

Town of Epsom
Economic Development Committee meeting minutes
Old Meetinghouse Lower Level
May 23, 2023 5:30 PM

Present

Vincent Pagano, Chair
Linda Hodgdon, Vice Chair
Sinehan Kerman, Secretary
Meadow Wysocki, Selectmen
Joseph Wysocki
JJ Johnson
Susan Lombard
Cheryl Gilpatrick & Mike Tardiff, Public

Call to order

Ms. Wysocki called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM

Agenda review

No changes to proposed agenda

Discussion

Each of the Committee members introduced themselves and gave their background. Ms. Wysocki provided an outline of the roles and discussed how the meetings would be run. Each of the members were provided a binder which included a current copy of the Charter.

Ms. Gilpatrick provided a background of how the previous Committee was run and the expectations of the EDC to provide ideas to be presented to the Select Board. If there are any expenditures that would be needed going forward the Select Board would need to approve. She explained that this Committee is for advisory purposes.

Ms. Gilpatrick explained some of the ideas that had been discussed by the prior Committee. A few of these ideas included brochures, a business survey, beautification of central areas and proposing changes to the Planning Board for Zoning Amendments. She discussed one of the things the prior Committee looked at was the Rail Trail. Mr. Tardiff discussed working with surrounding towns on the Rail Trail concept. He also discussed the Committee looking at what are other areas that support people considering coming into the town like the web site. Ms. Gilpatrick also recommended an EDC informational seminar which is available to the Committee members at no cost.

Ms. Gilpatrick indicated that the prior EDC members discussed ways to make the town be more social, like a town center or ways to safely walk to the business around the circle. She discussed looking at the Revitalization Zones. She explained what had been set up and that signs had

been made but not put up in the appropriate areas. She explained that signs have to be put up on State property and there is an application and approval process to have this done. Ms. Gilpatrick indicated that one of the signs was put up on Gauthier Drive, however, this sign was removed during construction on this road and she will check into what happened to the sign as it was not put back up. Mr. Tardiff explained the benefits to businesses. If they are located in a Economic Revitalization Zone and they make a capital investment they can apply for a break on the prior years Business Profits Tax. Mr. Johnson asked if the zones supported a commercial district. Mr. Tardiff explained that depending on the zone it defines what they could apply for. Certain districts can get a break on the valuation and therefore a tax break. Investments in an existing building to be developed into a business and the hiring of people would qualify. There is a calculation on both the capital investment as well as hiring requirements for this program. Ms. Gilpatrick discussed a possible brochure that could go out to business inquiries.

Ms. Gilpatrick explained that another part of the EDC is the water expansion program. Currently this is in process. The Town has been working with Underwood to put together a plan. There are also matching grant fund opportunities which is why there has been an item on the ballot each year to build up a fund. Mr. Tardiff discussed the process and costs associated with each phase of the project. Ms. Gilpatrick indicated she would put a copy of the well site reports into the shared drive for the Committee to review. She also indicated that the current Water District is hesitant to try to pull off of the existing wells to have a new district formed and the need to find new well sources.

Ms. Gilpatrick indicated the Town sends welcome packets to new homeowners. There is an opportunity to include items that would be beneficial to future business development. Megan Rheame sends out this packet and could provide the Committee with the details of what is included.

The Committee discussed website support and if it would be good to ask local businesses what steps they took when they looked at establishing their business in Epsom. Mr. Tardiff indicated that the Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission offer help with website designs which could be looked at. Ms. Gilpatrick suggested that it would be good to have the Committee define someone within the Committee who would be responsible for website maintenance. Mr. Johnson also suggested looking at a possible YouTube channel promoting the Town. He indicated he has experience with this and would be happy to take this on. He asked if there are pictures from around town or drone footage that could be put on the shared drive?

Mr. Gilpatrick mentioned looking at the possibility of installing a Welcome to Epsom sign that would be more inviting and visible to traffic on Route 4 and 28. She also indicated that the Committee should make a list of the items discussed and group them as short term or long term projects. It would be great to find something the Committee can do in the short term for an early win which would give the Committee some momentum. Mr. Pagano indicated that part of the process should also include any potential costs and how this can be justified and presented to the Select Board and Budget Committee.

Mr. Wysocki asked what the best source would be to collect data on demographics of the town such as number of residents, number of business and overall acreage? Ms. Gilpatrick indicated that Ms. Rheaume would be the best point of contact for this and that there is also a list of businesses on the Towns Website. Mr. Pagano provided that the BEA website has some brochures for businesses and residents and he will post copies to the share drive for the Committee to review.

Ms. Gilpatrick indicated that the Planning Board is looking to better define or revamp the districts because of how the zones are mixed.

Officer Election

Ms. Wysocki explained the three officer position which would need to be filled and the role for each position. The positions are Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary.

Mr. Johnson nominated Ms. Kerman for the Secretary position. Mr. Wysocki seconded the nomination. Vote 7-0 passed. Ms. Kerman accepted the nomination.

Mr. Wysocki nominated Ms. Hodgdon for the Vice Chair position. Mr. Pagano seconded the nomination. Vote 7-0 passed. Ms. Hodgdon accepted the nomination.

Mr. Johnson nominated Mr. Pagano for the Chair position. Ms. Hodgdon seconded the nomination. Vote 7-0 passed. Mr. Pagano accepted the nomination.

Mr. Pagano asked if there was an email address for the EDC. Ms. Wysocki was not sure but would check with Ms. Rheaume and have one set up if there is not one. She will also have Ms. Rheaume provide this information to Mr. Pagano as the Chair. Ms. Wysocki also will arrange to have each of the Committee members be granted access to the EDC folder on the share drive. Ms. Gilpatrick indicated that she will provide what she has to Ms. Wysocki as well as place copies in the shared drive for the Committee to review. Ms. Wysocki also indicated that Mr. Pagano will need to go into the Town Office to be assigned a passcode for the door to the meeting space so he will be able to set up for meetings.

Public input

None

Next meeting

June 27, 2023

Mr. Johnson made a motioned to adjourn. Ms. Hodgdon seconded the motion. The motion passed 7-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 PM.
Respectfully submitted, Meadow Wysocki