

Draft Minutes

Exeter Economic Development Commission

October 11, 2011

1. Call Meeting to Order

Chairman Barry Sandberg convened the meeting at 8:25 am in the Nowak Room of the Town Office Building. Members present were: Town Manager Russ Dean, Town Planner Sylvia von Aulock, Selectwoman Julie Gilman, Christine Davis, Brian Lortie, Brandon Stauber and Madeleine Hamel.

2. Approval of Minutes

Chairman noted because there was not a quorum present at the Sept 27, 2011 meeting there were no minutes for the scheduled meeting.

Approval of the minutes for August 16, 2011 meeting was asked. Ms. Hamel clarified the relationship of her guest at the meeting. With that correction, Ms. Davis made the motion for acceptance; seconded by Ms. Gilman. Minutes approved with noted correction.

Approval of minutes for August 30, 2011 was asked. Mr. Sandberg questioned Boatofgarten as the company seeking the planning Board approval for expansion. It was clarified the *application for expansion was presented by Boatofgarten LLC, to the Planning Board on behalf of the COBHAM facility located at 11 Continental Drive*. With clarification noted, Ms. Gilman made a motion to accept; Mr. Lortie seconded. Minutes of August 30, 2011 were accepted.

3. Discussion/Action Items

a. New Business

- Mr. Sandberg commented on his presentation to the BOS at their September 26, 2011 meeting. An outline of the presentation was electronically mailed to members on 9.27.2011. In summary it was an overview of the intent of the Economic Development Commission and the means of working with the Town and the various governing organizations to promote economic development within Exeter. Also included in the presentation were ten (10) Economy Development Core Competencies (as presented at the 9.12.2011 Visioning Session), their priorities and ranking according to the Commission's vote at the Session. The action plans were further categorized with proposed time lines ranging from the next 120 days (commencing with Jan 2012) to within three (3) years. Mr. Sandberg did stress to the members present this was in draft form and subject to review and revision.
- Mr. Dean reported forty thousand dollars (\$40,000) is being requested in the 2012 Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) for the EEDC and ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) as a line item in the 2012 operating budget. Both figures will be reviewed by the Budget Recommendation Committee that is just getting underway. The \$40,000 will be applied toward the development of the TIF project on the Epping Road and the \$10,000 provides for some level of fiscal support going into the year 21012; more of a place holder until the Commission has a better understanding of its needs. Mr. Stauber expressed his opposition to the \$10,000 amount; if money is to be spent the costs should be known. Ms. von Aulock stated the dollar amounts mentioned were the result of research done on what other towns had spent on such a project: it was not a random chosen amount. Ms. von Aulock suggested perhaps as with other Town boards the expenses could be itemized line items i.e. postage, printing, workshops etc. for ease in budgeting and tracking expenses. She went on to point out this is an unusual group and does get involved in a variety of items and will take time to find its way. Mr. Dean further commented it will be matched up to the items listed on the action plan as presented to the BOS. The budget process is calendar driven: there is just the one shot and Mr. Sandberg expressed the need for some fluidity. Ms. Hamel

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commended the Executive Committee for their forward thinking in preparing budget amounts before the results of the Visioning Session were determined.

- Evaluation of Visioning session

Also sent in the same electronic mailing was a compilation of feedback responses of the attendees present at the Visioning Session. The majority of the responses were favorable and most found the workshop beneficial.

The final report from the Arnett Group, the Action Plan, is in spreadsheet form and was electronically mailed to the members prior to this meeting. The top ten objectives/goals determined at the Session were listed by a reference number and the phase for completion also noted: 120 days, 18 months, 3 years. Under the top ten, the activities were further defined by sub groups and the number of votes received at the workshop as to priority and the time period they were to be completed. The second page of the handout reviewed the original six sub-committees of 2010 and included the addition of five potential sub-committees. But it was stressed there is still the need for an Executive Steering Committee. Discussion followed on the various tasks the sub-committees might take on with varying opinions and suggestions. Ms. von Aulock remarked it was a very ambitious plan and felt the Commission might be spreading itself too thin embarking on even five tasks. She stressed the group might want to recognize the “never seems to be enough time or resources” scenario that quite often does not yield satisfactory results. Mr. Sandberg acknowledged it was a point well taken and suggested a task and project structure. Ms. Davis stated it was good to have sub-committees but there is also the need to focus on the task. It was suggested the members be polled and indicate their area of interest. Mr. Dean recognized some members are doing work on their own but asked his office but kept abreast of the work so it can be distributed to the members: to consider his office the clearing house. Mr. Dean did state UNH has an intern available to the group and there is the potential to have the intern work on some of the tasks. When the results of the polling are tabulated an attempt would be made to marry the preferences to the resources.

Working from the graph, Mr. Dean narrowed down the tasks to three: 1.1 Marketing Plan, 2.1 Complete a business/commercial inventory including Epping Road and 3.1.2 Business issues/needs forum in Town—all to be completed in the 120 day time period. It seemed important to stay focused on the highest priority group but not abandon the long-range development plans such as the creation of a Web site. Ms. Hamel felt the short term and long term needs should be addressed. The need for a “go to” group to answer specific questions of a prospective business individual considering a move to Exeter should be established. The Chamber of Commerce can aid but they represent 10 communities and the EEDC should have their position represented; a welcoming entry point. Availability is important and a response team needs to be in place.

In summary, Chairman Sandberg will revise the Action Plan spreadsheet to reflect the three areas of priority activities identified for the next 120 day period as discussed in this meeting. It will be electronically mailed to members who will be asked to mark their top three choices of interest. Those responses will be complied and with that information decisions can be made on how to best organize the group’s resources for the remainder of 2011.

b. Old Business:

Mr. Briselden was not present to provide any update on the West Ex project

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4. Consensus of meeting schedule:

Chairman Sandberg stated the next meeting will be in two (2) weeks on October 25, 2011. The every-other Tuesday morning meeting schedule will continue for the remainder of the year but will be revisited at the beginning of 2012.

5. The EEDC meeting was adjourned at 9:40am

Respectfully submitted,

Ginny Raub
Recording secretary