

Economic Development Committee
Hooksett Business Retention and Expansion Program
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 14, 2015

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 4:00 pm.

Present: Andre Garron (UNH Cooperative Extension), David Scarpetti, Muamer Durakovic, Don Winterton, Joel Bretton (Chamber of Commerce), Matt Barrett (Barrett Insurance), Emily Bretton (Chamber of Commerce, Paul Scarpetti (Planning Board Rep), Jo Ann Duffy (Town Planner), Carolyn Cronin (Assistant Town Planner).

A. Garron introduced himself and gave a brief overview of the Business Retention and Expansion (BR&E) Program. The program is captured in 3 steps, research, prioritize and implement. The first step is to get the task force together to help carry out the program. Hooksett has roughly 500-700 businesses in Town. The team will narrow it down to 100+ sampling of the key businesses and major employers. How to go about narrowing it down will be discussed at a different meeting. The sampling/business list will come from different business sectors. Businesses will be contacted by mail prior to visit. The task force members will be trained on how to do the survey. There is a template of (50) survey questions, i.e., type of business, employee make-up, like and dislikes in the community, etc. The set of questions could be changed but overall, the tool works for most communities. The team will have to recruit volunteers to do the survey. The volunteers will be trained. The volunteers' time will be limited to 1-2 hours for training and 1 hour for visits. Businesses will get the set of questions in advance but will still have to go through them during visits. Red flag issues will be addressed right away, i.e., moving out of the community, etc. Next step in the process is where the leadership team would be invited to gather information derived from the survey and come up with strategies to implement. Step 3 is implementation of the projects. Some projects may need to be voted on.

Key meetings in BR&E Program

1. First leadership Team and task force meeting
2. Visitors training and launch visitation

Program Timeline

- 2-4 months – Step 1 (Research)
- 1-3 months - Step 2 (Prioritize)
- 1 year or more – Step 3 (Implement)

Selection of Coordinator Positions

1. Overall Coordinator – Muamer Durakovic
 - a) Help other members of the Leadership Team.
 - b) Visit firms.
 - c) Coordinate Leadership Team.
2. Visitation Coordinator – Carolyn Cronin
 - a) Help other members of the Leadership Team.

- b) Visit firms.
 - c) Identify a researcher to analyze results.*
 - d) Select a BR&E survey.
 - e) Identify and recruit Task Force.
 - f) Identify firms to be visited.*
 - g) Coordinate Practice Visits*
 - h) Coordinate Visitation Volunteer training.*
 - i) Mail copies of surveys to the researcher.*
3. Media Coordinator – Don Winterton
- a) Help other members of the Leadership Team.
 - b) Visit firms.
 - c) Establish contacts with the media.
 - d) Provide copy to media.
4. Business Resource Coordinator (aka, the “Red Flag” Coordinator) – Jo Ann Duffy
- a) Help other members of the Leadership Team.
 - b) Visit firms.
 - c) Establish contacts with the State or Federal agencies that can help local firms.*
 - d) Prepare localized fact sheet on development programs.*
 - e) Mail “Thank you” notes and localized fact sheet to firms after the visits.
 - f) Organize the “Red flag review surveys” by the Task Force.
 - g) Assign a Task Force member to handle each immediate business concern.
5. Milestone Coordinator – Joel Bretton and Matt Barrett
- a) Help other members of the Leadership Team.
 - b) Visit firms.
 - c) Arrange (including invitations) the Task Force retreat.
 - d) Arrange (including invitations) the implementation resources meeting.
 - e) Arrange (including invitations) the community commencement meeting.

*The BR&E consultant (Andre Gannon) either does these steps or provides major assistance on them.

Task Force Members (10-15 members)

Suggested members:

Town Council

Sewer Commission

ZBA

Chamber

Schools

Kiwanis

HYAA

Lion’s Club

SNHU

CMC

Elliot Hospital

Army National Guard
CIGNA/United Health Care
General Electric
Town Employees
Churches
Pro Con
High School – Community Service Hours
Salvation Army
Library
Boy Scouts
Car Dealers
Day Care Centers
Hooksett-ites
Amoskeag Rowing Club
Eversource
Grocery Store
Bass Pro Shops
Tri Town Ice Arena

Whoever gets recruited to be task force members will be invited to the next meeting. Visitation members will be recruited out of this list.

Next meeting – Tuesday, May 26th at 4 pm.

Economic Development Committee Mission Statement (attached)

D. Winterton: The Town Council is concerned about the proposed number of non-resident members.

J. Duffy: There is a proposal to increase the number of members from 7 to 9. Only 3 members from the business community. I checked with the Town Attorney, with an advisory board, the board can define a quorum.

M. Barrett: The Town Council does not realize that a business owner knows more about Hooksett than a resident. It bothers me that a resident who does not know anything about Hooksett has a lot more say than a business owner like me only because that person is a resident.

D. Winterton moved to adopt the proposed Economic Development Committee rules of procedure. P. Scarpetti seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

The Rules of Procedure will be forwarded to the Town Council for approval.

Respectfully submitted by,

Evelyn F. Horn
Administrative Assistant