

## Approved MINUTES

### EXETER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION Business Retention & Expansion Subcommittee

MAY 30, 2013

The Subcommittee meeting was called to order by Madeleine Hamel at 8:30am at the Town Office in the Wheelwright Room. Members present were Madeleine Hamel, David Hampson, Doug Eastman, Jason Proulx, and guests Don Clement- Board of Selectmen, and Derek Scanlon – new Town/EEDC intern. There were no minutes from the meeting of January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2013.

Mr. Scanlon introduced himself, a graduate of UNH with a major in economics, and outlined some of the projects he will be working on for the Town and the EEDC. These include the Master Plan, the TIF project, and updating the Exeter Business Directory (database).

Then the subcommittee members introduced themselves to Mr. Scanlon. Mr. Clement summarized some of the goals of the BOS, and Ms. Hamel reviewed the past work of the Subcommittee.

#### **Database Management and Software Options:**

Mr. Proulx brought up the need for better software to manage the Exeter Business and Properties database that is presently on Excel. He recommended a program called “Salesforce.com” which uses a cloud based server and he has experience using. He said it is available free to 501c3 organizations. Mr. Clement recommended speaking with the Town IT Manager to be sure whatever we use interfaces well with other Town systems. Mr. Hampson advised that whatever program is used to be sure it would allow us to upload from our Excel document, and Mr. Proulx said Salesforce.com does. Also, Mr. Hampson noted that the EEDC is organized as a 501c3 but has never filed a tax return as such so it hasn't operated as one. He said the threshold for the tax return is \$50,000 and is a simple form. Ms. Hamel suggested contacting EEDC Treasurer, Brian Lortie to confirm the 501c3 status, and Mr. Proulx said he would do that. Ms. Hamel explained that the issues of updating and maintaining the business database were discussed from the outset; there are columns in the present Excel format to enter information but it is limited space. Also, to maintain the integrity of the database, only a few people, including the subcommittee members and its interns and the Town Planner, had input access. Everyone else had 'read only' access.

#### **Business Community Outreach Project:**

The subcommittee reviewed our current working list of companies, summarizing what we know to date on each firm and whether we had been able to contact or meet with them. During the discussion about the property owners on Epping Road, Mr. Clement recommended we obtain maps of these properties that would outline their boundaries and zoning status to use for review. Mr. Eastman advised that certain Exeter businesses were expanding. All of the companies on the list have received an introductory letter from the EEDC, and been contacted. Some meetings have been completed while others are pending. Mr. Proulx and Mr. Hampson will let Ms. Hamel know dates of any completed meetings. This is the type of information we would like to have input on the database, but seems cumbersome at this time.

As we reviewed each firm, Mr. Proulx suggested that we add an element to the EEDC webpage or Town website that would give companies the opportunity to provide a testimonial for our webpage, free and at their own choice. It would be free advertising for the business and mutually beneficial. We will suggest this concept at the next EEDC meeting.

**EXETER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
Business Retention & Expansion Subcommittee  
continued**

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Minutes**

We discussed preparing a summary report on the status of the outreach project for the EEDC. Also, an ongoing need for administrative support to update company information gleaned from meetings, maintain follow up, provide referrals, and send thank you letters. Having an intern helps but does not provide continuity. At least a better database software website would provide minimal support to help us. It would require controlled access to maintain integrity of the database.

We see the outreach meetings as an opportunity to sell Exeter to the business community, prevent companies from leaving, attract new companies, and to support growth and expansion.

Mr. Scanlon stated he would brief the Town Manager about the meeting and our concerns.

With no further business or announcements, the meeting adjourned at 10:00 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Madeleine S. Hamel  
Chair