

Economic Development Committee  
Thursday, March 9, 2017

Present: Chairman, Kevin McLaughlin; Vice Chair-Wayne Hayward, Todd MacGregor, Mark Rees, Bill Roth, and John Seed (arrived at 7:01pm).

Absent: Daniel Freitas  
Meeting opened at 6:30 p.m.

**Acceptance of Minutes:** November 3, 2016 – Wayne Hayward made a motion to approve the minutes and was seconded by Todd Macgregor. The motion passed unanimously.

**Discuss Public Safety Marina at Union Wharf:** Present for this discussion was Chief of Police, Michael Myers; Tim Cox (Harbormaster); Todd Correia (Fire representative), along with other marina public safety representatives.

Mark Rees started conversation stating that with all the number of projects that are up for Fiscal Year 2018, the Board of Selectman are favorable to all except Safety Marina. Mr. Rees went on to explain the proposal to build ramps, pilings and floats on the North Side of Union Wharf to consolidate three boats that the Town owns (Harbormaster, Fire & Police), and to fund \$80,000 with a grant and \$20,000 through the waterways fund.

Mr. Rees stated that both Mr. Freitas and Mr. Espindola raised concerns about limiting the Town in the areas of economic development in the future. They were concerned with this proposal it may eliminate economic development to this area (the marina) in the future.

The Selectmen wanted Mr. Rees to bring this proposal to this Committee to get your opinion on the project.

William Roth explained that there would be two gangways, two floats and 15' clear area (for Chapter 91 permit for vessels to get through). He said the floats could easily be removed to another part of the marina if need be. Mr. Roth also stated that it has always been envisioned in a long-term Harbor Master Plan to put a building on this wharf.

Mr. McLaughlin asked how many public safety boats there were in Town.

Mr. Cox replied, "Six." He said they were looking only to fill four slips, a pump out boat, one harbormaster boat, one police and one fire.

Discussion ensued on Economic Development in that area. Discussion on plan presented in packet of drawings for this plan.

Mr. Rees reiterated that the Board of Selectman were simply looking for the Economic Development Committee to say "yes" or "no" that they feel this project may/may not eliminate Economic Development in this area in the future.

Todd Macgregor and Kevin McLaughlin both said, "No."

Mark Rees made a motion that the EDC felt that going forward with this plan would not eliminate any Economic Development in this area in the future and was seconded by Todd Macgregor. The motion passed unanimously.

Mark Rees made a suggestion to the EDC that with their \$5,000 budget they should look at some possible survey work to ask businesses and residents their feelings on Economic Development. Mr. Rees reported that the State of MA was giving the Town a \$20,000 grant to do Economic Development Plan.

William Roth suggested they could do a head of household survey mailing that would cost approximately \$2500 in mailing cost. They could also ask SRPEDD or UMASS Business for their assistance.

Wayne Hayward asked what the point of the survey would be. Mr. Hayward's concerns were with the Planning Board and the Master Plan already trying to do surveys among residents that residents would get confused if they got yet another survey.

Mr. Rees suggested to either consolidate the surveys or make the EDC one very separate and distinct. He said the premise is what the businesses and residents would like to see for Economic Development.

Mr. Macgregor said that he liked the idea of doing a survey to get the taxpayers ideas; however he was unsure about the mechanics of it.

Mark Rees excused himself from the meeting at 7:00p.m., stating a conflict with the Finance Committee meetings.

Robert Espindola had since walked in to the meeting and continued with the Board. Mr. Espindola spoke about the Economic Development grant that Fairhaven had received.

Mr. Espindola handed out a packet to the members about his ideas/thoughts for Economic Development and what resources may be able to help the Committee. He suggested members speak to the Town of Dartmouth who had recently completed a report on what was working for their Town.

In other business with Mr. Espindola, he met with the Committee to review his memo that he wrote identifying his thoughts and recommendations to the Committee. He spoke about the Selectmen making sure all meetings should be recorded (tonight's meeting was not being recorded). He shared that the new Cable Advisor Director has an Economic Development background. He felt that the EDC should be working together with local businesses in Fairhaven. Mr. Espindola also spoke about perhaps having some discussion with New Bedford's Economic Development Council and how they could help. Mr. Espindola also spoke about offshore wind and thoughts around how they could capitalize on that. Brief discussions on Atlas Tack and abandon properties.

Wayne Hayward said he would've liked to have had Mr. Espindola's handouts prior to meeting and would have liked the Marina Plan prior as well.

Mr. Espindola said he is trying to be proactive to things happening around Fairhaven and sharing his ideas with the EDC. He said he feels this Committee is very important, and he would like to help out in any way.

Mr. Roth gave an update on the Master Plan process. He explained that VHB was hired to be the consultant on the Master Plan and they have already spoken to key people in Town and businesses to get their thoughts. He reported that the first public meeting would be March 23<sup>rd</sup> as a listening/information gathering meeting. He said there are vision boards regarding the Master Plan up at Town Hall, and they would be around Town in different capacities.

Mr. Roth said it was definitely an 'exciting time' for Fairhaven.

Wayne Hayward said that because the Master Plan process was getting into the public phase of things is why he worried about too many public surveys.

A brief discussion was had about the Safety Marina project being added to their agenda and why it was actually on there. Was it a recommendation to Town Meeting, Wayne Hayward asked?

Mr. McLaughlin said he felt it was just a recommendation from EDC back to the Selectman, not for Town Meeting.

Mr. Roth stated that Mr. Espindola wanted to make sure no toes were being stepped on as they moved forward on the Safety Marina without first discussing with the EDC.

Mr. Roth offered that the EDC meet within the next couple of months.

Mr. McLaughlin shared his concerns about the commitment of members. He was also concerned that the agenda items were not presented to him first as Chairperson. He said in the future he would like to help write the agenda and have the committee receive information prior to the meeting. Mr. McLaughlin said it was not fair that the Committee walked in to all of the public safety personnel for an agenda item that the Committee knew nothing about.

Mr. Roth apologized stating he was on vacation the week prior. In the future, Mr. Roth said he would forward the template to Mr. McLaughlin for him to be able to add to the agenda and approve.

Mr. McLaughlin said that he has begun a photo survey of the Town of every vacant business and has completed 60-70%. He said he would have it completed for their next meeting.

Mr. McLaughlin stated that Ocean State Job Lot has bought the old Shaw's building and he has heard they plan on moving in by July.

Mr. Roth said that he has spoken to Tractor Supply about leasing a portion of the Kmart building.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 18, 2017 at 6:30p.m.

Wayne Hayward made a motion to adjourn and was seconded by John Seed. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting ended at 8:05pm.

Respectively submitted,

Patricia A. Pacella