

Town of Newington, NH  
Economic Development Committee Meeting Minutes  
Thursday December 1st, 2022

**Present:** Jeff Hiatt, Mike Donahue, Bob Raymond, Chair Judy Miamis, Selectmen's Rep Brandon Arsenault, Kara Anderson, Brian Semprini, Vice-Chair Bob Raymond, Intern John Downey, Paul Deschaine, Mikael Pyrtel, NH Seacoast Business Resource Specialist and Martha Roy, Town Administrator.

It was noted that Ken Latchew had submitted by email his resignation from the EDC effective today. It was accepted with thanks and regret.

Called to order at 6:00pm.

**Mikael M. Pyrtel-NH Business & Economic Affairs, Division of Economic Development-State Resources available:**

The NHBEA has customized assistance for business development. They help with business attraction and retention, workforce development, government contracting, business tax credit and international business development. Discussion ensued about the different programs and how these programs could help businesses in Newington. M. Donahue expressed interest in attracting new businesses to Newington, especially maritime businesses. M. Donahue would like to attract businesses in the off-shore wind supply chain. Newington has available land on the shoreline, the river is deep enough and the turnaround area has been dredged. M. Donahue showed M. Pyrtel the map of the ERZ and where the maritime businesses could be located and explained that it is properly zoned for this. There are grants out there to help build a needed pier for the business. M. Pyrtel agreed that this area looks like a match for maritime industries associated with the off-shore wind supply chain. The committee would like to invite M. Pyrtel back to talk more about the maritime industries.

**2023 Budget Committee Presentation:**

The EDC will present their budget of \$13,110 to the Budget Committee on Wednesday December 7<sup>th</sup>. The Committee reviewed and endorsed the P. Deschaine's memo to the Budget Committee as the EDC's presentation.

**Retail Sector Update:**

This item was postponed until the next meeting.

**Portsmouth EDC Survey:**

The committee reviewed the survey done by the Portsmouth EDC. Discussion ensued about the possible results and the results of a survey done by the Newington EDC. B. Semprini offered to look at both surveys and compare the results. B. Semprini thought

that a ten-minute conversation with a business could gain a lot more information than a survey. The committee discussed the importance of providing businesses with opportunities to meet and connect.

**Minutes Approval:** M. Donahue moved to approve the minutes of September 22, 2022. B. Arsenault seconded the motion. All were in favor.

**Report on Conference Call with Taylor Caswell, Commissioner NH Dept of Business & Economic Affairs (NH BEA):**

P. Deschaine reported that the items discussed on the conference call were; Travel and Tourism Development; they are conducting focus group discussions across the state looking at how tourism affects communities. Broadband Initiatives; the State is preparing to roll out an RFP for development of a digital equity plan. Outdoor Recreation Industry Development; they are anticipating a \$2 million grant focusing on community infrastructure enhancements to improve access and opportunity and Rural Economic Development; Steve Forcier has joined the BEA staff.

**Report on Seacoast Economic Development Stakeholders (SEDS) Roundtable:**

P. Deschaine explained the KIVA program for community backed loans. These loans are 0% interest, up to \$15,000 with a term of 36 months. Applicants gain exposure to 1.6 million potential customers and champions for your business and they connect with individual lenders looking to make a positive impact by supporting small businesses. The REDC is the contact hub for NH.

**Commercial Development Update:**

Town Planner, J. Krebs provided the committee with a memo outlining an update on commercial development.

- Torrington Properties closed on the Sears building and the (core) of the Fox Run Mall recently. They are pursuing the purchase of the remainder of the mall.
- Ken Lineman's agreement to sell his property to Wilcox Industries has fallen through. He is looking to sell or build the property for a commercial tenant.
- The Crossing's at Fox Run is seeking variances to subdivide their property by splitting off the restaurants and the Aldi's from the larger parcel.
- There is renewed interest in building the approved hotel on Shattuck Way from 2 companies, both seem serious.
- It is anticipated that Chick-Fil-A will be approved at the December Planning Board meeting, which will be the first of four parcels which comprise Newington Park that will be redeveloped by Torrington Properties.
- Unutil is proposing to construct a new clean-out (pig) facility near the off-ramp from the Spaulding Turnpike across the street from Mitchell's Gas Station which will allow the small substation next to the pavement to be removed. B. Arsenault explained that Unutil is updating the size of pipes all around Newington. They will be working along Gosling Road on December 12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>. One lane of Gosling, plus the breakdown lane, will be closed for these three days.

- There have been preliminary discussions with the heirs of Mark Stebbins (Pro-Con) to develop the "inner-loop" of the Spaulding Turnpike off-ramp (west side of the turnpike). The plans for the type of development are unknown at this time, but will likely require zoning changes to facilitate the development.
- Rye Pickleball is looking for five acres to build a facility.
- Rockingham Electric has been sold.

The committee discussed the development of Bloody Point and The Stone School. Committee member Kara Anderson works in the field of private development while preserving the historic resource. K. Anderson will reach out to the HDC and invite them to an EDC meeting to discuss the future possibilities of the Stone School. K. Anderson explained that the Town could still own the property, but would lease it out to a developer. It could combine historic preservation and affordable housing.

**Commercial and Industrial Brokers (NHCIBOR) Membership Renewal Invoice for:**

M. Donahue explained that the membership needs to be renewed for \$25 and it is a good investment. The members meet once per month on the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of the month. An EDC presence at the meetings on a quarterly basis would be beneficial. The committee agreed.

The next meetings are tentatively scheduled for January 26, 2023 and March 30, 2023 both at 6pm.

**Adjournment:** B. Arsenault moved to adjourn at 7:43pm. M. Donahue seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,  
Eleanor Boy, Recorder