

## TOWN OF DERRY

Town Council Workshop  
Derry Municipal Center

November 3, 2010  
Wednesday 8:30 p.m.

### MINUTES

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Present: Councilors Milz, Olbricht, Wetherbee, Coyle, Fairbanks, Chirichiello and Chairman Benson; John P. Anderson, Town Administrator; Larry Budreau, Director of Human Resources

Mr. Benson advised the purpose of this workshop is to have an open dialogue with John Anderson to form goals and focus on what the Town Council feels should be the process moving forward.

Mr. Anderson explained Mr. Budreau would act as facilitator this evening. The Councilors have copies of the survey they completed a few months ago and other materials. He is looking for three to five goals to focus on as they move forward in the next 6 months.

Mr. Budreau noted some goals may be difficult to quantify. Some goals will be concrete and have dates to evaluate if the task is completed or not; others will be subjective. For subjective goals, it would be helpful if the Councilors can add a descriptive so that it will be easier to measure if the goal has been met or not. As goals were expressed by Councilors, Mr. Budreau made note of them.

Mr. Coyle asked that by October of 2011, the TIF area road improvements be 95% complete, and that the second phase of the bike path (cost estimates/bridge engineering) be completed. He understands the town is waiting until spring for the engineering and bridge estimates and that once the approvals are obtained, the project can go out to bid. He would like to see this accomplished by October 2011.

Mr. Wetherbee asked for a focus on communication. He would like to see better communication throughout, including the state, state representatives, the School Board, the Council, Pinkerton, the Chamber of Commerce. He would like to see a solid communication plan throughout the organization. It needs improvement. This is the fourth largest community in the state and sometimes, the town ends up at the bottom of the barrel. Past communication has fallen short. He believes this it be a collaborative process with Mr. Anderson. Mr. Anderson agreed, stating this is all one town and everyone should be going in the same direction.

Mr. Milz would like to see Mr. Anderson meet with all of the downtown groups (Derry Downtown Committee, Derry Downtown Business Association), touch on all of the groups high points/goals, and see if he can come up with the common goals that can be met by the town. For example, he could look at parking near the Opera House, resolution of the DiFeo property and come back to the Council and say, This is what I can do in a reasonable time frame. Tasks should be set up for the downtown area.

Mike Gendron, member of the Derry Downtown Committee, explained the difference between the two groups. The Downtown Committee is a citizen action group that hopes to see more economic development in the downtown so it is a vibrant, fun and safe place to visit. Tom Hankins has formed the Merchant's Association so that they can have one voice to be heard. The Derry Downtown Business Association will not go under the Chamber of Commerce because the Chamber does not directly address the group's wants and needs. The Chamber's purpose is tied more closely to marketing. In addition there are other groups that have the downtown as a focus: The Moving Derry Forward Committee, the Derry Economic Development Corporation and the Chamber of Commerce. All are working toward the same goal of a more vibrant Derry. Mr. Olbricht noted there has not been a common discussion between all the groups to see how all the groups can work together for the common goal. All should be together to see how the groups can

better meet the common goals more quickly and easily. He recommended Mr. Anderson come up with specific goals related to the downtown. Mr. Gendron felt the most pressing issues is to make the DiFeo/Abbott Court parking lot well marked, well lit and safe with the ability to walk easily into the downtown. Women are afraid to park in that lot.

Mr. Benson felt that should be made a goal: Develop the DiFeo lot and make the Abbott Court parking lot a point of safe access to the downtown. Mr. Milz noted the two groups have other goals and have already done some things, such as the downtown parking study. The Merchant's Association has other issues and concerns that are similar. Mr. Anderson should sit with both groups and combine the lofty goals and the day to day goals and see if he can determine items such as how much would it cost for a foot patrol in this area during certain hours, and what can be done with parking.

Mrs. Fairbanks asked that Mr. Anderson work with the Conservation Commission to see if open space can be provided in West Derry that is contiguous with the Sybiak lot. She feels that an easement could be broken to accommodate Walmart and wants to see more open space in West Derry. She asked that a parcel be found so that can be expanded. She hopes they can talk about this in October of 2011. There is not a lot of land left, but there should be two to three parcels available. Mr. Benson said this will be put on the list and Mr. Anderson will talk to the various groups involved.

Mr. Benson asked that an economic development team with a defined purpose and function be in place by October 2011. What does this group look like, is it a non-profit group, staff person, or a combination of both? How will it be staffed, funded and move forward? He asked that the purpose be in place for October 2011, so that it can be addressed in the FY 2012 budget.

Mr. Olbricht asked if any communities budgeted out longer than one year, specifically with regard to fiscal goals? Mr. Anderson felt that broad goals could be set, but everyone needs to get on the same page. The state sets the tax rate annually and that complicates things. Mr. Childs noted the town can do that, but it can be difficult to budget based on variables. The CIP is in place for the 6 year term and longer; that can be reviewed with regard to financial capacity. It was noted everything comes down to funding sources.

Mr. Anderson commented on the request for a light at the intersection of Kilrea and Route 28. That will be complete by 2012; the project is moving forward because another funding source became available. He felt the town could determine long range goals and plans that can be determined through visioning, but things can change.. Mr. Olbricht stressed the need for long range planning. Mr. Wetherbee wanted to see resolution of the Senior Center issue, the Recreation Center, and economic development. He hopes the TIF moves forward. What is the next plan for economic development? What about the question of sustaining the Collective Bargaining Agreements under the tax cap? It seems the town deals with the issues that are right in front of it, but he felt the town should be looking further down the road. Where are they going when the TIF is done? Will the Senior Center be a public/private partnership? He felt the town needed to resolve these issues so that it knows how to move forward.

Mr. Benson asked that the following goals be added: resolve the Senior Center issue by October 2011, specifically, how is that item moving forward and what is the next major economic expansion and where will it be; that should be determined by October, 2011. Mr. Wetherbee felt they needed to tie in other issues, such as land use with regard to conservation versus recreation.

Mr. Coyle did not feel decades of problems could be solved in one year. He suggested setting clearly definable goals. The issues need to be narrowed down.

Mr. Benson said he hoped Mr. Anderson would walk away from the workshop with the Council's issues, and then when they meet again, can get down to three to five tangible goals. This will

allow Mr. Anderson to see where he should be in 2011 and 2012. Everyone agreed there should be three to five tangible goals.

Mr. Anderson said he wanted to point out the amazing job the Transfer Station did in such a small area. That facility is in need of more space.

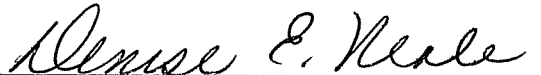
Mrs. Fairbanks had two other concerns. Before the next budget, there should be a study performed with regard to the public safety. She also would like to see the employees being more constituent friendly. She has heard good things about the employees, but there should be a reminder that the employees should take the concerns of the taxpayers to heart. Response should be quick and courteous. There are good employees here. If the taxpayers feel they are being served by the employees, then that is half the battle. Mr. Benson commented there is a new term called "First Touch". Do we as a town understand what our first touch is like and if we focus on that, we will have happier customers. Mrs. Fairbanks noted the employees are the "face" of the town and provide an example of how the tax dollars are being spent. Mr. Budreau felt it may take some time to see how to handle this issue, but suggested evaluating the service level and responsiveness at the Derry Municipal Center, and look at how the town is promoting "First Touch". Mr. Benson felt it was important to educate employees in the importance of understanding town services. Mr. Anderson commented that it seemed that they always hear about bad performance, never the good. It is important to have a baseline.

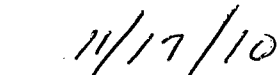
Mr. Wetherbee said Mr. Anderson will need to look at the list developed this evening and decide what he wants to tackle. Mr. Anderson said the town does good things. Everyone is excited to move forward. There are good things in place to have the town take off (Exit 4A, the TIF district). He will work with Mr. Budreau and get back to the Council. He will determine if anything needs to be added and bring the list back to Town Council. The Council can then rank the top three to five items. He would like to continue to make connections with neighboring communities and share resources.

Mr. Olbricht would like to see five to seven things that can be accomplished fairly readily, with long term planning out to 2012. The question will be how will they prioritize? Mr. Budreau suggested taking this list and see if anything needs to be added. Then, Mr. Anderson can go through the list and see what can be done in one year. He can prioritize the list, email it to the Councilors and then it can be discussed at the next Town Council meeting.

Mrs. Fairbanks asked that the economic development team piggy-back on Londonderry's Woodmont project. There should be focus on what is happening there so that people come to Derry as well. Make it a positive for Derry so that we are also a daytime destination. Mr. Benson noted he is of the understanding that Londonderry wants to include Derry in the process and make it successful for both communities. If the towns develop the right communication strategies, it will be successful for both communities and Derry can move forward with them. Mr. Wetherbee stressed it all starts with communication.

The workshop ended at 9:25 p.m.

  
Town Clerk

  
Date

Recording Clerk: Elizabeth Robidoux  
Reviewed by: John Anderson, Town Administrator