

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

June 27, 2018

MINUTES

Present: Adam Hamilton, Martha Schaefer, Chubb Whitten, Karen Hatcher, Christine Dennler, Corinne Chronopoulos and James Kelly

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

Chair Sterling called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m. “I don’t believe introductions will be necessary” he said with a smile.

Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman:

A motion was made/seconded (Kelly/Whitten) to nominate Adam Hamilton Chairman of the Economic Development Authority with all in favor.

A motion was made/seconded (Dennler/Kelly) to nominate Nate Morison Vice Chairman of the Economic Development Authority (pending his acceptance of the nomination) with all in favor.

Minutes:

A motion was made/seconded (Kelly/Whitten) to approve the minutes of May 22, 2018 as written with all in favor.

Request for the Use of TIF Funds:

Mr. Whitten began by asking about the use of TIF funds for maintenance costs of TIF improvements including snow removal and sanding, street sweeping, catch basin cleaning and gas and diesel for equipment. Mr. Bartlett explained how they had reached out to the Department of Revenue Administration and they confirmed TIF monies could be used for maintenance costs as well as TIF administration and project management. He went to specify that the funds could only be used on improvements that have been made in the District “for instance we can do maintenance trees that were planted during the redevelopment of West Peterborough, but we cannot use those funds for maintenance for trees that already existed.” Mr. Whitten interjected “but for snow?” to which Mr. Bartlett replied “the TIF District may encompass anything from roads to ice rinks. If it was funded by TIF funds, it can be maintained by TIF funds.”

Citing items like gas and diesel Ms. Dennler asked if the town would be keeping separate records for the maintenance and administrative costs for the TIFS. Mr. Bartlett noted “we have been monitoring it this year and next year we will maintain time and material records with hourly assignments for the trucks.” Ms. Hatcher asked “why does the TIF need a recommendation from the EDA for the use of the money?” Mr. Hamilton replied, “correct me if I am wrong but the TIFs are

overseen by the EDA.” Mr. Bartlett briefly reviewed the chain of command for fund requests (TIF Advisory Board recommendation-> EDA recommendation-> Board of Selectmen vote).

Mr. Kelly asked, “what is the money request for?” Mr. Bartlett explained the funds may also be used for TIF administration and project management including his time, Seth’s time, Office of Community Development time, and finance department support. The TIF funds would effectively free up general funds to provide support for an administrative position in the Office of Community Development which would be otherwise funded by the general fund. Ms. Bartlett added “it will reduce the general fund impact, so it is a benefit to the general fund taxpayer.”

A motion was made/seconded (Whitten/Kelly) to approve the recommendation from the West Peterborough TIF District to allocate \$71,500 of TIF funds to continue fund maintenance costs of TIF improvements and to approve the recommendation to allocate \$10,000 of TIF funds to cover staff cost of TIF Administration and Project Management (and) to approve the recommendation from the Greater Downtown TIF to allocate \$10,000 of TIF funds to cover staff cost of TIF Administration and Project Management with all in favor. It was noted a motion for the allocation of \$10,000 for the South Peterborough TIF District would be before the Board in the fall.

EDA Project Contract Extensions:

Strategic Marketing and Branding: (Dawn Wivell, Firebrand International). Mr. Throop briefly explained the effort to create a vibrant ecosystem which would include a broad spectrum of stakeholders who will support the community and economic development plan for the Town while providing marketing and outreach. He told the Members “the ecosystem hub group has met once and will meet again tomorrow when the Phase I deliverables will be finalized.” He noted the second phase would be a narrative and branding piece and initiation of the action plan. He noted the contract approved last December had been broken into two payments with no other changes to the proposal. He concluded “as an addendum we will solidify who will take on leadership of that group but until then it would be in our best interest to have Dawn continue to help that group move forward as she moves on to Phase II.” Mr. Hamilton replied, “so the ask is?” with Mr. Throop replying “the ask is a motion to authorize the expenditures out of the EDA fund for Phase II (marketing and branding strategy with narrative, unique brand identity and charting of the action plan implementation).

Ms. Chronopoulos asked about the schedule for the deliverables for Phase II with Mr. Throop replying, “four weeks” adding “but Dawn often goes above and beyond so I hope for the end of summer.” “Let’s try to keep it to four weeks” said Ms. Chronopoulos.

A motion was made/seconded (Kelly/Whitton) to approve Phase II as proposed by Firebrand International with all in favor.

Social Media and Online Promotion: Ms. Dennler began by telling the Members “we do not intend to renew the contract with our current agency” adding “instead we will sign a three-month contract with a local agency at the end of July.” Mr. Throop explained the local agency would be modifying their quote and would it would be brought back to the Members as formal proposal. Mr. Whitton complimented the work of the current agency but noted “it all seemed tourist related, not business related. I enjoyed their work, but they needed to be more business oriented.” Mr. Throop agreed adding “the thrust is to promote the town as a town, not just a tourist attraction.” Mr. Whitten replied, “yes the content is like 99% a great place to live and 1% here are some jobs.” Ms. Hatcher also agreed noting the content was “high quality and consistently excellent.”

A motion was made/seconded (Kelly/Schaefer) to approve the decision to discontinue the contract with the current online agency and resign with a local agency at the end of July 2018 with all in favor.

Project Updates:

Mr. Bartlett gave a brief update of *Regional Initiatives* (reaching out to the bureau of Economic Affairs (BEA) in Concord with the clear intent to improve the view of the Monadnock Region and Peterborough; and to encourage the state’s participation in the next Employer’s Forum July 31st). Mr. Throop gave an update on *Workforce Development Employer Forum IV* (an update of the upcoming Employer’s Forum to be held at Rivermead on July 31st) and *Downtown Vitality – Bridge Closure Mitigation* (“A Committee with not enough people on it and needs leadership” interjected Ms. Chronopoulos) as she went on to say a group has come together to market community events (what, how often and where to be determined) for the townspeople and visitors “and with a component that drives shopping. She went on to suggest having a subcommittee for the larger events (i.e. a winter carnival) noting “our ask is for volunteers from the business community to champion these subcommittees and provide a guided effort to show Peterborough is a great place to visit and shop during the bridge construction.”

Other Business:

Agricultural Commission Request for Funds: Alex Walker introduced herself as a member of the Peterborough Agricultural Commission. She held up a three-fold color brochure they had created to promote local farmers in town. She explained the brochure would be distributed in local retail shops and restaurants, at the Welcome Team's *Meet & Greet* events and the public areas of town buildings (Town House, Library etc.) Ms. Walker told the Members the quote was from Vista Prints and was for \$490.00 for 1500 brochures and four brochure holders.

Ms. Hatcher said "I hope we support this, farmers are typically very poor people, I am sure that is why Alex is here, they need our help. I recommend supporting this as an overall marketing of Peterborough." Mr. Ryan noted the New Hampshire Department of Agriculture is "highly supportive of agriculture" and noted the Agricultural Promotion Mini-Grant Program that offers matching grants of up to \$1,000 to organizations that wish to conduct a project focused on promoting New Hampshire agriculture. "Perfect for a brochure like yours" he said adding "and they will also distribute the brochures to all the state rest stops as well." He explained how the grant was awarded (apply for the grant, get awarded, produce the receipt for the work and get reimbursed). Mr. Whitten asked Ms. Walker if the Agricultural Commission had any funds with Ms. Walker replying "no." Mr. Kelly asked about the balance of funds in the EDA account with Mr. Throop replying, "you may have \$500.00 left in there." Ms. Chronopoulos noted her support, but suggested Ms. Walker get local bids on the job. She also suggested the brochure match the branding material being created by Firebrand International (imagery, fonts, colors etc.) and concluded with "the Library has tons of brochure holders we can give you." Mr. Whitton suggested the Committee apply for the grant directly, leaving the request out of EDA hands and Mr. Ryan noted if the EDA funded this request the Agriculture Commission could apply for the grant and if approved, use the money for additional promotions.

A motion was made/seconded (Whitton/Kelly) to approve up to \$500.00 for printing services for a four-color brochure for promotional purposes by the Agricultural Commission with all in favor. Two conditions of the approval were that the EDA have funds available and that Agriculture Commission get local bids for the job.

Meeting Date and Time:

The Members agreed to meet the fourth Tuesday of the month at 12:00 Noon.

In closing, audience member Pelagia Vincent noted the third International Thornton Wilder Conference coming to Peterborough July 12 through 14th and asked about local news coverage about it. Mr. Ryan noted he was awaiting a press release from Tracy Messer, but the event had been or was going to be advertised in the Chicago Tribune and the New York Times. Mr. Ryan went on to say once he had the release it would be advertised for the Gardner to Concord and Manchester to Keene corridors. “It will also go to VisitNH.gov” he said.

Next Meeting:

July 24, 2018 at 12:00 Noon

The meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Norton

Administrative Assistant