

Hooksett Economic Development Committee
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, October 21, 2014
4:00 PM

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 4:04 pm.

Present: Carolyn Cronin (Assistant Town Planner), Jo Ann Duffy (Town Planner), Frank Kotowski, Ivan Gult, Matt Mercier, David Scarpetti and Dean Shankle (Town Administrator)

Approval of Minutes

September 30, 2014 Meeting – *F. Kotowski moved to approve the minutes. Motion seconded by D. Scarpetti. Motion carried unanimously.*

Town Planner's Update

Community Profile Event – A public forum will be held at Cawley Middle School (89 Whitehall Road) on Friday, November 7, 2014, 5:30 – 9:00 pm and Saturday, November 8, 2014, 8:00 am – 1:00 pm. Food will be served and if needed, child care and transportation will be provided. J. Duffy invited all members to attend. UNH Cooperative Extension is running the event. There will be an introduction by people from Town. People will be broken into 11 smaller groups to discuss the 11 topics. After discussion, the topics will be narrowed down to what the group would like to cover and will be narrowed down further to what is important.

C. Cronin presented some ideas for EDC projects. EDC members could reach out to business owners and interview the people involved with the projects then produce case studies to be published in a booklet and/or post to the town website. The board could also create a webpage of available sites for potential businesses. Town staff will maintain the website and keep it updated. This was done a few years ago.

J. Duffy mentioned a link for available properties was added to the Town's website but it's no longer working. The key is to have a list available and updated regularly.

C. Cronin added the board could also look at the 2004/2013 Master Plan Task list and determine which tasks are still relevant and can be accomplished.

F. Kotowski suggested coming up with a priority list with one or two items the board could work and focus on, i.e., identify shovel ready sites for businesses, promoting infrastructures, etc.

New Business

UNH Business Retention and Expansion Program

Andre Garron (Extension Specialist, UNH Cooperative Extension, Regional Economic Development) introduced himself to the board and gave an overview of the program.

A. Garron has put together the program using the same template the State of Minnesota has been implementing since early to mid-90's. He is currently working with Goffstown, Milford

and Amherst. The program is a community undertaking, which provides structure, guidance and materials the community needs. The cost is \$1,500.00.

There are 3 steps to the Business Retention and Expansion program:

Step 1 - Research

- Inform community about the program.
- Organize the leadership team.
- Organize the task force.
- Practice visiting businesses.
- Finalize the survey instrument.
- Train visitors.
- Visit businesses.
- Tabulate survey data.

Step 2 – Prioritize

- Review warning flags.
- Respond to individual concerns.
- Analyze survey data.
- Write research report.
- Retreat to set priorities on systematic issues.
- Design priority projects.
- Write summary report.
- Commence on implementation.

Step 3 – Implement

- Work on project teams.
- Sustain leadership team.
- Update on projects - 1st, 2nd and 3rd quarter task force.
- Evaluate results.
- Prepare evaluation reports.
- Update on projects – 4th quarter task force.
- Sustain or conclude Business Retention and Expansion.

The survey part of the program would take about 6 to 8 months to complete. Depending on the complexity of the goals, it could take about 6 months or up to a couple years to implement.

M. Mercier moved to recommend implementing the program. Motion seconded by D. Scarpetti.

F. Kotowski expressed concerns with getting volunteers to work on the program.

J. Duffy suggested getting SNHU students involved. A. Garron stated assistance would be provided to the Town.

Motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

Evelyn F. Horn
Administrative Assistant