

# WOLFEBORO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

June 8, 2010

## MINUTES

**Members Present:** Gene Leone, Vice-Chairman, Linda Murray, Selectman's Representative, Mike Cooper, Dave Tower, Mary DeVries, Denise Roy-Palmer, Members.

**Members Absent:** Frank Giebutowski, Acting Chairman, Tony Triolo, Bob Reid, Members.

**Staff Present:** Lee Ann Keathley, Secretary.

*Vice-Chairman Leone opened the meeting at 8:09 AM.*

### **Consideration of Minutes**

**May 11, 2010**

**It was moved by Linda Murray and seconded by Mike Cooper to approve the May 11, 2010 Economic Development Committee minutes as submitted. All members voted in favor. The motion passed.**

### **Discussion Item**

➤ **Review of consolidated results of the 5/17/10 Public Forum / SWOTS input meeting**

The Committee reviewed such, see attached, and provided the following comments;

- Lack of collective vision, noting the Master Plan was intended to create such; questioned how to reconcile the disconnect; noting a shared vision is necessary to be successful
- Importance of communication to entire community; how to get the information to the public and by what means (discussed the disconnect to the community for those people who may be residents however work outside the Town)
- The context / analysis is missing from the results therefore, the information simply becomes a list; the Committee is unsure as to what to do with the information
- Strengths of the Town are apparent; noting such have existed for years
- Most of the information was information already known; noting such has been discussed for years by the Committee and the Committee does not want to backtrack

Relating the results to the development of an Economic Development Strategic Plan, the Committee made the following comments;

- The Committee noted they chose the consultant because of their previous experience and success with smaller towns. As a whole, the Committee was underwhelmed by both the public forum and the consolidated results; noting there is now little expectation from the consultant. The Committee stated they were looking for more originality and help and had hoped to draw on their expertise to guide direction
- Request the consultants to use the data they have to date to show the Committee what our vision might look like
- Need a plan / document to prepare for the future when the economic downturn is over and the Town can move forward with
- Requested the consultant to develop a strategic plan to include goals and initiatives to help guide the EDC
- The goal of the study / plan is to depict what the right track for Wolfeboro is

The Committee has requested the consultant to provide the following for their July 13, 2010 meeting; explore opportunity to provide Wifi to the Downtown area, review utility costs of other Towns, provide / retrieve data in regard to trends, such as commercial loans to determine how people are buying and spending and direction of and attendance at the Committee's next meeting; requested information related to such in advance of the meeting.

The Committee discussed economic incentives and ways to develop an economic climate that is supportive of small business. The Committee discussed electric power; the Town's electric plant and its impact on the community; noting the inability to qualify for grants due to municipal power. The Committee also discussed the Town's water and sewer systems.

Linda Murray questioned whether the Town should run its own electric plant. She stated a study had been done on such and a decision by the community had been made to keep the local plant. She stated she would retrieve the study.

Denise Roy-Palmer stated there are 240 communities in the State of NH and only 3-4 have their own electric power.

**It was moved by Mary DeVries and seconded by Denise Roy-Palmer to adjourn the June 8, 2010 EDC meeting. All members voted in favor.**

*There being no further business before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 9:04 AM.*

Respectfully Submitted,  
*Lee Ann Keathley*  
Lee Ann Keathley

Consolidated Results of 5-17-10 SWOTS input meeting (issues with no votes have been eliminated)

## Strengths

### Genuine, small town New England Village

	Functioning, New England downtown village	14
	Many 1 <sup>st</sup> class amenities to draw people	10
Lake	Lakefront	10
	Clean environment and lake	8
	Outdoor recreation	7
	Unique hospitality by the whole community towards visitors and residents	5
	Central state location (2 hrs to Boston, Close to Ports., Conc., Manch.)	4

Authentic Place	Authentic – bring back good memories	5
	Brand value	3
	Simpler way of life	3

### People/Institutional Resources

	Strong, stable institutions, i.e., Brewster, Huggins	11
People Talents	Population talents –willing to do things	9
	Strong retirement pool = talent/people, education	7
	Strong education; public/private	7
	Non-profits to help us care for each other	4

### Culture/Creativity

	Great cultural base (arts, music, galleries, antiques, historic...)	3
	Volume of music/arts organizations	2

### Fiscal Issues

	Good budget process /fiscal responsibility	1
	Low income tax	1

## Challenges

### Vision

	Lack of a collective vision for where the town should go	12
	People in power do not want change	2

### Infrastructure/Natural Assets

Maintain Business Properties	Maintaining buildings/infrastructure	12
	Undeveloped properties, buildings	2
	Maintain retail center for seasonal and year round residents/diverse retail	
Maintain Infra-structure	Parking and traffic, management of traffic control officers at crossings	6
	Traffic & road system for getting through town	5
	Reconstruction of downtown/join business districts by road, walk, bridge, ferry	3
	Downtown parking – make a part of downtown reconstruction	2
	Bury utilities	2
	Transportation: limited; quality; public	

Location and access – takes an hour to get anywhere	6
How to lengthen business season	4
Maintaining natural resources (lake)	
<b>Business</b>	
Difficult to start a new business, and for existing to improve	6
Planning Board unclear policy and un-followed policy	5
Keeping existing businesses here / Make it easier for new businesses to come here	
/Yankee Frugality/Come up with incentives to attract new business	11
<b>Labor Force</b>	
Workforce	4
{ Lack of things to do for young population	4
{ Keeping youth here with decent jobs	2
Lack of job opportunities	1
Less employees = less spending	1
<b>Fiscal</b>	
Perception that taxes are high	3
Dependency on property taxes	3
Increased financial burden passed from state to town	2
Cost of goods and services higher	3
 <b>Opportunities</b>	
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Tax laws	11
Deterioration of natural resources elsewhere	9
Internet opportunity	4
Shore protection act, 'greenness of area'	3
Weather more predictable, less violent	2
Exodus from metropolitan areas	1
Education	
Strengthen brand: Destination; culture; quality; stretch season; promotion	
Business development/jobs: Wickers, incubator	
 <b>Threats</b>	
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Change in tax law – tax uncertainties (in Concord)	15
Decrease in property value	10
Energy cost	4
State budget cuts	1