mailings. “We estimate a budget of \$3500.00” she said.

Jeanne Dietsch asked about sponsors for the meet and greets. Ms. Hatcher noted some businesses are already on board “and if we can get meet and greet spaces that we are not charged for it will be even less” she said adding “we will be frugal for sure.”

Ms. Hatcher noted a business appeal drive was launched yesterday “with five businesses already signed up.” When a member asked for clarification on what the business appeal was Ms. Hatcher replied the business would provide an offering of some sort (a gift or coupon to be placed in the basket or the donation of a door prize at the meet and greet event).

After some back and forth on the budget Ms. Hatcher told the members the firm budget with in-kind services and sponsorships was \$2500.00 Mr. Gregg asked “where is the money coming from?” Chair Sterling replied “our standing budget of \$5000.00” adding “we are thrilled about the community support, this helps create what Jeanne (Dietsch) refers to as *stickiness*.”

A motion was made/seconded (Gregg/Hamilton) to approve \$2500.00 be given to the Peterborough Welcome Team for the purposes listed with all in favor.

Excited and pleased, Ms. Hatcher thanked the members for their contribution.

Discussion - Shop Local Initiative:

Noting the Chamber of Commerce was maxed out with their initiatives and projects Chair Sterling said "I'd like to light a fire to collaborate and devise a shop local initiative." He told the members "I have studied shopping local and the distinction is a very fine line of promoting it to the community." He continued by noting "I have also studied choices on buying and while we think about buying *logically*, we actually buy *emotionally* with price and convenience in the forefront. We are missing the commitment of shopping locally."

In agreement Mr. Robinson interjected "but right now we are all over the place. I think that is where the Chamber should be, we are more global than them, it is in their wellhouse where it should be." Mr. Kelly agreed adding "it is an important subject, it should carry on in our existing efforts and let the Chamber handle it." Mr. Gregg also agreed noting "local initiative is a function of the Chamber."

Mr. Throop mentioned Monadnock Buy Local, an organization providing positive economic and community benefits by spending dollars locally. "Their effort has been underway for several years" he said adding "we don't have to recreate any wheels here, we can become a part of that. Mr. Gregg suggested a recommendation of collaboration from the EDA may be valuable. From the audience Ms. Hatcher interjected a greater regional presence in all their efforts was appropriate.

Mr. Throop told the members he had a lot of confidence in Jen Risley, (instrumental in getting the Keene Co-op off the ground) "I have a lot of confidence in a regionally-based buy local effort with her steering" he said.

Subcommittee Updates:

Marketing Workgroup: With a smile Mr. Robinson began with "we were supposed to meet this morning." In reference to projects such as Nashua Community College he said "we are really just waiting for a story to tell."

Broadband Workgroup: Mr. Throop began with an update of the research an intern had completed on the density to mileage issue, particularly on the Greenfield Road (Route 136). He projected several graphics depicting the start and end areas uncovered by Comcast as well as a needs ratio by individual sections of town (one mile with twenty or less living units). He then asked Ms. Dietsch if she had

anything to add. Ms. Dietsch replied “we need to go back to marketing” adding “Joe (Ierna) and Nicole (MacStay) are training staff in social media and we are working on a plan on how to spend the advertising budget.” She told the members the tri-fold *Why move to Peterborough* brochures would be distributed at the Hooksett South Truck Stop. “The charge is \$30.00 for a place on the kiosk and \$5.00 a week (or \$260.00) for the rack jobber to keep it filled.

A motion was made/seconded (Kelly/Robinson) to authorize \$290.00 for the distribution of the town’s brochure in Hooksett with all in favor.

Getting back to Broadband Ms. Dietsch reviewed the unit per mile calculation noting “this is a business issue, we have a model for them that should make sense to them. They can make money on this and it puts them a little closer to Greenfield than they were.” She also told the members about a meeting she planned to attend on how to approach legislative efforts for broadband. Ms. Dietsch concluded by saying “I think we have some leverage here.” Mr. Throop agreed and said “we will have to wait and see how they respond to it.”

Chair Sterling asked about other areas in town with Ms. Dietsch replying “there may be a few little pockets but not like the Greenfield Road.” Chair Sterling then asked “how many houses (are effected) all together?” Mr. Throop replied “about 200” adding “and this is a direct outcome of our broadband effort headed by Jeanne Dietsch.”

EDA Strategic Planning Workgroup: Mr. Kelly noted the subcommittee had not met recently. Mr. Throop spoke briefly about the collaborative efforts of the Planning Board, the EDA and the subcommittee for the Economic Vitality Chapter of the Master Plan. He particularly noted town-wide communication and a branding message. Citing the potential of a new hotel in town Ms. Dietsch added the potential of hiring a consultant on form based code “and how to represent ourselves as a community.”

Mr. Robinson told the members he felt as though they had a lot of spinning plates without a lot of synchronization and a brief discussion on how the various groups and organizations should work together. Incidentally, Mr. Throop noted how Town Administrator Rodney Bartlett had stepped up to facilitate getting the All Town gas and convenience store opened. “They have a right of way issue” he said adding “it is not within the Town’s control but Rodney did an incredible job in working toward a solution.” Chair Sterling added “by getting the right people together at the right time in a proactive way.”

Mr. Throop projected a graphic and reviewed economic development tools and techniques to include business retention and expansion, business attraction, global trade and foreign investment, workforce development, innovation and entrepreneurial support, business technical assistance and quality of place/place-based development. “It is all about building our relationship with our businesses in town” he said noting a flow chart of research/prioritization and implementation. “Is not about attracting big business, it is about business support and development which includes planning, organization, implementation and resource development.”

Affordable Housing: Mr. Carpenter told the member she group has been busy “we meet every Friday” he said adding “we are moving on things.”

Nashua Community College (NCC) Update:

Mr. Whitton was not present to give an update. Mr. Throop noted an educational forum scheduled for 7:30 p.m., October 5, 2016 at the All Saints Church (Reynolds Hall) in Peterborough. He noted participants involved included representative from the Well School, the Dublin School, Franklin Pierce University, Con-Val and Conant. “I am hoping Lucille (Jordon, NCC President) can be there as well” he concluded.

Economic Vitality Chapter Update:

Both Mr. Kelly and Ms. Dietsch agreed this update had been covered in previous conversation.

Other Business:

Economic Development Academy:

BIA Presentation: Mr. Throop noted the NH Business Industrial Academy is a program supported by the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension.

Presentation XXXXXX

He told our story of the last decade, the energy we have generated and the things we have actually accomplished as well as the things we still want to tackle” he said adding “it was quite gratifying using the words “cutting edge” and it is frustrating when it seem things are going slower than we want but as we continue doing it in a thoughtful way it will bear results for us.”

Economic vitality and EDA participate in that data gathering. Kick off in the next couple of weeks (end of October).

Forum late November, early December to share what we have learned and get feedback.

Send two people one to do the asking the other to take notes.

Ms. Dietsch noted that in her discussions she has realized that “it does not seem to be workforce development (not having enough trained people) as much as it is low wages. We have two sides of the coin we should be aware of. It is a complex issue.” Noting she was looking for work Ms. Hatcher agreed adding “wages in this area are significantly lower, it is really tough.” Ms. Dietsch concluded “companies who cut costs do not have good wages. We are looking for companies who work to build and attract talent, to be global and sell global, *then* you will have higher wages and more wealth in the community. We have to compete on quality and uniqueness and that takes talent.”

From the audience Dennis Calcutt asked the members if he might come and talk to them about the grant they were awarded as well as other ways to think about the region, economic development and how to improve the area.

Chair Sterling noted he had gone hiking in Vermont and came upon a hydroelectric dam that supplied power for 800 homes. “It paid for itself in 15 years he said as he asked about an update on the status of the hydroelectric dam on River Street. Mr. Calcutt noted he would follow up with Loir Barg and report back.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 a.m.

Next Meeting:
October 25, 2016

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Norton
Administrative Assistant