

Town of Farmington  
Economic Development Committee Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, November 12, 2019

**Committee Members Present:** Chairman Angela Hardin, Vice Chairman Denise Roy-Palmer, Secretary Sharon McKenny, Selectmen's Rep. Dave Connolly, Chad York

**Committee Members Absent:** Planning Board Rep. Stephen Henry-excused, Randy Orvis

**Others Present:** SBA Economic Development Specialist Miguel Moralez, Jr., 3 residents

**1). Call to Order:**

Chairman Hardin called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

**2). Pledge of Allegiance:**

All present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3). Small Business Administration Presentation:**

Chairman Hardin introduced Miguel Moralez from the U. S. Small Business Administration. Mr. Moralez said that his job is as an Economic Development Specialist and a Veteran's Business Development Officer and he deals with people thinking of starting a business as well as those people thinking of expanding an existing business and that he covers all of NH. He said that after World War II people returning from the war wanted to start businesses and there weren't any protections for small businesses so in 1953 the SBA was created to help educate them and to grow and protect those businesses.

Mr. Moralez's slide presentation included:

**The SBA Resource Partner Network** – (SBA logo) approved and funded by the SBA; 1,400+ partner offices nationwide; find local resource partners near you at [SBA.gov/local-assistance](http://SBA.gov/local-assistance). Mr. Moralez said the SBA works to help small business start, grow, expand and recover. The SBA has an office in every state and works with most lending institutions to guarantee a portion of a loan to that lender he said.

**Which Resource Partners are Right for You?** – **SCORE** (Service Corps of Retired Executives), 215 Commerce Way, Suite 420, Portsmouth, NH (phone 603-433-0575) provides mentorship and advice from business executives and free online workshops and webinars.

Mr. Moralez said there are 6 chapters located throughout the state and that a lot of the advisors are still in business. He said if someone was planning on starting a particular business such as a restaurant he would put them in touch with someone in the restaurant business. He said if the business owner is looking for help with marketing/advertising advice they can also help with that and the services are free and confidential for the lifetime of the business. Some of the chapters charge a small fee to attend their workshops but they are always free at the Portsmouth chapter thanks to donations from the local lending institutions.

He said SCORE also has online counseling with counselors available 24 hours a day.

**Small Business Development Centers** offers aspiring entrepreneurs or small business owners free business consulting and low cost training on crucial topics at [www.nhsbdc.org](http://www.nhsbdc.org).

Mr. Moralez said SBDC has 12 locations in NH and they also offer free and confidential assistance for the life of the business and can assist on a more technical level and help with business plans. The website has an online course on starting a business in NH including where to register your business name and where to get an Employer Identification Number he said. He said that having a business plan is very important and every business should have one even if you have been in business for 10 years without one and they can help you with this.

**Women's Business Center- Center for Women & Enterprise**, 30 Temple Street, Suite 610, Nashua, NH (Phone 603-318-7580) provides comprehensive training and counseling on a variety of topics in several languages and business advice.

Mr. Moralez said this 2 woman group covers the whole state and offers several workshops most of which are free and their services are not restricted to women only.

He said current/potential business owners can use another of the resources if they don't like the answers they got from one of them. Your information is always confidential and if one of the resources wants to bring in another resource they must get your permission first he said.

**VBOC – Veteran's Business Outreach Centers**, 30 Temple Street, Suite 610, Nashua, NH (phone (844) 404-2171, [www.cweonline.org/vboc](http://www.cweonline.org/vboc) - provides US military veterans or military spouses with counseling, transition assistance, training, advice and resource referrals.

Mr. Moralez said Director Marco Capaldi offers free one-on-one counseling and mentoring for veterans and their spouses and is based in Rhode Island but covers the New England area. He said that he is a Veterans Business Development Officer for NH (SBA NH District Office, 55 Pleasant Street, Suite 3101, Concord, NH, phone 603-225-1601, [miguel.moralez@sba.gov](mailto:miguel.moralez@sba.gov)) so he and Mr. Capaldi work closely with each other.

He then asked if there were any questions on the resource partners.

There were no questions from the committee or the audience members.

**Need Access to Capital? The SBA Can Help** – Mr. Moralez said many look at the SBA just for financing and don't realize they have other programs available.

**Need a Business Loan to Start, Grow or Expand?** – The SBA works with approved lenders to offer microloans and SBA backed loans with competitive terms, lower down payments, flexible overhead requirements, counseling and application assistance.

Mr. Moralez said the SBA guarantees from 50% to 90% of loan to the lender and that loans backed at the 90% level are primarily for businesses that export their goods or services. He said the first thing the lender will do is check your credit score and what kind of collateral you have. Every lender has their own criteria before they even look at the SBA. If everything goes well the lender will draw up the loan and if a back up is needed they contact the SBA and we offer them a guarantee for a portion of the loan he said.

He said that microloans go up to \$50,000 and if the borrower needs a small loan program the

SBA can help with that. We deal with Accion USA and more information about them is available on their website he said.

**How Can a SBA backed Loan Help You?** – Launch, grow or repair a start-up, start or purchase a small business, access revolving credit or working capital for day-to-day expenses, purchase, renovate or expand facilities, purchase inventory, equipment or machinery, purchase land or real estate, export products.

Mr. Morales again emphasized the importance of having a business plan and that you can't just walk into any lending institute and think you are going to get a loan right off the bat. You better have experience, collateral and check your credit score and it is very important to have that information he said.

He said they deal with land and real estate only for commercial uses and don't look at regular real estate as a business. But if a developer is in need of heavy equipment, etc. we can help that developer he said.

Mr. Morales said they deal with exporting quite a bit, working capital and lines of credit but they have not seen much work with start-ups. Most lenders want to see the business in operation for about a year before agreeing to a loan because of the risk in taking on a new business owner he said.

**Increase Your Chances of Securing a Loan** – Lenders want to know they're making a smart choice by giving you a loan. Your local SBA Resource Partners can help you develop your business plan, expense sheets, financial statements and financial projections.

Mr. Morales urged viewers to utilize their resource partners. He said SCORE would ask the business owner to develop their business plan on their own and then bring it in to them to review and they will act like a lender and tell you what they like/don't like about the plan and any changes that are needed.

He said that a lot of the lenders want to see that you have worked with one of the resources because they will know our resource partners and that you have done your research and have a great business plan. Some of the SCORE counselors and mentors will actually go with you to the lender he said.

Mr. Morales then asked the 3 unidentified residents present what type of businesses they were looking to start.

A man and woman sitting together said they planned to open a coffee shop as did the woman sitting a few seats away.

Mr. Morales asked if there are any other coffee shops in town.

The woman alone said there are a Honey Dew Donuts and an Aroma Joe's in town. She said she wants to locate her business in the middle of town and that she planned to include baked goods on the menu along with the coffee and to sell hot beverages and warm cookies on the sidewalk during public events such as during the Christmas tree lighting.

Mr. Morales complimented her for thinking out of the box and what she is going to do

differently as there is always competition. He said word of mouth and bringing the community in is important as they will spread the word to their friends and relatives about the great coffee shop in town.

He advised all potential business owners that if they plan to have partners in their businesses to make sure they have a Partner's Agreement and to always have an attorney. He said the SBA has 140 workshops online for more information on these issues.

Mr. Moralez then asked the man and woman sitting together what type of restaurant they were planning to open.

The man replied that they also planned to open a coffee shop.

Mr. Moralez said they will need to think outside the box and decide who is going to do what. He said it is important for them to do their market research and added that they may be able to help each other out when it comes to events in town.

He said another resource is city and county economic development depts. and Planning Boards and to check with them to see what kinds of programs they may have. Starting a business is very scary and you might want to step back and make sure you have everything in order before you take that leap he said.

**Lender Match:** 1). Describe Your Needs; 2). Interested Lenders Reply within 2 days; 3).Talk to Lenders; 4).Apply for a Loan.

Mr. Moralez said it is free to submit information into the Lenders Match system and applicants should receive an e-mail reply or phone call from 3-4 lenders interested in what you're planning to do. Some of the lenders may not want to work with a retail business, others don't want to work with a restaurant and their expectations will be different he said.

**Are You Ready to Consider Federal Contracting?** – The world's largest customer buying all kinds of products & services. They are required by law to provide contract opportunities to small businesses. Evaluate your readiness & learn more by visiting [SBA.gov/contracting](https://www.sba.gov/contracting).

Mr. Moralez said the federal government is the biggest purchaser in the U. S. and they buy anything and everything. In fiscal year 2018 \$2.7 billion worth of federal government contracting was done with small businesses in NH alone including veteran owned, services supplied to veterans and woman owned businesses he said.

He said the federal government has set a goal that 23% of its contracts will be made with small businesses. This year the SBA will hold the heads of each agency responsible for meeting the goal and if they don't they will receive a letter from the SBA stating they are not meeting the goals for veteran owned, women owned and minority owned businesses he said.

**The SBA Can Help You Evaluate Your Readiness** – Federal contracting can represent a very profitable market for your business but it can also be extremely complex to get started and thrive. The SBA can help you determine if your business is ready for federal contracting by assessing your marketability, structure and experience, systems and capacity and ability to find contracts.

Mr. Morales said that no one is guaranteed to get a federal contract but there is a free system that deals with federal, state and local contracts which is basically free advertising for your business and could help a small business owner obtain a government contract.

**Qualify for Federal Contracts with Certifications** – The SBA works with federal agencies to award at least 23% of all prime government contracting dollars each year to small businesses that are certified with the SBA's contracting programs which include the 8(a) Business Development Program, Historically Underutilized Business Zones (HUB Zone Program), Women-Owned Small Business (WOSB Program) and the Service-Disabled Veteran Owned Program. Mr. Morales said small business owners can get certified at [certify.SBA.gov](http://certify.SBA.gov) and there they will find a questionnaire which will tell them if they are eligible for these programs.

**Who Can Help?** – If you are looking to expand with government contracting PTAC's (Procurement Technical Assistance Centers) can help. Determine if your business is ready for federal contracting. Help you register in the proper places to get involved in the government marketplace. See if you are eligible for certifications at NH Procurement Technical Assistance Center, 1 Eagle Square, Concord, NH 03301 (phone 603-271-7581) [www.nheconomy.com/sell-to-the-government](http://www.nheconomy.com/sell-to-the-government).

**Interested in International Trade or Exporting?** - Nearly 96% of consumers live outside the U.S.; Two-thirds of the world's purchasing power is in foreign countries. Evaluate your readiness & learn more by visiting [SBA.gov/exporting](http://SBA.gov/exporting).

Mr. Morales said if one of the coffee shop owners wanted to sell muffins in Canada they would be exporting products and that the SBA deals with exporting quite a bit.

He said he has received a lot of phone calls/e-mails asking about grants for small businesses and that he has never seen any grants for a start-up business. He asked anyone who does find one to let him know about it. There are so many scams out there so just be real careful he said.

**Disasters Happen. Prepare Your Business.** – An estimated 25% of businesses don't reopen after a major disaster. Businesses can protect themselves with an up-to-date plan of action. Prepare your business & learn more by visiting [SBA.gov/prepare](http://SBA.gov/prepare).

Mr. Morales said their disaster program runs 24 hours a day/7 days a week and there are 6 locations throughout the U.S. He said this is the only direct loan program they have and the President or the SBA Office Administrator has to declare a disaster before it can take effect. We also help cities and towns with road/bridge washouts with this program he said.

He advised people to take as many pictures as possible before cleaning up after a disaster so there is some proof of the damage from the disaster available. He said they also encourage business owners to keep electronic and cloud-based records of their business as paper records may be destroyed during a disaster. There are workshops available on how to protect your employees and your business he said.

**SBA Disaster Assistance Loans** – Each year the SBA provides billions of dollars in low interest long term disaster loans to help small businesses, homeowners and renters recover from

declared disasters. Loans may cover real estate, personal property, economic injury, machinery and equipment, inventory and military personnel called to active duty.

Mr. Moralez said if a veteran who owns a business is called up they can help keep their business operational while in active duty but the loan can't be used for other purposes such as repayment of debt. We have had one such case in Vermont but have yet to have in NH he said. Chairman Hardin speculated that is because people don't know the program is available.

Mr. Moralez said since 2013 he has held a free 2 day program at the Pease International Tradeport called "Boots to Business" for veterans, their spouses and their children over age 18 which includes representatives from their resource partners and a law firm, an introduction to starting a business, how to conduct market research, dealing with competition, business plans and financial statements.

He said that social media is a great tool for business and their resource partners hold workshops on how to take advantage of social media sites like Face book, Twitter, etc.

There were no questions from the committee or the audience.

Mr. Moralez said anyone wanting a copy of this presentation can get one by e-mailing him.

**Recess** – Chairman Hardin called for a short recess to allow Mr. Moralez to pack up his materials at 6:35 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 6:50 p.m.

Chairman Hardin thanked Mr. Moralez for his presentation about the SBA.

#### **4). Public Comment: None**

#### **5). Review of Minutes:**

October 8, 2019 – No errors or omissions

**Motion:** (Connolly, second Roy-Palmer) to accept the minutes as written passed 2-0-3 (Hardin, Roy-Palmer in favor; McKenny, Connolly, York-abstained).

#### **6). Any Other Business before the Committee:**

Mr. Connolly said he contacted 3 local sign companies regarding the signs for the Adopt-a-Spot Program locations. He said that he received only 1 response and got a handwritten price quote from this individual.

He said a 12" x 18" sign would cost \$40 each which includes the sign and the lettering. The committee would have to decide if they want the signs to have the Town logo on them, a flat white background with green reflective lettering, a white reflective background with flat green lettering or a sign with both reflective background and reflective lettering.

Mr. Connolly said the committee would not have to purchase all of the signs needed at the same time and if they bought one sign now and the next one in 3-4 weeks from now the cost would still be \$40 each.

Mrs. Hardin asked if the price would be the same regardless of the lettering/background they choose.

Mr. Connolly said the price is \$40 regardless of the reflective backing or lettering they choose.

Mrs. Hardin asked what would add to the \$40 price.

Mr. Connolly said adding the Town logo would not increase the cost and the only increase would be for a bigger sign which would be adjusted according to the size of the sign.

Mrs. Hardin said a bigger sign might be needed in certain areas such as on Route 11 where a 12" x 18" sign would not be seen.

Mr. Connolly said the sign maker could give them a specific quote for a bigger sign at that time.

Mrs. Hardin asked if the sign company was able to produce anything smaller than 12" x 18".

Mr. Connolly said he was not sure if he can make anything smaller.

He said he also researched signs online and found that signs there start at \$65 each and that you have to purchase multiple signs at one time just to get it discounted to \$63 each.

Mrs. Hardin asked if the sign maker included the number of characters that would fit on a sign.

Mr. Connolly said it would depend on the font size of the lettering.

**Motion:** (Roy-Palmer, second York) to have the background for the signs be reflective white with flat dark green lettering passed unanimously.

Mrs. Hardin said she has received the Adopt-a-Spot paperwork from the Woman's Club, the Farmington Democrats and Stuart Pease for the existing adopted locations. She said she would work out a filing system with the Administrative Assistant for the paperwork and suggested they invite any new applicants to meet with the committee over the winter to discuss their plans for their spot and what they want on their signs.

Mr. Connolly said the committee has not discussed installation of the signs and noted that this price does not include posts.

Mrs. Hardin said she would contact the existing adopters to find out what they want on their signs and the Town Administrator and the DPW Director to ask about installation of the signs.

**7). Next Meeting:** Tuesday, December 10, 2019 at 6 p.m.

**8). Adjournment:**

**Motion:** (Roy-Palmer, second Connolly) to adjourn the meeting passed 5-0 at 7 p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Kathleen Magoon

Recording Secretary

---

Angela Hardin, Chairman