

**Unofficial**  
**As of 03/27/13**

**MINUTES**

**HOOKSETT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (EDC)  
HOOKSETT TOWN HALL CHAMBERS**

**Tuesday, March 26, 2013**

**4:30 PM**

**Call to Order:**

Chair Matt Mercier called the meeting to order at 4:42 pm.

**Present:**

Chair Matt Mercier, Jo Ann Duffy, Town Planner, Dr. Dean E. Shankle, Jr., Town Administrator, William King, Mark Sanborn (left at 6:05pm), David Scarpetti, Leslie Boswak, Town Council Rep. (left at 5:45pm), and Craig Ahlquist.

Excused: William Gillett and John Gryval, Planning Board Chair.

Absent: Mike Reed, and Nick Mercier.

**Approval of minutes 02/13/13 & 02/20/13**

*W. King motioned to approve the minutes of 02/13/13. Seconded by M. Sanborn. Vote unanimously in favor.*

*W. King motioned to approve the minutes of 02/20/13. Seconded by M. Sanborn. Vote unanimously in favor.*

**REVIEW 2/20/13 MEETING**

- Committee Feedback
- Public and attendee feedback
- Next Steps

L. Boswak: I would like to thank the members who put the 2/20/13 event together. It is a positive step. Mike Bergeron, DRED, presented good ideas.

D. Scarpetti: Matt and Leslie had the great idea to have Mike Bergeron's slide show forwarded for those who could not attend.

W. King: Mr. Bergeron appropriately brought-up things such as our Town sign not being lit at night.

M. Mercier: We now need to have an open forum for public input. I would have liked to see more input from the audience who attended the 2/20/13 event.

L. Boswak: We should contact the Library to have an evening event there and invite business owners for a roundtable discussion on how is it to do business in Hooksett.

W. King: We could do this with the Hooksett Chamber of Commerce (Chamber). There are 700 businesses in Hooksett.

M. Sanborn: Of the active businesses in Hooksett which ones are involved with the Chamber?

M. Mercier: SNHU, PSNH, and Merchants do not attend the Chamber.

W. King: Merchants was at a Chamber meeting.

L. Boswak: We used to maintain a business list in Town. We could an event scheduled for the end of May and insert the invite with tax bills.

D. Scarpetti: Fred Bishop had a business list when he was on this committee.

M. Sanborn: I have a better list that I cleaned-up and I can forward it to everyone.

M. Mercier: And to Ginger.

L. Boswak: Mark can bring in his list to our April meeting and we can look at.

D. Scarpetti: Mark should send the list to this group so we can review it ahead of time. It should determine who is already a member of the Chamber.

W. King: We can cross-reference the Commerce website.

M. Mercier: Cross-check the Chamber website with Mark's list and code those businesses that are on the Commerce.

L. Boswak: We should reach out to commercial brokers too for our public forum.

M. Sanborn: We could co-host with the Chamber.

D. Scarpetti: Dan Bouchard is the Chamber Chair and Jackie Roy is involved with it too.

W. King: HYAA is proposing a business appreciation night. If appropriate we can combine our event with the HYAA, Commerce, and EDC. We could even use Donati Field and have a cook-out.

M. Sanborn: What is the goal we are attempting to accomplish?

M. Mercier: I want people to be able to speak their minds on how it is to do business here. Have a unification of vision "common language" between the EDC, Zoning, Planning, Heritage, Conservation, and others.

L. Boswak: With our vision we want to attract businesses, and make healthier relations. What do we need to do to make this happen?

M. Mercier: What is our next step of the "unified vision"?

L. Boswak: We need to meet with business owners to get their input.

C. Ahlquist: We have done some of this before and there are two sides to each story. We need to get both sides in the room.

D. Scarpetti: Are business owners going to open up with staff present?

C. Ahquist: Probably not because they don't want to burn their bridges.

M. Mercier: I can control the tenure of that meeting for constructive feedback in a professional manner.

C. Ahlquist: We can have meetings similar to the way they were back 4 years ago.

W. King: We should turn the focus on what we are doing right.

M. Mercier: We can provide a historic picture.

W. King: The Town has certain legal requirements they have to adhere to.

Donna Fitzpatrick: You may want to invite the water and sewer departments. Developers and businesses have commented on hook-up fees, services fees, grease traps, and sprinkler systems (vs. Fire Dept. access). There are 4 water precincts in Town and one sewer.

M. Mercier: Water and sewer are fundamental parts of doing business.

EDC: Discussed recent water and sewer examples in Town to include New England's Tap House Grille, Heritage Family Credit Union, and Al Terry Plumbing and Heating.

W. King: We should determine if we are too expensive, consider changing the rules, and communicate the rules.

M. Sanborn: We should have a comprehensive dialogue over a couple of meetings to identify a couple of roadblocks. Have a series of 5 meetings with businesses. The taxpayers and businesses should be heard. The outcome should be a comprehensive report of developers and restaurants by type of business. Have 20-30 roadblocks to Boards/Committees, Council, staff, and businesses.

L. Boswak: Every 6-12 months determine what more can be done better.

M. Sanborn: Is it a State issue, Federal issue, or is it a budget issue? Have an action plan to respond to something.

M. Mercier: Have a series of 5 monthly meetings and annually or semi-annually review where we stand.

M. Sanborn: Does the Town website have an EDC section?

J. Duffy: Yes EDC has its own page.

L. Boswak: At the upcoming forum have something available for businesses to contact the Town with their comments.

M. Mercier: Have it on a business card.

C. Ahlquist: Have a survey. Combine a couple of the lists with Chambers.

J. Duffy: Barbara has a list. I have asked if the Building Dept. could update that list of businesses.

C. Ahlquist: We could do a “survey monkey”, but we will need business e-mails. The survey could ask “What is your situation with water? With Sewer? With the Planning Board?”

L. Boswak: Questions should be phrased positively, but allow for all comments.

M. Sanborn: Someone who deals with multiple towns should be asked “What works well in Hooksett?”

W. King: What about a Facebook page for EDC?

M. Mercier: Facebook is great, and people will use it. However if I comment and then other EDC members of this Committee comment then there may be a quorum. We could put information on Facebook vs. comments.

M. Sanborn: We need the right person do it.

C. Ahlquist: We could have different surveys for different audiences.

M. Sanborn: There could be one universal survey and categorize questions if applicable. If you are “X” business skip to “X” question.

M. Mercier: Does the survey system allow you to not just click an answer but enter data (i.e. names of other towns dealt with) or also answers may default to another question?

C. Ahlquist: You could have 8 universal questions.

M. Sanborn: And if you are a developer have more questions.

L. Boswak: There are many social medias. Twitter is a one-way communication. There are also the nights of Commerce meetings we can combine our efforts with. Media messages should be short and sweet.

M. Mercier: Our list of tasks:

- 1) identify communication outlets
- 2) Mark send business list to Donna
- 3) Donna check with Commerce website to determine who is with Commerce and code
- 4) Matt contact Commerce to set-up date in May 2013
- 5) Craig & Jo Ann will look at past survey questions

6) April EDC agenda – add discussion for survey format and questions

**AMBASSADOR PROGRAM**

- General Progress
- Matt & Dave’s meeting with Tap House

D. Scarpetti: Matt and I had a meeting at the New England’s “Tap House” Grille with Dan the owner. We discussed bank financing, signing the lease, and option to expand into extra unit. Dan said he had a wonderful experience with Matt, Donna, and Jo Ann. One problem with the Sewer Dept. was they required a grease trap and Dan had to come up with some serious money for it.

W. King: Should he have known about this?

D. Scarpetti: He had to go back to get information from Donna on the Ninety-Nine and Applebee’s restaurants for number of seating to determine their grease trap size.

L. Boswak: The Sewer Dept. information should have come out of the TRC meeting.

J. Duffy: It had no TRC, because it was just a change of use process. There is more to the story and I need to find that out.

C. Ahlquist: Having a TRC may have informed him earlier.

D. Scarpetti: We should look at the last 12 months of applicants vs. longer.

M. Sanborn: Dan was fast tracked, but then it caused a problem in the end.

W. King: Either the business owner or people he hired should know about it.

C. Ahlquist: There could have been a code change or State statute from before to now. Can we get a report on new businesses? We should talk to new businesses a couple of months after they open.

M. Mercier: Thank you for keeping up the momentum of the Ambassador Program.

D. Scarpetti: I already spoke with Shooter’s Outpost too.

C. Ahlquist: We should get a list of CO’s, before we contact them we should talk with Jo Ann.

D. Scarpetti: And talk with Matt Labonte.

J. Duffy: I will talk with Matt about the Building Dept. providing the EDC CO’s.

**CHANGE OF USE**

J. Duffy: Before if it was the same use in an existing structure and applicant would just go to the Building Dept. for a CO. Now if retail-to-retail, no expansion and no site work

(i.e. parking lot expansion), it is just a change of use. The Change of Use staff includes the CEO, Town Planner, DPW Director, Fire Dept. and sewer and water if applicable. This process has been working out well and speeds-up the process for these people. They don't have to hire an engineer and there are no fees.

D. Scarpetti: I just went to a change of use and it is a simple process.

### **ACCESS GREAT MANCHESTER**

J. Duffy: They meet bi-monthly at the Manchester Chamber of Commerce. One of their focuses in Londonderry on the "Bentonville Road" project to attract businesses due to the proximity to the airport. The Ready Set Go! Program via SNHPC as presented to the Planning Board a couple of weeks ago. There is a PSNH event in the next couple of weeks on April 17<sup>th</sup> 4:00pm in Manchester and the CYBOR Realtors are invited. The program includes the "Gold Certification" for final sign-offs by water and sewer, "Bronze Certification" for conceptual or design review. Hooksett doesn't allow for design review at this time; however someone could present a conceptual to the Planning Board and get their consensus if they liked the plan.

C. Ahlquist: Gold Certificate would be something like Lowe's.

M. Mercier: Rebranding to "Access Greater Manchester" vs. Metro has gone well.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

C. Ahlquist: Bass Pro update?

J. Duffy: Matt and I met with them last week and we are meeting with them again next week to include the Town Administrator. They are asking us technical questions at this time.

W. King: What is the status on the sewer expansion?

J. Duffy: The Sewer Commission agreement will be signed within the next couple of weeks. It is a 14-month project. Wal-Mart will front the funds and be reimbursed for sewer hook-ups in that area. Bass Pro is planning to open in November 2013. If they need a larger sign that would require a variance through the ZBA.

C. Ahlquist: Who follows Bass Pro Shop for businesses?

Alden Beauchemin: Big Cedar Lodge is tied to Bass Pro in MO.

C. Ahlquist: Bass Pro is a destination place.

Alden Beauchemin: There will be a domino effect of restaurants that will follow at both exits 10 & 11. Sewer on this side of the river was holding up development.

W. King: Sydney, NE was the original location of Bass Pro Shop.

J. Duffy: The Lowe's site is 150,000 sq. ft.

M. Mercier: I believe the Planning Board Chair and EDC Chair should be at the meetings with Bass Pro Shop. I would like the EDC to have more of a role in recruitment of businesses.

C. Ahlquist: There is the issue of potential businesses wanting confidentiality. It is a case-by-case basis depending on the business to come into Town. The EDC could state “We would like to be at the table, if they are willing.”

Alden Beauchemin: Bass Pro Shop’s website has job applications for Hooksett, NH on it.

**CEDS (comprehensive economic development survey)**

W. King: CEDS meetings are run by consultants. They look at road infrastructure, sewer, Broadband, and economic growth. There next meeting is May 2013.

M. Mercier: We should add to future EDC agendas - CEDS update.

*C. Ahlquist motioned to adjourn at 6:15pm. Seconded by W. King.  
Vote unanimously in favor.*

**ADJOURNMENT**

Chair M. Mercier declared the meeting adjourned at 6:15pm. The next EDC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 23, 2013 @ 4:30pm at Town Hall chambers.

Respectfully submitted by,

Donna J. Fitzpatrick  
Planning Coordinator