

WOLFEBORO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
Thursday, April 10, 2007
MINUTES

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

Members Absent: David Tower, Member.

Staff Present: Lee Ann Keathley, Secretary.

Guest: Michael Bergeron, State of NH Business Resource Center

Chairman Reid opened the meeting at 8:11 AM.

Consideration of Minutes
March 22, 2007

The Committee tabled consideration of minutes until May 8, 2007.

Discussion Items

➤ **Michael Bergeron, State of NH Business Resource Center**

Michael Bergeron reviewed his personal background. He stated his job includes the recruitment of companies to NH and convincing people that NH is the ultimate place to go. He stated leads are retrieved from real estate brokers, organizations similar to WEDCO and websites. He stated he markets the State through a regional approach due to differences in its uniqueness and benefits of the region. He stated said marketing includes cold calls, websites, targeted mailings, targeted sales presentations, tradeshow (6 per year), networking with real estate brokers, venture capitalists and site consultants and networking with local and regional economic development officials. He stated it is important to market to the decision makers, CEO / President, or those who represent the companies. He reviewed the State's database for listings within ten miles of Wolfeboro and recommended the following; inventory all existing industrial business, make businesses aware of building(s) listed, contact all commercial brokers in the lakes region and state, hold an open house for brokers (have a raffle to attract the brokers), advertise on the State and local website, subdivide to meet the market, increase the industrial cluster with a new park and be prepared and patient for at least a one year vacancy.

Tony Triolo stated he held a broker open house for the Wicker property, fall 2006, and 65 people attended.

Michael Bergeron stated on average, it takes one year to lease space. He stated Wolfeboro's tenant size for office is 500 – 1500 SF and for light industrial is 2,000 – 8,000 SF. He reviewed Wolfeboro's target market; small family business, start up company, Brewster Academy alumni. He recommended sending marketing material to out of state vacation homeowners by including such in their tax bills, advertising at the closest airport that uses corporate jets and tent cards in restaurants / inns. He stated Wolfeboro has national and international celebrity and respect

however, the challenge of Wolfeboro and the region is labor; a perceived weakness that needs to be addressed through marketing.

Tony Triolo stated Wolfeboro and the Lakes Region has a unique quality of life.

Bob Reid agreed with Mr. Triolo and stated Wolfeboro also has a safe environment.

Michael Bergeron stated according to national surveys the top three things people look at is crime rate, schools and health care.

Bob Reid stated there will be workforce housing within ten minutes walking distance to the Wickers building. He stated there is another industrial building next to the Wickers building; GI Plastek. He stated life insurance companies have great difficulty in finding, training and developing underwriters. He stated the Town has developed a Master Plan in which the economic development portion recommended the hiring of an Economic Development Director for the Town to develop an atmosphere of full time employment with benefits. He stated Wolfeboro has areas that are zoned commercial. He stated energy to keep people in Wolfeboro or have people return to Wolfeboro after college has to be created.

Tony Triolo stated an Economic Development Director would develop the infrastructure to attract businesses. He questioned other towns that have such.

Denise Roy-Palmer replied Rochester and Dover.

Michael Bergeron replied Meredith.

Bob Reid stated an interest in creating a balance for Wolfeboro.

Gene Leone stated the idea of having small businesses / 1 - 2 person businesses contradict attracting young people. He stated there is no labor pool in Wolfeboro.

Michael Bergeron stated small businesses will attract labor and then clusters of business will attract other clusters.

Bob Reid stated the Master Plan also recommends a business plan that includes a business park. He stated Wolfeboro currently has service industry however; the jobs are seasonal without benefits. He stated he wants Wickers to be a thriving business.

Michael Bergeron recommended attracting people age 28 – 30 or beginning a family. He stated people coming out of college would not be attracted to the area.

Gene Leone stated Wolfeboro doesn't have what young people want; Wolfeboro is not set up for such.

Mike Cooper stated Brewster Academy's highest turnover is the single people because there is no social life or they want to further their education.

Michael Bergeron recommended focusing on people who Wolfeboro can attract.

Mike Cooper stated through their admissions cycle, more people are looking to move full time to Wolfeboro (people who have second homes). He stated their school sells the area however, some people are attracted to the school because of the location and others don't come to Brewster Academy because of the location.

Michael Bergeron stated 80% of expansion comes from within the community. He recommended appointing an ambassador that can meet with the company on short notice and has good sales however; stated to be careful of confidentiality. He recommended creating a checklist for the approval process that includes names, titles, phone numbers and time frames.

Denise Roy-Palmer stated an Economic Development Director would guide businesses through the process.

Michael Bergeron reviewed the national market trend and website strategies. He stated it took him several attempts to access the Town of Wolfeboro's website in addition, the website says nothing of business. He recommended the following; market within the community, upgrade the Town's website, reach out to brokers in southern NH and communicate with State representatives. He stated he has a prospect looking for 2,500 – 3,000 SF; family run machine tool company.

Bob Reid stated between 1995 – 2003 Wolfeboro had a business net increase of 1%. He stated without a healthy economic base, such would benefit the Town.

It was moved by Mike Cooper and seconded by Mary DeVries to adjourn the April 10, 2007 Wolfeboro Economic Development Committee meeting. All members voted in favor. The motion passes.

EDC meeting scheduled for Tuesday, May 8, 2007 @ 8 AM at Leone, McDonnell & Roberts office.

There being no further business before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 9:11 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lee Ann Keathley