

Town of Farmington
Economic Development Committee Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, June 12, 2018

Committee Members Present:

Denise Roy-Palmer, Vice Chairman
Sharon McKinney, Secretary
Martin Laferte, Planning Board Rep.
Elise Haig
Randy Orvis

Committee Members Absent:

Angela Hardin, Chairman
Ann Titus, Selectmen's Rep.

1). Call to Order:

Vice Chairman Roy-Palmer called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

2). Pledge of Allegiance:

All present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

3). Public Comment: None

4). Review of Minutes:

May 8, 2018- No errors or omissions

Motion: (Laferte, second McKinney) to approve the minutes as written passed 4-0-1 (Orvis abstained).

May 24, 2018- Page 1, Explore Moose Mountains, 4th line- strike "Mills" from "Milton Mills";
Page 3, NH Scenic Byway Program, 4th line- add a "w" to "ton" to read "town"

Motion: (Laferte, second McKinney) to approve the minutes as amended passed 4-0-1 (Orvis abstained).

5). Planning Board Report: Mr. Laferte said a couple (John and Laura Taber) came before the Planning Board to discuss their plan to acquire the building with the Masonic emblems downtown (445 Main Street) and open a coffee shop in the building. He said the Tabers were informed that the traffic count for that portion of Main Street is between 5,000 and 6,000 vehicles a day and they were enthused about getting their businesses started there. Mr. Laferte said the coffee shop will be installed in one unit of the first floor and they have not finalized the plans for the rest of the first floor. He said they plan to rent office/studio spaces on the second floor but a potential problem with the plan is that there is only one entrance/exit to the second floor which may be fire safety violation. The Tabers said they will consult with the Fire Chief to determine if an additional egress is required he said. He said they hope to close on the purchase of the building in July and open the coffee shop by the end of August. Mr. Orvis asked what other issues or topics the Planning Board is currently working on.

Mr. Laferte said the board holds two meetings a month- one is a workshop meeting and the other is for public hearings of the applications before the board. He said the Town Planner is putting together a workshop on the Form Based Codes system and is keeping the board updated on the PLAN NH Steering Committee's progress with developing the plans to renovate the old fire house/downtown area.

6). Updated EDC Bylaws:

Vice Chairman Roy-Palmer asked the members if they wished to review the revised documents now or take them home to review and then discuss it at the next meeting.

Mr. Laferte noted the EDC bylaws are essentially the same as the Planning Board bylaws but that the proposed changes will have to go before the Board of Selectmen for approval.

Mrs. Roy-Palmer said the EDC must review and approve the changes first before the revised bylaws go to the Selectmen.

Mr. Laferte asked if there is a representative of the EDC serving on the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District Advisory Board.

Mrs. Roy-Palmer said she is the EDC representative to the TIF Advisory Board.

She said the last sentence of Article II, Membership and Meetings, #11, Removal is repeated as the last sentence of Article III, Officers, #6, Removal (removal by Selectmen for missing 3 consecutive meetings without contacting the committee) and asked if the sentence was needed or should be struck from Article III #6.

Mr. Laferte suggested removing the entire section from Article III.

Mr. Orvis suggested this section may have been added to Article III as a means to allow the Selectmen the authority to remove a member from a committee officer position but to allow the person to remain as a member of the committee.

Consensus of the committee was to strike the last sentence only of Article III, #6, Removal.

Mr. Laferte said that the last sentence of Article II, Membership and Meetings, #2 Qualifications for Membership narrows down the availability of potential members for the committee as it seeks business owners and those persons with a broad network of economic development resources as "preferred" members. He expressed concern about potential members thinking they wouldn't fit in with the committee because they don't have the preferred qualifications.

Mrs. Roy-Palmer said the first sentence states anyone willing to give their time, energy and skills to the committee can be a member and keeps the membership requirements broad enough so as not to be overly restrictive to potential members.

Mr. Orvis said that historically anyone interested in joining a committee has been appointed especially to those committees that have difficulty maintaining a quorum of members.

Mr. Laferte said that is why he didn't want to give the impression to anyone thinking of becoming a committee the idea that they aren't qualified because they don't own/manage a business or know anything about economic development resources.

Ms. Haig said it is hard to get people to even attend meetings as an audience member due to

family and other commitments and suggested the committee needs to try something new to make participation more appealing. She suggested that as a compromise the committee could approach the business owners and ask them to take an advisory role with the committee. She said she did not think it makes much difference whether the last sentence is included or not in the bylaws.

Motion: (Laferte, second McKinney) to remove the sentence that is highlighted and in italics from Article II, Section #2 passed unanimously.

Motion: (Orvis, second McKinney) to remove the last sentence of Article III, Section #6 passed unanimously.

Motion: (Orvis, second McKinney) to present the EDC Bylaws to the Board of Selectmen as amended passed unanimously.

7). Old Business:

A). Sarah Greenfield Business Owners- Vice Chairman Roy-Palmer said letters were sent to the current property owners in the business park inviting them to attend an EDC meeting to discuss possibly revising the park covenants. There has been no response and the letters will be re-sent to the owners inviting them to attend either the Aug. 14 or Aug. 30 EDC meeting she said.

B). Recap of Explore Moose Mountains Presentation- Members said that both the marketing initiative and the scenic byways presentations were well done and impressive.

Mrs. Roy-Palmer said Town Planner Dan DeSantis asked her to provide a letter of support for the proposed scenic byway through downtown Farmington to the Board of Selectmen and asked for the members' approval to draft and forward the letter to the board.

Mr. Laferte asked if Mrs. Roy-Palmer's letter would be on behalf of the Explore Moose Mountains group or on behalf of the EDC.

Mrs. Roy-Palmer said she would have to revisit Mr. DeSantis' e-mail to see which group he was requesting support from.

Mr. Laferte said that if he was requesting a letter of support from the EDC the committee should review the letter before it is sent to Selectmen.

Mrs. Roy-Palmer said if the request was for a letter on behalf of the EDC she would provide the draft to the committee for review.

8). New Business:

Mr. Orvis said he attended a Selectmen's meeting to discuss installing Economic Revitalization Zone signs in town and asked if anything has happened since that discussion.

Members recalled the previous discussion on the matter but Mrs. Titus was absent from the meeting so there was no answer on behalf of the Selectmen.

Mr. Orvis then told the members about the billboard on Route 11 inviting people to "Bring your business to Rochester" and noted that the billboard is in Farmington.

Mrs. Roy-Palmer asked about the direction the sign is facing and suggested they are targeting

visitors going to and from the Lakes Region.

Mr. Orvis said the city next door is spending more money advertising their city in our town than we spend advertising our town in our town.

Mrs. Roy-Palmer said she did not think much could be done about that. She suggested someone check the website link included in the advertisement to see who sponsored the ad.

Mrs. McKinney said she would find out who paid to put up the ad.

After a brief discussion Mrs. Roy-Palmer suggested that Signage be included as a topic for the next agenda. She then asked someone to contact Mrs. Titus for an update on the ERZ signs.

Mrs. McKinney said she would speak with Mr. Titus about the signs.

9). Any Other Business before the Committee:

Mrs. Roy-Palmer said Chairman Hardin was considering not holding the second EDC meeting during June and July and asked for the members' thoughts on just scheduling one meeting for those two months.

Consensus of the committee was not to hold a second monthly meeting during June and July.

10). Next Meeting: Tuesday, July 10, 2018 at 6 p.m.

11). Adjournment:

Motion: (Laferte, second McKinney) to adjourn the meeting passed 5-0 at 6:35 p.m.

Respectively submitted

Kathleen Magoon

Recording Secretary

Denise Roy-Palmer, Vice Chairman