

**WOLFEBORO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
Tuesday, May 9, 2006
MINUTES**

Members Present: Bob Reid, Chairman, Tony Triolo, Mike Cooper, Denise Roy-Palmer, Mary DeVries, Gene Leone, David Tower, Members.

Staff Present: Lee Ann Keathley, Secretary.

Chairman Reid opened the meeting at 8:34 am.

Consideration of Minutes
March 1, 2006

It was moved by David Tower and seconded by Gene Leone to approve the March 1, 2006 Economic Development Committee minutes as submitted. All members voted in favor.

April 12, 2006
Corrections:

Page 2, 1st paragraph; strike 1st sentence.

It was moved by Denise Roy-Palmer and seconded by David Tower to approve the April 12, 2006 Economic Development Committee minutes as amended. All members voted in favor.

Discussion Items

➤ **Master Plan update**

Bob Reid requested comment regarding the Committee formulating opinions, ideas and comments of the working and actual draft of the 1996 Master Plan.

Denise Roy-Palmer stated she has reviewed such, made changes and submitted those changes to the Committee.

Bob Reid stated the deadline for the draft of the chapter update to the Planning Board is June 16th. He stated the Economic Base Chapter subcommittee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 10th, 5 pm @ Maxfield Real Estate Office. He stated in the area of economic development, that such has taken a back seat in the Master Plan and is not aware that any of the items noted in the 1996 Master Plan have been implemented.

David Tower stated it appeared in the 1996 Master Plan that growth or lack thereof was expected to occur, the Town had the opportunity to direct it however, the plan was placed on a shelf. He questioned what would happen now.

Bob Reid stated there is going to be a concerted effort to implement the Master Plan and that David Booth is going to facilitate a system that will allow such. He stated the Committee can only influence the economic development issues and fears that other committees will submit expensive plans that would hinder the implementation of the Master Plan due to the cost of such. He stated he feels it is essential for someone to head Economic Development for the Town (staff position).

Tony Triolo stated that if the staff position is created, it would be a success of the Committee. He stated the staff person should be under the control of the EDC.

Bob Reid stated that currently, that anybody who has a business opportunity and is seeking information only has two sources to retrieve such information; Town Planner and Town Manager, both of whom are too busy. He questioned whether the Committee agrees to the hiring of staff as a priority and if so, to write such into the chapter plan.

Tony Triolo agreed with the recommendation.

Denise Roy-Palmer questioned whether the position would be full time.

Bob Reid stated it would be determined however, the Committee could make recommendations regarding such.

Denise Roy-Palmer stated the person would be a facilitator.

Bob Reid stated the Town Planner, under statute, is required to review and make recommendations in the most conservative way therefore, he cannot facilitate and reinforces the recommendation of having a paid staff person.

Mary DeVries stated that it makes sense to have a paid staff person who will be responsible for the items in the Master Plan to be implemented.

Bob Reid stated the Committee can describe the function of the staff person.

Denise Roy-Palmer stated she would retrieve a job description of the staff person.

Tony Triolo stated the paid staff person could eliminate the stone walls that people now face and make the process easier.

David Tower stated he is unsure whether he would favor creating a position that answers to a committee and feels that such a position should be supported by the Town. He questioned who the person would work for and the role of the EDC.

Bob Reid replied the person would not work for the EDC. He stated that if the EDC could become a viable EDC for the Town, staff would attend the EDC meetings and help people in the Town go through the system.

Gene Leone stated he does not agree with placing another body into place without any organizational chart or structure.

Mike Cooper agreed with Mr. Leone's comment stating that where the staff position fits in the structural organizational chart is very important.

Denise Roy-Palmer stated she would seek that information as well.

Bob Reid stated that under the current structure, anybody of staff level position would report directly to the Town Manager. He stated there is some energy of looking at a charter form of government and looking at the possibility of a Town Administrator. He stated that any such change would have to be voted on by the voters.

Gene Leone stated it is his opinion that a profession of bureaucrats in this country has been created and all come highly educated if not over qualified for a particular position and their solution is to look for a problem; if the problem never exists; they create a problem to get a solution.

Bob Reid agreed with Mr. Leone's comments. He stated there is no representative from the business district of the Town of Wolfeboro at staff meetings.

Tony Triolo questioned whether the staff person would represent the business community.

Bob Reid stated that such would be described as part of the recommendations and needs to be defined.

Mary DeVries stated that when reviewing the job description, the Committee should review the description retrieved from the same form of government as the Town of Wolfeboro (report to Town Manager). She stated that currently, the people have to go to individual staff who are not talking together with the other departments.

Bob Reid stated that even if there were a Town Administrator, the reporting process would be the same; the only difference would be that the Town Administrator is not the ultimate authority. He stated the Board of Selectmen or Town Counsel would be the ultimate decision making process about personnel. He explained that with the Town Manager form of government, all personnel decisions except for the Town Manager position are made by the Town Manager and not influenced by the elected officials. He stated the Town Manager has the absolute authority under law to hire or fire anybody he wants.

Gene Leone stated if the person is a trained political bureaucrat, he/she will not represent the business community because he/she will not know how to do such. He stated that ultimately the person won't care due to the power to tax.

Denise Roy-Palmer stated the person would need to have the background and skills to fulfill the position.

Gene Leone questioned the background and skills of such a person.

Denise Roy-Palmer replied she is unaware.

Mary DeVries questioned whether it would be the charge of the EDC to see what Towns have had success with a staff person. In regard to the Master Plan, she stated there were Chamber of Commerce identified responsibilities that were implemented by the Chamber.

Bob Reid replied those responsibilities did not require cost by the Town.

David Tower stated that if the premise is for a staff person to be an advocate looking for different types of businesses to come into the community, then he would assume that the infrastructure exists to recruit those people. He expressed concern regarding such and questioned whether the Town has said infrastructure. He stated the Master Plan speaks of development and industry for Route 28, Center Street, South Main Street and ten years ago, the Town had the tools to get people to come to Town however, if you bring in a person to actively recruit, he questioned how that person is connected to the sources and questioned the placement of light industry or manufactured housing.

Denise Roy-Palmer stated the focus should be placed on the existing businesses because they have a vested interest in the community.

David Tower stated the economic base of the Town is predominantly service and questioned how that could be grown.

Bob Reid stated there is energy to develop a Business Park of which was placed in the Master Plan and hopes will be placed in the new Master Plan. He stated the EDC cannot sit alone as a committee and when discussing economic development, the committee needs to talk to the Downtown Committee, Infrastructure Committee, etc.

Gene Leone stated the Town does not attract enough young people. He stated the elderly are more conservative with money and the Town needs a better mix of people.

Bob Reid agreed with Mr. Leone's comments however, stated the biggest provider of money to the Town without services are the elderly. He stated the largest amount of taxes are paid by retirees and are a great source of revenue however, those people are going to die and have properties that are worth millions of dollars. He stated the Town has to attract people who can afford to move into those homes. He stated the Town needs a better mix for economic viability.

Tony Triolo stated that younger people are coming to the Town for the quality of life it offers. He stated there are a larger number of people working from their homes. He stated there needs to be land rezoned for a business park.

Bob Reid stated the Town has the opportunity to attract people for the quality of life, home based businesses and support businesses if the Town has a person who can recruit such. He stated he sees the opportunity to make it more friendly so that if a person is interested, it is easier to get through the door.

Denise Roy-Palmer recommended a marketing campaign to attract seasonal people to relocate to Wolfeboro. She stated it is the existing businesses that have the potential of creating jobs.

Bob Reid questioned whether it is the recommendation of the Committee that the Economic Base Committee continue to make an EDC staff member one of its priorities.

Mike Cooper requested additional information regarding job description of the staff person.

Gene Leone asked what other towns have such a staff person.

Denise Roy-Palmer replied Dover, Manchester, Concord, and Littleton.

Bob Reid stated the captain of the Mount Washington stated that Wolfeboro is the number one destination of the lake and that such needs to be taken advantage of.

Town of Wolfeboro EDC meeting scheduled for Tuesday, June 6, 2006 @ 8:30 am at the offices of Leone, McDonnell & Roberts.

It was moved by Gene Leone and seconded by Mike Cooper to adjourn the May 9, 2006 Economic Development Committee meeting. All members voted in favor.

There being no further business before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 9:15 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Lee Ann Keathley
Secretary