

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

October 23, 2018

## MINUTES

**Present:** Nate Morison, 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.

Chair Hamilton called the meeting to order at 12:00 Noon and noted no need for introductions.

### **Minutes**

A motion was made/seconded (Hamilton/Galus) to approve the Minutes of September 25, 2018 with a “member present” correction as written with all in favor.

### **Update: Social Media Promotion Project**

Mr. Throop reviewed the proposed two-month extension of *Drum*'s contract with a renegotiation in November. He noted that their experience with creating content was taking more time than originally expected “partly because they are creating video which enhances our presence,” he said. A brief discussion about that process followed, including topics like tweaking an existing agreement or reissuing the RFQ all over again. Chair Hamilton noted a difference between “tweaking” and a price change. Ms. Chronopoulos asked if Drum had underbid the project to get the work. Mr. Throop noted that he thought they simply underestimated the time involved with the project, especially with the video content creation. Mr. Throop also suggested that they could increase the money or stay at the same rate and adjust the original RFQ to something less than four videos a week. He added, “think about the audience. Are four videos [a week] necessary, or could they even border on being an annoyance?”

Ms. Dietsch immediately interjected that Christine Halvorson of *Halvorson New Media, LLC*, who had been asked to give a comprehensive report of the Town's social media presence to the EDA's Marketing Subcommittee in the past, had recommended to post daily to maximize their exposure. “It is all based on algorithms used by social media, and I recommend we have Christine [Halvorson] back at least once a year to review our strategy. Actually, I strongly recommend Christine meet with *Drum*.” The Members briefly considered alternatives to the current situation, with a suggestion that three videos and four static messages may work. “That is something everyday” said Mr. Throop. Ms. Dietsch reiterated “Christine is adamant about the frequency.”

Mr. Throop concluded that the Board approve the extension regardless, “so as to not have a gap in the messaging and get together with Drum and have that conversation.”

Ms. Chronopoulos asked about the long-term plan. Ms. Dennler interjected, “this is a good segue to a strategic planning update.” She went to note she had met with the Deputy Town Administrator and revisited the Town's (and related) websites. She told the Members, “the cost is not as high as discussed last fall, so we are going to ask that the Subcommittee work on a revamp integration of the site while splitting the cost with the Town.” She estimated the cost to be between \$5,000 and \$6,000 from the EDA. Ms. Dennler noted that the work would be within the guidelines and mission of the EDA and that, “[down the line] there is an end goal and there is

a plan forming.” It was also noted that the Town Departments’ individual websites were not being considered in the integration. “Those Town sites will remain intact,” said Ms. Dennler.

Mr. Galus asked about the extension for Drum. “If we negotiate the next two months, at the end of that time will we be stuck in the same boat?” he asked. Mr. Throop replied that the goal of the extension is provide time to negotiate a new proposal. Another brief discussion about the legality of posting or not posting a *new* RFQ followed, especially considering if the scope has changed.

Mr. Kelly asked where the money was coming from. Mr. Throop replied, “from the money the Town voted on in 2016.” Mr. Kelly asked about that balance, with Mr. Throop replying, “about \$57,000.” Mr. Throop noted the website money should come from that budget (not the EDA’s annual \$5,000 budget) “and that should be included in your motion” he said.

A motion was made/seconded (Dennler/Kelly) to authorize conversation and research with the goal of coming back and asking for funding from the Special Warrant Article budget with all in favor.

### **Update: Strategic Marketing and Branding**

Dawn Wivell of *Firebrand, Int’l* was present and began her update with a brief review of the Ecosystem Hub. Ms. Wivell noted that the group had met three times and they were focused on developing the most urgent Hubs as well as those that have some established foundation already and get those Spoke leaders into the Hub.

Ms. Wivell reiterated the vision of the ecosystem, which was to act as a connection point to a coordinated network of sectors and resources that work in concert to create a sustainable, prosperous, and vibrant economy in the Greater Peterborough area. The mission of the ecosystem is to guide and encourage innovation and new business, strengthen existing business and industry; to respect the environment, grow and diversify the community and define Peterborough’s culture while honoring its history.

Ms. Wivell noted that the Hub meetings are scheduled for the last Monday of each month for the next year. She also noted that *Cooper Hill’s* Kyle Sullivan had emerged as a leader for one of the spokes and was doing a phenomenal job.

She told the Members that a *Merchants Spoke* and *Sustainability/Environmental Spoke* had been formed and the *Business Development, Energy, Recycling, Tourism, and Culture and the Arts* Spokes had foundations. She also noted she was working on providing an action plan to focus on specific markets and specialties such as *Specialty Foods*. She told the Members, “each Spoke has its own characteristics. They are all different.” She also told the Members that people were getting excited about the Hub. “I have been getting random emails from the arts community saying that they are encouraged and invigorated by it” she said. Ms. Wivell also touched on *Education and Workforce Development, Housing, and Diversity and Inclusion* as necessary Spokes being developed. She noted the need for structure within the Spokes and that she applies a “playbook,” which she morphs to meet separate and distinct individual Spoke needs. Ms. Hatcher noted some aspects of a Spoke (for instance, *Diversity and Inclusion*) will wrap around the other Spokes. She suggested they look to the vision and mission statements to include similar values for each Spoke. Ms. Dietsch added that it was important to clarify what a Spoke is and that they are *not* trying to get all the groups (including nonprofits) to combine and collaborate, citing the need to unify and talk to larger corporations about their mission was imperative.

Ms. Wivell spent some time reviewing a Narrative she had created reflecting the beauty and charm of a classic New England town “with something different in the air.” She noted that the narrative included personal stories that highlighted the deep community engagements and entrepreneurial opportunities, as well as many “firsts” in the state and the nation. Ms. Chronopoulos interjected an important correction regarding the Library, noting, “it is the first free public Library supported by taxation. That is an important distinction.”

Chair Hamilton suggested that the Members all read the Narrative and email their feedback to Ms. Wivell, copying Mr. Throop. Ms. Wivell emphasized that the focus is on millennials, particularly young professionals and young families. She hoped the stories in the Narrative will resonate to that targeted group. She went on to tell the Members that she had lined up a reporter from NHBR to visit Peterborough on November 7<sup>th</sup> to meet with some local entrepreneurs. She noted Nuttin Ordinary, Cooper’s Hill, and In My Back Yard as examples of the diversity of the entrepreneurships in town.

Ms. Hatcher noted that as a Town document, she would like to have the Board of Selectmen and the Town Administrator review the Narrative as well. The Members agreed to have their comments in to Ms. Wivell by end of day, October 29<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Dennler noted that the Narrative was not a new brochure for the Town and suggested it not get too detailed. “If you do that you lose the main goal,” she said. Mr. Throop concluded, “ultimately it is validated by the community and reflects the image you have been trying to project in a consistent and coherent way.”

Ms. Wivell concluded with a brief review of the promotional strategies, reminding the Members once again that the focus was on millennials and young families. “Keep that in mind,” she said. She reviewed the selling points of walkability, shopping, culture, outdoor and recreational opportunities, culture, and entrepreneurship. She told the Members attracting this audience was competitive, and that is why she included stories. “It is important to be authentic. That is the reason for personal stories” she said.

Citing a time restriction, Chair Hamilton asked Ms. Wivell to summarize. Ms. Wivell reiterated that an action plan was coming, hopefully by the end of the week. She also suggested that the Town get a Linked-In page. “It is a big deal right now” she said.

Ms. Dietsch interjected that an update of the commercial vacancy rate in town would be helpful. She then pointed out the need to redefine the mission of the Strategic Planning Committee, as many of its functions are taken over by the Hub. “The EDA should retain it for quantitative review of statistics on how the Hub is doing” she said.

#### **Other Business:**

Ms. Hatcher mentioned the upcoming Meet & Greet on Thursday November 8<sup>th</sup>, noting that it would be focused on connecting new residents with Town committees, volunteer opportunities, and non-profit organizations.

**Next Meeting:** November 27, 2018

The meeting adjourned at 1:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Laura Norton,  
Administrative Assistant