

Exeter Economic Development Commission

July 08, 2014

1. Call to Order

Chairwoman Kathy Corson called the meeting to order at 8:07 AM in the Nowak Room of the Exeter Town Office building. Members present were: Dave Hampson, Brandon Stauber, Brian Lortie, Barry Sandberg, Selectman representative Dan Chartrand, Lizabeth MacDonald, Jason Proulx, Madeleine Hamel and Town Manager Russ Dean. Also in attendance: Building Inspector Doug Eastman, Town Planner Sylvia von Aulock.

Guest: Board of Selectmen Chairwoman Julie Gilman

2. Approval of Minutes

Ms. MacDonald moved to accept the minutes of the June 10, 2014 meeting as presented; seconded by Mr. Hampson. Motion carried with Mr. Chartrand abstaining. (Mr. Proulx was not present for the vote.)

3. Current Business

• ***Discussion of meeting times/ televising of meetings***

Ms. Corson, in researching possible conflicts with other meetings, stated the first and fourth Tuesday of the month are available for evening meetings and do not conflict with other Town meetings nor scheduled Chamber of Commerce events.

As for meeting times, discussion determined a 7 PM start time allowed those who might work out of town to be better able to attend the meeting or view live on Channel 22.

Polling the members present for a preference of meeting times, AM or PM, determined there was a not a true consensus for either time. As to the availability of Town staff members to attend, it was felt with the presence of the newly appointed Economic Development Director, Ms. von Aulock and Mr. Eastman would need not attend; possibly only on an as-needed basis.

Mr. Stauber felt it was worth a try and could be evaluated at the end of the year. With a goal to encourage more participation and promote visibility he motioned for the EEDC to change the meeting day and time to the first Tuesday of the month with a start time of 7 PM and to be televised; seconded by Ms. MacDonald. With no further discussion, motion was approved.

The first evening meeting will be September 9, 2014 with a start time of 7 PM.

• ***Event to Introduce Economic Development Director***

The Chair, wishing to formally introduce the Director, spoke of hosting a Morning Mixer type event or possibly a Ribbon Cutting function. Mr. Proulx added the Morning Mixers sponsored by the Chamber are booked out for a year, but the Chamber suggested a Ribbon Cutting style event; noting it would have the support of the Chamber and with the resources of their organization for publicity. Discussion focused on time and format of such an event; consensus wanted it to be informal and be a meet and greet.

Mr. Dean felt all were good ideas but asked the EEDC to wait as the appointee had some ideas/an interest in rolling out the position in the right way. Also, to have Ms. Corson work jointly with the all the parties in preparing an initial press release. Mr. Dean did confirm an individual has been offered the position but employment details are being finalized and hopes the name be released by end of week of July 7, 2014.

Ms. Gilman noted the new staff person will be coming before the BOS for introduction, but the meeting will be in a structured format. Ms. Corson felt a more informal event with an opportunity to meet and speak one on one was what the EEDC was striving for. Ms. Hamel suggested it be a networking event.

Following the discussion, Mr. Stauber motioned for the Executive Committee, working with the new Director, (and the assistance of the Business Retention and Expansion subcommittee), to plan an evening event in September for an early introduction to the appointee; seconded by Mr. Hampson. Motion carried.

- ***Guest commentator on EEDC charter***

The Chair noting not stated on agenda, she asked BOS Chairwoman Gilman to speak to the Commission after the discussion at June meeting on EEDC charter and possible re-organization. Ms. Gilman noted the initial charter was complex and suggested it be reviewed by all members to develop ideas for the makeup of the Commission with the understanding it was to be a Board appointed body as are all the other town committees. She did add, it did not appear necessary to retain the finance portion of the charter.

Ms. MacDonald agreed. In her research following last month's meeting, the 501c3 was never registered, at least with the IRS, so there is no tax benefit in retaining it.

As to maintaining or having an Economic Development Corporation remains to be determined; would there be a benefit to the Town. However it is clear the members of such a group would not assume or preform the role as did the previous members. Mr. Dean noted the professional joining the staff does have experience with local development corporations and can provide information and background on models suitable for the community.

Mr. Stauber felt with a new director coming on staff it was an excellent opportunity to realign the Commission's efforts; stressed any revised charter should be inclusive, legal and allow for maximum citizen participation.

Mr. Dean restated the Economic Development Corporation and the present EEDC are Board of Selectmen ordinances and it is up to them whatever action will be undertaken, but felt Ms. Gilman wished to receive input from the present members on their views based on their experience with the present group, of how the Commission could and should function in an optimum manner before initiating any actions.

It was confirmed if the not-for-profit organization is dissolved the present assets would be returned to the Town treasury. If the Commission would have continued use of those dollars was uncertain; there may be some mechanism to permit some use of the dollars for economic projects/ventures.

It was agreed to revisit the topic after members' review and input from the EDD individual; perhaps as an October agenda item.

4. Reports

- ***Business Retention and Expansion***

(Discussion of RSA79-E rollout was included in the discussion of an event introducing new EDC; Ms. Hamel spoke of having the locale in one of the 4 designated districts. Also, the subcommittee planned to mail out invitations.)

- ***Town Economic News***

Mr. Eastman:

- a. At the last Zoning Board meeting, The Porches of Exeter received approval for their parking plan at 1 Franklin St.; next will go back to Historic District Commission (HDC) for approval on design changes for the project/area.
- b. Met with Loaf and Ladle owner and the contractor as they move forward; will be going to HDC for approval on new design changes to rear of building.

Ms. Corson/Planning Board:

- a. Approved a change in footprint for Squamscott Y project; plans are to break ground in September.
- b. Reviewed the preliminary site plan for Great Bay Kids construction project on Epping Road

Mr. Dean:

- a. Pleased to start receiving inquiries on RSA 79-E
- b. Feels new Director would like to meet with various developers as soon as possible; if members have names of individuals they feel should be contacted forward on to Town Manager's office.

Ms. Gilman added Public Works came to the BOS with a sidewalk plan that will be going into the CIP; invited members to attend the various meeting when presented to show support.

With no further business, Mr. Hampson motioned to adjourn; seconded by Mr. Lortie.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 AM

Respectfully submitted,

Ginny Raub