

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

June 24, 2019

## MINUTES

**Present:** Nate Morison, James Kelly, Jerry Galus, Christine Dennler, Jeanne Dietsch, Corinne Chronopoulos, and Karen Hatcher

**Also Present:** Peter Throop, Laura Norton, and Kristin Bixby, Office of Community Development

Chair Morison called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. with introductions of the Board and Staff

### **Minutes:**

A motion was made/seconded (Kelly/Dietsch) to approve the Minutes of May 21, 2018 as written with all in favor.

### **Opportunities with Franklin Pierce University and Request for Expenditure Approval:**

Mr. Galus briefly reviewed the Town of Peterborough's presence and participation as well as the budget and items for the STEP Day Events (June and July) at Franklin Peirce University. "There will be about 500 parents and students attending each" he said. Mr. Galus noted the Town had two tables and a banner for the event and would be distributing brochures, eco-friendly gift bags with the town's name and website printed on them and a raffle for a Welcome Team Basket. He went on to say, "if we want to be sustainable and expand our presence at these events, we'll need to look to the EDA to fund some things." Mr. Galus noted the cost of printing the gift bags was \$470.00, "but they will be floating allover campus and then taken home."

When Ms. Dennler asked, "what is STEP Day?" Mr. Galus replied it was when new students and their parents come to tour the campus and interact with staff and educators. The day is filled with presentations, events and activities for the incoming students. He told the Members "there are 530 physical bodies signed up for the first event and slightly

less for the second with a 75-80% turnout.” Ms. Dennler asked if there were others giving out promotional materials with Mr. Galus noting there were some food and linen services vendors “but no one else at this scale.” Mr. Galus concluded that the town had actually been approached by the university as a result of the Employer’s Forum. “This will be our first time and we are still in the learning stages” he said.

Mr. Kelly replied, “this is good” and asked how much money the Members had left in their current budget. Mr. Throop replied “\$2300 and change and (being the end of the fiscal year) you’ll need to decide how to use it *this* week.” Mr. Morison noted the monies encumbered for the walking tour app were not used so they would go unencumbered and go back to the general fund in a week. Ms. Dietsch noted her dismay (“I am quite disturbed”) she said, “that the re-upping of Firebrand’s contract had not taken place yet and that some the money could be used for that.” It was explained to her that Firebrand’s contract is paid through a different revenue source. As a motion was made by Mr. Kelly to approve the \$470.00 for gift bags, Ms. Dennler recommended they review all requests for funds before they vote. Ms. Dennler also noted another financial request for EDA funds was forthcoming.

### **Requests to Carry Over Funds from FY 2019 Website Updates:**

Ms. Hatcher noted consideration for funds for DRUM’s website redesign, copy and content creation, and search engine optimization also be reviewed. She also noted the need for a process for updating information on the Welcome Team page of the website (something she had been responsible for) adding, “it seems appropriate to me to take this out of my prevue and give it to the professionals.” Ms. Dennler segued in with the need for an ability to do geo tracking to target posts. She cited this tool to measure the success of the social media and drill down a bit more specifically on their audience. “It is an indication of how successful we are being” she said, “and since we are throwing money requests, I thought I’d put this out there.”

There was a brief discussion of how geo tracking works. “It is more than tracking clicks, it translates into people coming to town” said Ms. Dennler. The main way Ms. Dennler had been tracking the data was through information given to her by the Sharon Arts Center. Ms. Bixby told the Members the Sharon Art Center (absorbed by the New Hampshire Art Institute in 2012) will be merged with New England College and will close its doors in Peterborough by the end of August. Unaware of this fact Ms. Dennler replied, “well then, never mind. I am behind the eight-ball on information so never mind.” Ms. Hatcher noted the importance of keeping geo tracking as a part of the plan for the future. Ms. Dennler agreed, “yes for frame of reference and benchmarks.”

A motion was made/seconded (Kelly/Dietsch) to approve \$470.00 of EDA funds for printed gift bags for the Franklin Pierce University STEP Day Events. With all in favor.

A motion was made/seconded (Dietsch/Kelly) to authorize up to \$1400 for website updates. Mr. Throop noted an allocation of \$300.00 to Drum and the motion was amended to read “to authorized \$1700 for website updates” (Dietsch/Kelly) with all in favor.

### **Future of EDA and HUB/Ecosystem:**

Mr. Morison began with a brief review of the mission and vision of the HUB as developed with Firebrand. He then incorporated the goals of the EDA “to get us thinking about where we are going with our authority to enhance and foster economic development in Peterborough.” He briefly reviewed the “Five Ps” (purpose, priority, people, projects and performance) and the next steps to take with their relationship with the HUB, and how the HUB may want to be supported.

Interrupting Mr. Morison’s presentation Ms. Hatcher interjected “I think we need to talk about the process and where we go from here” adding “so I think we should hear Jeanne’s PowerPoint.” Ms. Dietsch eagerly began her presentation beginning with the EDA in 2014 “EDA in Crisis

Mode” reviewing an evolvement to 2015 and EDA’s Mission and Vision and Strategic Planning Sets including 3-Year Plan Goals. This included business owner interviews on how to retain existing jobs; strengthening the town’s relationship with the state agencies; expanding the Town’s Wikipedia page to attract workforce and increase tourism; establish and engage in Employer’s Forums (working with large employers and educational institutions to align needs and training); initiating a Broadband Study for home professionals; redesigned the website to target those seeking to build a startup business, find employment, grow global business and telecommute (with) a matching brochure, Facebook page and supporting videos; supported the creation of the Welcome Team to create stickiness amongst new and existing residents; and gained approval for a Consultant to create an Economic Ecosystem to lower vacancy rates, retain existing jobs and generate new business in town.

Going back the Status 2014 slide Ms. Dietsch told the Members “we are no longer in crisis mode” adding it was time to set up their ongoing role which included setting up a watchdog system for economic oversight, town marketing and TIF management. Ms. Dietsch noted this included creating performance metrics to measure them and keep them up to date.

She suggested a watchdog approach of conducting business interviews (new and existing) on a quarterly basis to keep in touch “as a good example of monitoring working together.” She also noted resource requirements and told the Members “my husband Bill is a former businessman and would be a good monitor for that.” She noted using the resources of Mr. Galus for larger corporations, her husband for smaller businesses and others appropriate for other particular types of industries.

“That makes sense” replied Ms. Hatcher adding “the EDA can go at a slower pace to figure things out with the HUB (*who does what*) while the good work continues.” She noted, “we can take a breath and have them look at what makes the most sense with the watchdog thing. It’s the EDA role and stature of authority versus a *doing* body.”

Mr. Morison asked about next steps. Ms. Dietsch replied, “filling out the Five Ps and a budget strategy.” Mr. Throop elaborated on some of the best ways to spend the money they have left for the EDA Special Article budget (about \$30,000). The Members then briefly discussed the need for a meeting sooner rather than later for strategic planning, open spots on the Board, and the budget. Hoping for full attendance while being respectful of people’s time, Mr. Morison suggested July 15<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 Noon. Ms. Dietsch replied, “that works for me with the understanding that we don’t need as many meetings that we have.”

**Next Meeting:** July 15, 2019 at 12:00 Noon

The meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Norton

Administrative Assistant