

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

September 25, 2018

MINUTES

Present: Nate Morison, Martha Schaefer, Jeanne Dietsch, Christine Dennler, Corinne Chronopoulos, James Kelly, Jerry Galus, Adam Hamilton and Karen Hatcher

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

Vice Chairman Morison (Mr. Morison) called the meeting to order at 12:00 Noon and noted no need for introductions.

Minutes:

A motion was made/seconded (Kelly/Galus) to approve the Minutes of August 7, 2018 as written with all in favor.

Consideration of Support for the Bee Mural Project: Tabled while awaiting the arrival of Chair Hamilton.

Welcome Team Update:

Ms. Hatcher reported that the group had met over the weekend and gave the Members a brief review of Welcome Team statistics since its inception in 2015. She noted a completion 114 home visits, where team members had delivered welcome baskets to new residents. These visits were scheduled based on attempts to contact all 382 new residents identified by new home owner lists. Ms. Hatcher went on to note that the Team's next Meet & Greet event was scheduled for November 8th from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. at Bass Hall (Monadnock Center for History & Culture). She noted the addition of invitations to community committees, organizations, and non-profit groups to attend the event to explain volunteer opportunities to those new to town. "It will be a mix of community and civic engagement" she said. When Mr. Kelly suggested having information index cards added to the welcome baskets. Ms. Hatcher noted information table set-up was available at the event. Ms. Dennler interjected, "but that is not a bad idea, especially having something about town (volunteer) committees in the baskets." She also asked if there was any data collected on where new residents came from and what brought them to Peterborough. Ms. Dietsch added, "and if they work from home and if they would be interested in a professional network." Ms. Hatcher noted some of that data had been obtained but not formulated. Mr. Morison asked if the limited data they had collected showed any trends. Ms. Hatcher replied, "it

has been a mix.” Mr. Kelly suggested they add information to the welcome baskets and the Meet & Greet regarding Our Town Networking Group, a group of young entrepreneurs that meet very two weeks. Ms. Hatcher suggested he put that information out at the event.

Online Social Media Promotion Project Update:

Ms. Dennler began by reviewing the most recent analytics from Drum. “The overall summary is good, showing an improvement” she said. Ms. Dennler reviewed several graphics projected on the screen that reviewed responses from Instagram and Facebook. This included organic impressions, engagements, reaches per post, and impressions per post. “These lead to guidance on two choices” she said. She explained that this had led to a Marketing Committee discussion about whether the social media promotions should include regional events (if deemed particular to the fabric of the area) or Peterborough events only.

Ms. Schaefer noted that over the past couple of months three out-of-town events had been mentioned that were not Peterborough-centric. “The concern is that the postings are paid for by Peterborough tax payer dollars” she said. The members discussed publicizing events that included Peterborough as well as other Southern New Hampshire towns (for instance the annual Art Tour); events easily accessible from Peterborough “but not naming the town” suggested Ms. Dennler; or promoting events and naming the towns. By naming neighboring towns, Peterborough would be taking advantage of being a good neighbor, regional player, and leader. Ms. Schaefer suggested beginning posts with “our neighbors in Jaffrey are ...” so it is still making a tie back to Peterborough. The members also discussed geographic borders to the posts, with suggestions of using the 35 towns in the Monadnock Region or towns that fall within an “X”-mile radius of Peterborough as parameters. Ms. Hatcher noted her interest in promoting events in the region. “We don’t live in a bubble” she said. She added, “the broader issues are *our* issues too. We need a good neighbor policy.”

As Ms. Dennler asked if some sort of a motion was necessary, Ms. Dietsch interjected, “let me play Devils’ Advocate” and went on to address the notion that townspeople may in fact demand to know why Peterborough is wasting their tax dollars on other towns. After further discussion the members agreed they would advertise community events and big draw events (such as the annual Art tour and Fireworks Display in Jaffrey) while controlling the frequency of the advertising.

Mr. Throop noted the upcoming *Radially Rural* event (September 27th & 28th in Keene), an annual two-day summit that brings together those who are passionate

about creating vibrant and robust communities. “This event embraces many aspects of economic development in the region including food, and arts and culture tracts. There are some really cool things happening in our region.”

In reference to the posting parameters for outside communities, Ms. Dietsch suggested drawing a circle within the Monadnock region. “At least that,” agreed Mr. Throop. Ms. Hatcher suggested, “or we could like a post or event, and/or share it. That way we are not spending any money on it.” Ms. Chronopoulos cautioned that any shared post be in alignment with the mission statement of the EDA. “Promoting events are not prohibited but must be carefully vetted and align with our mission statement” she said. Ms. Dennler agreed, and added that “the frame for target demographics are defined by the mission statement, the guideline is the demographic we have identified.”

With reference to a to geographical specific mileage radius, Mr. Galus suggested measuring by potential impact. He noted an example using Jaffrey’s Scarecrow Festival. “Just 4 miles south of Peterborough’s fine restaurants is a Scarecrow Festival October XX.” Ms. Hatcher interjected, “so you are suggesting how you position a spin on the post to be Peterborough-centric?” Mr. Galus replied “yes, and mission specific.” Ms. Hatcher suggested, “so we target events open to the public within a 10-mile radius of the town and then consider their priority. What we are really trying do is anticipate any problems of mentioning other towns before they arise.” Mr. Throop added, “and those that are not a fit can be liked and shared on social media, building connections and interest without spending taxpayer’s money.”

Before moving on, the members briefly discussed renewing the Division of Travel and Tourism (DTT) Brochure Program where *Why Move to Peterborough* brochures are stocked and distributed at Interstate 93 (I 93) rest stops as well as plans for updating and reprinting the brochure. Mr. Throop noted that staff was working on getting distribution data for their consideration on renewing the contract (which will hopefully be ready for the October meeting), as well as renewal of Drum’s contract and any website needs that need to be taken care of.

Marketing Committee Discussion: Next Steps and Priorities:

Ms. Dennler told the members that the Marketing Committee was considering merging with whatever group that was working on the vitality of the Downtown area throughout the Main Street Bridge construction to consolidate their resources and manpower for a concentrated effort. Mr. Throop noted several parallel efforts and agreed merging town-based entities under one umbrella was “a good way to

find what you are looking for.” It was noted that this merge was for resources and volunteers, not a merge of individual websites. A member asked about potential eligibility for Town funds for Bridge construction programs. Mr. Throop explained the CIP process. The members also briefly discussed the Town’s website (sometimes difficult to maneuver) and creating a URL as a landing page with resident and visitor options. Ms. Hatcher suggested that they define the scope of what potential projects would look like, based on something they know works. Mr. Throop suggested developing a work plan and doing the research on what they wanted “results in a solid ask with a solid quote. The more you know, the easier it is to get through the process.” He also suggested getting technical input for the website from IT Specialist Tim Brezovec and Planning Board Chairman Bob Holt. Mr. Throop also cautioned that Town staff support capacity would be strained as the CIP and the zoning amendment seasons were approaching quickly. “We probably will not lighten up until March” he said. Ms. Dennler said that she thought the Committee would do most of the leg work and would not be staff-driven. She also mentioned recruiting members for the Committee and using the Hub models. Mr. Kelly added, “that is a resource for a heck of a lot of people. I thought that was the purpose of the Hub.” Mr. Hamilton reminded the Members that, while supportive of the all the merchants, the EDA is not responsible for marketing the Downtown during the bridge construction. Ms. Schaefer noted the importance of “new blood” on the Committee and Ms. Hatcher reiterated the importance of maximizing volunteer opportunities at the Meet & Greet events. “There is a lot of expertise in this town” she said.

Eco-System Hub and Strategic Branding:

Mr. Throop told the members the first meeting of the Merchant’s Hub was held September 18th and their second meeting was scheduled and held this morning at 11:00 a.m. Mr. Throop noted that Kyle Sullivan of Cooper’s Hill Public House emerged as a leader and that he had handed off the organization of meeting and related activities (shift of culture in how merchants view operating hours, etc.) to Mr. Sullivan so that he could move on to the next group of spokes.

Mr. Galus reported that the Advisory Committee for the Employer’s Forum would be meeting soon to review Ms. Wivell’s input. Mr. Kelly suggested Mr. Galus contact Great Bridge Properties to consider a collaborative approach to financing housing development in town. Mr. Galus noted he would research them, adding, “any time we try to turn this back to the employers, they turn it back to the Town and try to make it a Town initiative. But the Town is not a developer and is not going to be a developer.” Mr. Galus noted the Town’s position on housing

development was more of a catalyst, cheerleader, or facilitator. “It is a tough nut for towns across the country” interjected Mr. Throop.

As Ms. Chronopoulos pointed out, the group was still waiting on deliverables from Ms. Wivell. Mr. Throop noted that Ms. Wivell still needed clarity on how to develop a soundbite on work regarding broadband and telecommunication issues. “She needs some guidance on that” he said. Ms. Dietsch noted that she had sent Ms. Wivell some information regarding the MF2 Challenge, where a group could apply to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for funding for expansion of coverage, and that she would contact her. Ms. Dietsch also noted challenges in expanding cell phone coverage in the state “because right now only Coös County qualifies and the burden of proof to show otherwise is on our shoulders.” Mr. Throop concluded, “Dawn (Ms. Wivell) wants to wrap this up within the next two weeks. She just needs a more distinct explanation of our telecommunications and broadband efforts. That is an important part of the story.”

Consideration of Support for the Bee Mural Project:

Mr. Hamilton asked the members if they had seen the Honey Bee mural on the side of the Community Center building. He reminded the members that Melissa Stephenson had been before the group in February asking for support of the project. He also noted that at that time the EDA expressed that it would be difficult to use taxpayer monies to provide a sponsorship, but they would consider posting the project on the EDA Website as well as promote it through their personal Twitter accounts. He noted that while most of the funding had been raised, they are still short. “This has been a tangible thing from start to finish. Having seen the mural and heard the feedback of it having a direct positive impact on the town, I would ask we reconsider supporting it by making a \$500.00 contribution from the marketing budget.” In the discussion that followed it was noted that permission was granted to paint the mural and while the Town may benefit, no official contract exists, and the Town is not financially responsible for the project. Members also recognized the EDA has no Budget Committee or process for funding requests. A system for application, approval, and allocation of funds was necessary so that funding requests could be considered on merit. It should not be considered by timing or what may be available in the marketing budget at the time of the request.

Ms. Hatcher noted the financial support given the Welcome Team for its events and distinguished the group as a recognized subcommittee of the EDA.

Mr. Throop qualified and explained the “two bucket” budgets the EDA employs. One bucket is for social media, website hosting, and marketing initiatives (i.e. Drum and Firebrand International). The other bucket is an annual operating budget of \$5,000.00 which supports other marketing activities such as event sponsorship like Greenerboro, participation in the Division of Travel and Tourism Development (DTTD) Brochure Program at the Welcome and Information Center off I 93, and other related activities. Ms. Schaefer concluded “either way we need a formal process before making any decisions” with Mr. Hamilton replying, “it does not sound like we have an appetite to reconsider so let’s move on, I am fine with that.”

Other Business:

None

Next Meeting:

October 23, 2018

The meeting adjourned at 1:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Laura Norton,
Administrative Assistant