

DRAFT MINUTES

Exeter Economic Development Commission

September 28, 2018

Present: Russell Dean – Town Manager, Darren Winham- Economic Development Director, Madeleine Hamel - Clerk, Langdon Plumer – Planning Board Chair, Earl Murphy, John Tremblay, Julie Gilman- Select Board.

1. Call to Order/welcome

The meeting was called to order at 8:37 a.m. by Mrs. Madeleine Hamel

2. Approval of Minutes of 8/28/18 meeting

The Commission had a brief discussion on the Minutes.

Mr. Dean – Town Manager motioned to approve the September 28, 2018 Minutes with amendments.

Mr. Murphy seconded the motion.

Roll Call – 5 Yay's and 1 Abstention

3. Business Retention and Expansion Updates

Mr. Winham – Economic Development Director says that almost all the volunteers have done their interviews. There are a few left to do. And we are planning on having the Expert Panel from UNH at the next meeting in October. The Expert Panel from UNH will be discussing the outcome of the interviews and suggest action steps. Part of the program is to encourage the volunteers to maintain the business relationships and for businesses to realize there is an outreach program for them. We are definitely nearing the ending of the project. There are about 20ish volunteers doing a great job, lots of positive feedback both from the companies and volunteers.

Mrs. Hamel – Says while talking to the businesses she found a lot of them commenting on Exeter being an excellent location and a transportation corridor throughout New England.

4. Discussion of EEDC Ordinance revision

Mr. Dean – Town Manager says just a quick little history on the Economic Development Committee Ordinance. There are actually 2 Arms of the Commission, there is a Town Commission appointed by the Select Board and there is also a Non for Profit that was

established under RSA-292. The two are separated by years, the Ordinance that was established in 1968 and the Non for Profit that was established in looks like 1975. The way the Non for Profit works is the convention of the Board of Directors set up by laws and meetings. And the Town Commission is like a Town Board works, so they are slightly different. Part of that is rooted in History, there is an RSA- 162G that is in the same Chapter as the TIF statutes and at one time the Town was considering adopting the RSA-162G as an enabling legislation back around 1974. 162G is actually an RSA that gives an Economic Development Commission authority to lease or buy property and to do different things that were part of the Industrial Development Commission. Looking at the notes and Minutes from back then it was interesting to see what was going on at the time when 162G was actually a new statute and to see if it would ever come to pass. It looks like in the lineage part of the discussion ended up being where we don't want to recommend the adoption of this law but what we will do is establish a Non for Profit similar and under RSA-292 that sort of reflects what is in 162G. Our current Ordinance incorporates both elements of the Town Commission and the Non for Profit. The current Ordinance talks about two Committees, they are both called the Exeter Development Commission but they both have who their Commissions are and so forth. The recommendation here is the the Ordinance be amended and go from 9 qualified members and a body that includes the Chairman of the Select Board, the Chairman of the Planning Board and the Town Manager, as ex officio members basically twelve members down to a total of 7 members. And those members have not necessarily been identified; it does not say it would be a Select Board or the Chair of the Board. Most Committees can assign whoever they want it does not have to be the Chair of the Board to sit in. We took 9 members and truncated it down to 7 and changed the terms from 4 years to 3 years. As far as the Statement of Policy is pretty similar as the current one far as the role of what the Commission would be. The suggestion would be that the Commission would follow the same rules as other Committees of the Select Board. The reference to the Non for Profit would be stricken all together, it does not mean that the Non for Profit will go away, it will still exist as long as it is on file with the Secretary of State and kept up to speed and so forth. Taking it out of the Ordinance means setting it aside and eventually we can address it at a later time by looking at what are the By-Laws. As the Economic Development Commission reviews this it would be good if everyone would be supportive of the changes and invite some representation to the Select Board when this is taken up. We can then create a Commission and re-establish consistent quorums not so large. The preference is to get it at least on the schedule for late October that would be ideal. The status Non for Profit has been consistently re-upped with the Secretary of States Office. The Non for Profit is called the Exeter Falcon and is in good standing with the State. The funding goes back to the \$7,000 from back in the Seventies when the Exeter Development Commission was very active in developing Industrial thrive and were in the business for a long time buying and selling property to get the Industrial thrive developed. And those are left over's from the Industrial Thrive fund.

Mrs. Hamel - says the members should review the Ordinance that has been sent out and submit recommendations and comments, to be able to add them to the next Meeting Agenda. And if any members have any questions they can contact Mr. Dean – Town Manager.

Mr. Dean – Town Manager says the members are more than welcome to take a look at the PDF's and Folders that he has which are from the seventies and are very impressive.

5. Economic Development Director's updates (TIF, etc.)

Mr. Winham – Economic Development Director says he will be at the next Select Meeting with a request for a new economic utilization zone for properties on Holland Way. We have an interest from a company that wants to expand, for any of these projects to happen the NERC is necessary and he feels the Select Board will be very open to this. He says the NREC is very effective and we already have one on Epping Road which has been very effective. A lot of Businesses out there that are expanding are taking advantage of it. It is incentives on business profit and business enterprise taxes , which are state taxes and have no effect on our community what so ever other than it is beneficial to businesses that are in that zone. It is a very easy process, because we already adopted the ability to do NERC's with the Epping Road NERC. All the Board has to do is say yes, there will be a form coming from Mr. Winham's Office that simply shows the properties and to qualify for it has to be properties that are underutilized and or properties that have not been utilized for a number of years and all those properties easily qualify. It requires a simple signature from the Commissioner of NHBEA; it does not have to go thru legislators. By the next meeting or by the November meeting he should be able to know which companies are buying and building it. The Town SUR Construction will be hosting a Public Meeting at 6:30pm next Wednesday night at the Neighborhood Beer Co. he encourages anyone that is interested in what the Construction schedules would be to attend the Meeting. There are a lot of businesses looking to locate to Exeter and there is some great space out there. There are some good spaces and locations for Artists and light manufacturing available now. There will be significant Residential building such as 22 Condos, a mixed use building and another building with apartments. A Building on Main Street is under Contract for Condos and it looks like that will be happening. Also at 12 Front Street the plan for the Condos came in. There is a Company that wants to locate to Exeter and build a 100 Sqft building, it would be Warehousing manufacturing. Mr. Winham says that Mr. Moynihan submitted a site plan at the King Property which has many uses, there may be other projects coming in as well on that site. We have three different uses now that look like they will be happening. The good news is it really gets us ahead on our TIF. The new addition of Water Sewer is certainly making that area grow. Shafmaster is moving ahead on his project on the Active Adult Community. Hemmingway is closed and there have been a couple of people interested in making an offer on the property. The appraisal for the proposed Parking location in the Down Town area that was discussed at the last

meeting is in and he is negotiating with the owner on the property now. Meeting with the neighboring entity to discuss their property and then meet with the DPW to discuss further.

Mrs. Gilman – Select Board says they had a short discussion on what they can do and there does not seem to be a lot they can do since there is nothing proposed for it. The recommendation and what will go forward is to have the Heritage Commission write a letter to the owner about our concerns with the physical plans of the building. There are a lot of ideas out there from the public but the mechanics of doing anything from the Towns aspect will take some long term planning.

Mr. Dean – Town Manager says him and Mr. Winham talked about this the other day and he believes there is a successful Theater up in Rockland Maine, which has a great website and can be looked at to get a feel for what could and the indication for a theater that was thriving and a family that got involved and bought it and over time made it into a staple for the Down Town Community. It takes a lot of resources to do that and those are the things that need a good solid private partnership to kind of get this thing off the ground.

Mrs. Gilman – Select Board says that is one of the things the owner has expressed an interest in having some kind of business that generates from its profit to a non- profit. It is a business model that is difficult but can be done.

Mr. Winham – Economic Development Director says Mr. Berkowitz is moving ahead with both projects, as is Mr. Friedman with his project for Housing.

Mr. Dean – Town Manager would like to acknowledge Mr. Winham's efforts. It is exciting to see so much activity going on and there has been more interest in the Town and more things happening around Economic Development. And that is to contribute to the economy and also Mr. Winham's willingness to kind of get in right on the ground floor on a lot of this activity and keep it moving. This is not something we had as Town resources before, so it is really great to have the consistency of the businesses need a point of contact and or if there is a developer looking to do something or a property owner that is looking for something. Mr. Winham is out there talking to property owners on a regular basis and getting a feel from them as to what and giving them advise as to what could possibly be done and what we are looking to do and so on. Also a quick point on one of the things we had conversations on was zoning in terms of what we allow by right in different districts and not a lot of people realize in our commercial zones we allow by right assisted living and allow congregate care facilities, so when we think about commercial property development in the Town, understand that the demographics of aging are also impacting the economic development because that is what's popular. The point that was made earlier, there has been a plan submitted to the king property for assisted living and somebody my look at this and say oh gee wow how did that happen, it is because we allow it by right and as a community we decided

back in around 1994 to allow those kind of things as commercial development. Even though there are more residential developments than commercial, our zoning treats them as commercial and we just need to keep that in mind and we allowed them by right so unless we go to look at our re-zoning and decide we have enough of this at this point and we want to do something different with the remaining commercial that we have left. It is something to think about and pass on, as we think about our Master Plan and where we are going. Getting the message out there is important.

Mr. Dean – Town Manager says the fact that they are now extending the Water and Sewer to Epping Road to accommodate these developments is a game changer and a great thing, which took some decades in the making. Also a couple of things, one was people may not be aware that Mr. Dean – Town Manager also sits on the Chambers of Commerce Board locally and wants to mention that they have a new Executive Director Jen Wheeler, she has been there about three month and Jen used to be the Executive Director of Leadership Seacoast . The Chamber is located in the lower level of the Town Hall right across the street here. If anyone wanted to drop by there is a visitor center there and pass the word to people if they are coming into town there is now a spot where they can go and get information about the Town of Exeter, the area and things to do. We also have a new App that is up and running called the My Exeter App and our IT guy Bob Whowacki is in charge of the App. It does not take long to download it and he encourages everyone to download it, play with it, get feedback and input on what we as a community can do make this App stronger. We have talked to the Chamber and they are very interested partnering with us in some way with the App. It is a great step forward for us. This came with a two thousand dollar investment on the front end and it is six thousand dollars a year to maintain and for a Town Budget of Eighteen point Six million dollars, that is very small money to have citizens engaged. It just got off the ground and as people work their way thru it they may see things that need to be improved, but it has great potential. About the article on Seacoast On-line this week on the Town of Stratham they have been doing more with their Gateway Commercial district sort of re-born and many people may know or may not know that the Town actually has a water agreement with Stratham that if they decide to tie in to our water system, we already have established a buy-in of two Million Dollars and it seems like that process over there is moving forward again. We have not had direct conversations with them about it, but we are doing is just kind of observing and seeing how the process goes over there. Our Waste water facility here is under construction and Stratham made a reference to sewer and whether they would like to explore how to create a sewer facility and infrastructure over there. Again this will be a long distance and long time project. We are constructing our new facility. Mr. Dean – Town Manager also just got back from the International City Town Managers Association called the ICMA down in Baltimore and a lot of what is happening now is this idea of smart communities smart cities and we had a great seminar with a gentleman Xavier Hughes who worked for the Federal Government during the Obama Administration as Chief of

Innovation Officer and has now been hired by ICMA as their Liaison to communities across the country in the areas of smart cities technology. Smart cities technology is sort of a buzz word, but what it basically means is taking analytics and other increases and more available technology and installing it into your infrastructure and getting, ore data analytics out of your infrastructure in order to follow an intelligence city model. We are seeing more and more of this being integrated. The key statistic comment was that in the last two to three years there has been Seven hundred and sixty-eight billion dollars invested nationally by Venture Capital Companies into this technology. It is coming and it is here already, larger cities are using it but there are also smaller places like West Hollywood California a city of thirty thousand that have developed Intelligence Strategic plans around implementing this technology into their system. We will be hearing a lot more about that in the next couple of years. As an economic development component of any community it is very valuable to look into this and read up on it. He has a couple of things that he can send out and get you engaged on this. It is a very exciting thing.

6. Election of new officers

It was recommended and agreed to postponing the election of Officers until next meeting.

7. Next meeting:

Friday, October 26, 2018 at 8:30 A.M.

8. Adjournment

There was no quorum and the meeting was adjourned by Mrs. Hamel at 9:30am

Respectfully submitted
Melody Hypolite