

Economic Development Citizens Advisory Committee (EDCAC)

Minutes for the April 13, 2016, Committee Meeting

Held in the Merrimack Memorial Room

Merrimack, NH

Committee Members

Present: Susan B. Lee, David Shaw, Douglas C. Dowell, Ken Asai, Joshua Schiavone

Absent: None

Excused: None

Town Council Representative: None

Guest: Dawn Shepherd, President Merrimack Chamber of Commerce

Public attendees: None

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 p.m., by Susan B. Lee, chairperson.

2. Announcements

No announcements were made.

3. Business

Guest: Dawn Shepherd, President, Merrimack Chamber of Commerce, attended the meeting. Dawn has been president of the Chamber for eight months. Susan invited Dawn to join EDCAC as a member and Dawn indicated her intention to do so.

a. Discussion on a new business survey (Led by Joshua Schiavone)

Joshua indicated his interest in producing a new survey for business located in Merrimack, the objective of which would be to gather information to be used in a manner to retain local businesses and to aid in their growth. Susan handed-out a similar survey that was used for this purpose in 2009. The committee discussed methods of distributing this survey; among methods discussed were email, handouts at the 2016 Fall Festival, and posting on the Town website, with publicity through an announcement at the Town Council.

Susan suggested reviewing various survey websites for ideas on survey systems to employ; Ken suggested that having a relatively narrow scope of topics within the survey may be most effective. Susan suggested that Joshua could glean data about the public use of the Town website through this process.

Joshua would be the lead person for managing this survey. Susan requested committee members to generate ideas for the survey and provide these to her, for forwarding to Joshua. Joshua will use the EDCAC gmail address for emailing the survey. Doug moved that we proceed with the survey as discussed, and David seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0-0.

b. Update business profiles

David has visited two businesses, the Common Man and Big Kahuna restaurants. Susan indicated that she would like us to have more profiles posted on the Town website. The committee reviewed the rules that any copy posted on the website must be informational in nature and not promotional. Doug asked whether the company being profiled would have editorial approval of the content. Susan stated that she will discuss this question with Tim Thompson. In seeking out businesses to profile, we are generally seeking the characteristics of uniqueness and longevity in the town of Merrimack.

c. Update Community Development Guide and FAQs

Susan has reached out to Jillian Harris, Planning and Zoning Administrator, regarding the status of the Community Development Guide to see if she needed any help. Jillian is still working on the guide and is implementing certain recommendations made by EDCAC previously. The guide may be available in time for the committee's June 8, 2016, meeting.

d. Other topics that may be raised during meeting

Susan has spoken with Jack Donovan, Executive Director of the New Hampshire Business Finance Authority, regarding New Market Tax Credits, and believes that Merrimack is probably not a good candidate for this program. She also spoke with Richard Jennings, Sr. VP of Mascoma Savings Bank. She will be speaking again to Mr. Jennings and will share information regarding this contact with EDCAC when possible.

Joshua related concerns he encountered at certain businesses regarding the tolls on Merrimack accesses on the Everett Turnpike. The committee briefly discussed the history of these tolls. Joshua also asked about plans for the old Shaw's plaza on DW Highway. It is generally believed that the old Shaw's location will not be used for a go-cart facility.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - 1/16/2016

Certain changes to the draft minutes from the January 16, 2016, EDCAC meeting were discussed and agreed on. David moved that the minutes as amended should be approved and Susan seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0-2, with Ken and Joshua abstaining.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

No members of the public attended the meeting.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Doug and seconded by David. The motion passed 5-0-0 and the meeting was adjourned at 8:16 p.m.

These minutes are respectfully submitted to the Committee by Douglas Dowell – Secretary.

These minutes were approved as written on 06.08.2016, by a vote of 5-0-1 (with Dawn abstaining) on a motion made by David and seconded by Dawn.