

**Hooksett Economic Development Committee**  
**March 25, 2014 Meeting Minutes**

**Call to Order:** Meeting was called to order at 4:32 pm.

**Present:** William King, David Scarpetti, Matt Mercier, Don Winterton (Town Council Rep), Carolyn Cronin (Assistant Town Planner), Dean Shankle (Town Administrator)

**Old Business**

Update on Committee Goals

Community Forum – This is currently being planned to be held at SNHU Auditorium. SNHU would present future plans to the community.

Developers' Forum – Possible forum with real estate agents and developers.

Chair W. King stated EDC should focus on the following: Community Forums, Branding and Communications.

D. Winterton commented the main thing Hooksett needs to do is to let the developers know that the culture and attitude of Hooksett has changed. The Town should inform our electorate that there are a number of warrants that need to be passed, i.e., hiring an engineer and the proposed amended sign ordinance. EDC's role should be to make sure those warrant articles pass. A letter of support from the Chair or the board to the Hooksett Banner and/or the Union Leader will be a start. Presence at the polls, etc. would also help. A sub-committee spent a lot of time coming up with a proposed amended Sign Ordinance. That needs to be passed. He added the board's role should be to help those things get passed. The board should make sure these articles pass then, do the forums. Have it known that the attitude and culture of the current Planning Board has changed.

D. Shankle: I think the Town Engineer will probably be the most contentious warrant article this year.

D. Scarpetti: We need to let the public know that this is good for the Town, having an engineer on staff.

D. Winterton: There needs to be a discussion that adding this position is positive for the Town.

D. Shankle: When there is a proposal that needs to be reviewed, it gets sent out to Stantec. Stantec decides what info they need. They charge \$130/hour for their services. The complaints I get is that they would always come up with items that need to be redone. We would charge less for those reviews and save developers a lot of money if we did those in-house. DPW has already started doing some of those reviews. What we want to do is to bring someone in-house and get it done expeditiously. We would be able to react quicker, save money and make it more convenient for the developers. Last year, \$106,000 passed through us from the developers to the engineers. In 2008, about \$600,000 was paid to Stantec. The lowest year out of the 7 years is \$106,000. Hiring an engineer shows the Town cares.

M. Mercier: What's the actual salary?

D. Shankle: \$80,000-\$91,000 including benefits. The previous Planning Board had a way they want things done and want to work with certain people. The Town thought it could save money by contracting the work rather than hiring a full time employee. The current Planning Board is different now and the cost of engineering services has gone up uncontrollably.

D. Winterton: We have to do the storm water drainage and the sewer across the river. We will need an engineer on staff.

M. Mercier: Will it be an automatic \$0.06 per thousand tax increase? I'm all for saving the Town \$500,000 but there's still an increase in my property taxes. I don't see how my taxes can still go up when the Town would end up saving money.

D. Winterton: We are required by DRA to include this line on the total budget.

D. Shankle: The reason they do gross budgeting is transparency. We have to put it all out there. We can't take money out of one line and put it on other lines. Every penny has to be accounted for and spent the way people know.

***D. Winterton moved for the Chair to draft (2) letters to be sent to the Hooksett Banner and Union Leader in support of the warrant articles for the new Engineer and the amended Sign Ordinance. Motion seconded by D. Scarpetti. Motion carried.*** M. Mercier voted to support the letter for the Sign ordinance but abstained on the letter for the new Engineer citing the fact that he does not understand the Town's budget system well enough.

Chair W. King will contact people with regards to the SNHU forum and Developers' forum and will tell them the board will need to concentrate on supporting the warrant articles at this time.

### **Board Membership**

Discussion regarding committee membership and meeting time.

Chair Bill King will contact EDC members and ask them if they would like to stay on the board. They will be asked to respond to the Town Administrator.

There was a consensus to move the monthly EDC meetings to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays of the month at 6 pm.

***D. Winterton moved to recommend Darryl Dreffs and invite the other (2) applicants (Muamer Durakovic and Ivan Gult) to attend the next EDC meeting. Motion seconded by D. Scarpetti. Motion carried.***

### **Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 5:46 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

Evelyn F. Horn  
Administrative Assistant