

Approved: December 5, 2013

Posted: December 6, 2013



Town Council Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 21 2013, at 7:00 PM, in the Matthew Thornton Room

Chairman Rothhaus called the meeting of the Town Council to order at 7:00 p.m. Present at the meeting were Councilor Boyd, Councilor Dwyer, Councilor Harrington, Councilor Mahon, Town Manager Eileen Cabanel, and Finance Director Paul Micali. Vice Chairman Yakuboff and Councilor Koenig were excused.

Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Rothhaus lead in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements

Regular meetings of the Town Council will be conducted on Thursday, December 5th and December 19th at 7:00 p.m. in the Matthew Thornton Room.

The Police Department would like to remind the public that the Winter Parking Ban took effect on November 15th and will go through April 15th from 11:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. Please keep your cars off the roads during this time and during all snow emergencies.

In order to ensure a safe and enjoyable shopping experience for residents and visitors to the Merrimack Premium Outlets, the Police Department has coordinated with Merrimack Premium Outlets to provide for enhanced traffic control along Industrial Drive and Premium Outlets Boulevard for the Black Friday event beginning Thursday, November 28th and throughout the weekend. Police Officers will also be on foot patrol periodically throughout the mall during that weekend as well. Town Manager Cabanel noted this is a special detail the cost of which is covered by the mall.

The Parks and Recreation Department is still accepting registrations for Santa Calling. This program is open to the children of Merrimack, ages pre-school through second grade. Calls will be made to the children on the evenings of December 17th and 18th between 6:00 and 8:00 p.m. Registration forms are available at Town Hall, the Public Library, and on the website, www.merrimacknh.gov.

The Public Works and Police Departments are holding a food drive through January 1st to support the local food pantries. Donations may be made at both the Highway Garage at 80 Turkey Hill Road and the Police Station at 31 Baboosic Lake Road. The Police Department is still accepting applications for the Citizen Academy, which starts on January 22nd.

The Friends of the Merrimack Dog Park are holding a fundraiser on Sunday, November 24th from 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. at Pets Choice in Connell's Plaza. Sea-Jay Photography will be doing winter-themed photo shoots for pets and their families. It will be \$10 per print with 25% of proceeds being donated to the Dog Park.

Comments from the Press and Public

Dennis Farrell, 24 Whittier Road

Remarked it has been about a year and a half since the opening of the Merrimack Premium Outlets (MPO), and a problem that has come about is patrons of the MPO becoming lost and ending up driving around his neighborhood. Certain GPS devices and mapping software direct motorists down Englewood Drive to the dead end. Mr. Farrell remarked people have actually rung his doorbell asking for directions.

He questioned why signage has not been put up. He stated his understanding the State is responsible for signage on the F.E. Everett Turnpike. He has visited the management office of the mall a few times in the past year and a half inquiring about signage, and has been informed they are working with the State; however, the State has changed their vendor for signs, etc. He suggested it would be helpful if the Town placed signage on Continental Boulevard.

Town Manager Cabanel noted there is one sign placed on Continental Boulevard. Councilor Harrington stated her belief motorists become lost when coming off of Exit 11. When asked, Town Manager Cabanel stated the State has not put signage in place. She had been assured by the former Governor this issue had been worked through and a pilot program was in place. However, once it reached the Executive Council (within the last month) the opinion that was rendered was they do not want signage on the highway. She noted the MPO and the Town has been and will continue working on the issue; however, as far as the F.E. Everett Turnpike, it is a dead issue. Councilor Dwyer suggested an A frame sign could be placed (during the holiday season) in the area of Camp Sargent Road and Whittier Road.

Barbara McCormick, 43 Island Drive

Informed the Council of an instance where she had to call 911 and received a bill in excess of \$1,000 for the ambulance. She questioned why her taxes would not cover such an expense. Chairman Rothhaus stated there to be a fee structure for the service, and suggested she contact the Town Manager's Office to be advised of the schedule. Ms. McCormick stated she has tried contacting the Town, has been in contact with her insurance company, and the ambulance service. Each entity has suggested she contact another. Director Micali provided Ms. McCormick with his contact information, and suggested she contact him directly to see if he could be of assistance.

Recognitions, Resignations and Retirements - None

Appointments

1. New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development Commissioner Jeff Rose

Submitted by Town Councilor William W. Boyd, III

NH Dept. of Resources & Economic Development Commissioner Jeff Rose to introduce himself and discuss with the Town Council the economic significance of Merrimack from a regional and statewide perspective.

Councilor Boyd welcomed the New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development (DRED) Commissioner, Jeff Rose. Mr. Rose has been personally known to him for the past 10-15 years, and he asked him if he could present to the Council to coincide with the Annual Review with the

Economic Development Citizen Advisory Committee. He requested Mr. Rose discuss how Merrimack fits in economically from a regional perspective and statewide.

Commissioner Rose remarked he was raised in Merrimack and is thrilled to have the opportunity to be back. He noted he has served in his current role for the past 7 months or so. Prior to that, he spent 9 years working at BAE Systems. Before that he spent 8 years working for various members of Congress, 7 of which were in New Hampshire.

Commissioner Rose stated there to be four different divisions within DRED; Forest & Lands, Parks & Recreation, Travel & Tourism, and Economic Development, which includes natural resources.

New Hampshire is the second most forested state in the country (84% of state forested). Just less than 80% of that land is privately owned, and as such DRED works very closely with a lot of environmental organizations and private landowners promoting sustainable forestry, Best Management Practices (BMPs), and trying to ensure healthy and diverse stands of timber. Within that division they also manage forest health; help with forest fire protection.

Within the Parks & Recreation Division are all of the state parks, historic sites, and recreation lands. There are 92 properties ranging from campgrounds to Hampton Beach to the top of Mount Washington. Management of the properties is self-funded (through user fees). Some capital funding is provided such as that used to construct the new half shell at Hampton Beach. The division manages about 6,000 miles of snowmobile trails and 1,000 miles of ATV trails on behalf of the State. They actively manage about 200,000 acres with forestry and conservation easements on about 250,000 acres.

Travel & Tourism is where they are provided the opportunity to talk about all of the great assets and attributes the State has; why people should come to the State and enjoy those natural resources. They are about a year and a half into a new marketing campaign; the Live Free and campaign, e.g., Live Free and Camp, Live Free and Swim, etc. They are working to help build off of the State's motto in terms of the undercurrent of the individual freedoms and opportunities we like to promote. The campaign has been very successful thus far. About 90% of the travel and tourism efforts are out of state and may not be visible. Within that division is the management of the State's welcome centers.

The Economic Development Division has been broken up into a few pieces. The Job Retention Team works closely with the different businesses already in the State. Gary Chabot represents this part of the State. Commissioner Rose spoke of the importance of having a relationship with the businesses to ensure they know how much their presence in the State is appreciated, but also to get a feel for what issues might be impacting them, what might be done differently at the State level to try to be of assistance, etc. There are also job recruiters (team of 2) that work with businesses considering relocating to or expanding within the State. They focus primarily on the New England states; however, do a good deal in Canada as well. There is a Procurement Technical Assistance Team, which works with State businesses that are trying to do work at the public sector. Whether that is working at the municipal, State, or Federal level, they provide assistance in navigating through and identifying different opportunities that fit within their profile of services they can provide.

There is an International Trade Resource Center, which is a division that works closely with New Hampshire businesses looking to export their products. Training programs are provided to assist with

understanding the rules and high regulations associated with doing international trade (exports are up between 16-18% for the year).

The Workforce Opportunity Council works with businesses that are perhaps going through a reduction in force. In such instances, a rapid response team is deployed to work with the employers as well as the employees to ease the transition to the extent possible. Assistance through job training is provided to dislocated employees. Also within the workforce opportunity is the job training fund, which provides direct grants on a 50/50 cost share with businesses to help make sure the workforce they do have has the skills necessary to help meet the needs of their customers. Commissioner Rose noted some of the local companies that have taken advantage of those grants are Nanocomp, Kollsman, and GT Solar. That division also communicates a great deal with the telecommunications industry and works on broadband rollout throughout the State.

Commissioner Rose stated his belief things have been moving in a very positive direction. They have seen good activity over the last 3-4 months. The State had a nice fall season with outstanding travel & tourism numbers. He spoke of a few days where record numbers were reached at the tolls. Rooms & Meals were up about 4-5% last year and through the first 4 months of this year, about the same; 5% over budget plan. The overall business activity in the State has been very healthy, which is important given approximately 24% of the State budget is based off of business tax revenue (highest percentage of any state in the country). Business revenues were up for the last fiscal year and during the first quarter of this fiscal year (4-6% range).

Commissioner Rose commented one of the biggest surprises he has found since taking his position is how important the work that takes place at the local level is to the overall health of the State's economy. There are things that cannot be controlled at the Federal level, but he sees it as the State's job to ensure they provide that healthy backdrop and environment for which businesses want to come to the State. That is still just the backdrop by which the towns need to be able to execute to what their vision is and the roles and the importance of what takes place at the local level through the planning and zoning boards, conservation commissions, etc., which determine how the community will look. How well a community thinks those things through has a real impact on the overall ability to develop and grow as a State and a regional economy. Commissioner Rose remarked some of the biggest challenges to bringing in a company are working at that local level, whether it is relative to zoning, signage or working with local landlords. That business friendliness that can be provided at the State level and at the municipal level are absolutely critical to the overall health and vitality of being able to activity recruit and grow the State's economy. DRED is excited about some initiatives taking place in Merrimack such as working closely with the outlet mall in terms of promotional opportunities.

Councilor Boyd questioned whether additional data is available that shows the industries that are coming to Merrimack, e.g., Nanocomp, Merrimack Premium Outlets (MPO), Atrium Medical, etc. are driving additional development opportunities in other parts of the region. Commissioner Rose remarked he is not aware of information being available which is broken down by town in terms of where the different business tax revenues come from; however, commented nothing breeds success like success. The fact we have some really good core anchor businesses here is important in developing that cluster mentality where businesses like to be near other businesses.

Councilor Boyd spoke of a recent article in newsprint indicating the Business Industry Association (BIA) put together an economic development plan that OEP had, for whatever reason, not followed through on. Yesterday Representative John Cebrowski from Bedford stated a desire to bring that particular planning aspect back under the auspices of DRED. He questioned whether the Commissioner has given any thought to how that was handled in the past and what is being proposed. Commissioner Rose responded the BIA unrolled their strategic economic plan, which he has had an opportunity to review. The BIA plays a very important role in being a part of that dialogue and trying to help maintain that healthy business environment. He stated his opinion it was a very thoughtful and deliberate proposal and process they went through, and it is great to baseline and document a lot of that stuff. It is their plan and it is a membership based organization, but there is a lot of really good information. He stated he looks forward to working with them and talking with them about some of those elements.

With regard to Representative Cebrowski, Commissioner Rose stated he has had good conversations with him during his tenure. He believes him to be very well intentioned, and the legislation he is looking to introduce has some real merits. It is just at the beginning of that process. He stated his belief it is important to have a roadmap to help get to where you want to go. A lot of these things are done intuitively and instinctively in this State, but it is always good to document and have a baseline by which you are trying to measure to ensure focus remains on what you are trying to achieve. He remarked, if the legislation moves through the Legislature, he will welcome the opportunity to work on it.

Councilor Boyd noted the Commissioner spoke of outreach that has occurred in Canada and how Canada is looking to come slightly south of the border and into New Hampshire. He commented when he moved into the State back in the late '90s, infrastructure, specifically broadband, was almost non-existent up in the North Country. He is pleased to hear of those opportunities beginning to happen north of the notches. He questioned whether the neighbor to the north is finally starting to recognize we are serious about putting infrastructure up there and taking advantage of that. Commissioner Rose stated that trend is being seen although he would like to see it even more. He agreed infrastructure is critical and broadband is part of that infrastructure. He remarked when speaking with different recruiters that are looking at New Hampshire they ask very consistent questions. First and foremost they ask about the labor force; skilled labor, and availability of workers. The second thing they ask about is the cost of doing business and the business friendliness, and then the third thing they usually ask about is infrastructure. That can be roads and bridges, rail, airports, pipelines, etc.

Speaking with regard to the Northern Pass, Councilor Dwyer remarked if they want that power to go through to the south, he cannot understand why the Economic Development Office has not been more proactive in negotiation and screaming at the top of their lungs to say bury it or you won't get it through. He stated his belief that the office has either been silent or compliant in letting it go. Commissioner Rose stated the department has been silent and are required by law to be silent on that. Councilor Dwyer questioned if legislation could be introduced to change the law. Commissioner Rose responded there is a process for that to happen and there are actually some reviews of that. He explained power projects have to be approved through what is called the Site Evaluation Committee. He is one of the 12 people that serve on that committee as are two of his directors. As a result of that, they are required to be neutral. However, there is no proposal before them so they have nothing to really evaluate that on.

He stated he knows it is an important issue and there is a public discourse and debate that takes place around that, but as members of that Site Evaluation Committee it is their responsibility, if something

does come before them, to view it with a very neutral and objective perspective to do what is in the best interest of the State.

Councilor Dwyer noted DRED is promoting airport business at Pease at the detriment of Manchester. He commented the common sense factor seems to be missing; Manchester has lost 2 million passengers in the last 7 years and we want to split that traffic even more. He stated the economic picture of an airline out of Pease did not work when attempted previously, and he is of the belief it cannot work now. He added any success Pease would have would be at the expense of Manchester. He remarked there will be a breaking point for Manchester where if more flights and passengers are lost there will come a point where it is no longer viable.

Commissioner Rose stated he is in regular conversations with the Airport Director, Mark Brewer. They work in very close alignment with the Manchester airport. There has not been passenger activity at Pease for some 2-4 years. There is an airline that just opened up within the last month or so that is starting to introduce passenger flights. He is unsure what their schedule is like, but would not anticipate it to be something that is in immediate competition with Manchester. The Manchester airport is a gateway into the state and there are various partnerships in place and a few additional partnerships currently being worked on with the Manchester airport that hopefully will roll out in the first two quarters of next year.

He spoke of the new airport access road and activity taking place along the potential of the Pattengill Road Development in Londonderry, which has the ability to open up 1,000 acres of land for development. There is some optimism around what that potential could do, and in fact, some of the studies suggest that piece of property could have the same impact, from an economic development perspective, in this region of the State, as Pease did out in the Seacoast.

The Manchester airport is certainly down from its height 4-5 years ago, but the passenger numbers are still strong, and the cargo activity there is very strong right now. Councilor Mahon remarked he serves as the Chair of the Rail Transit Authority and Director Brewer sits on that board. They have had a good deal of discussion about what is going on, and Director Brewer would tell you he is at the mercy of the airlines and their business models. That is the biggest impact on why there are fewer flights in and out of Manchester. There is a lot of consolidation in those models to maximize profits. That is one of those bigger issues there is not much control over.

Chairman Rothhaus questioned whether the State corporate tax structure is favorable to business. Commissioner Rose stated it is an advantage. The latest U.S. Tax Foundation Report either had the State at 7th or 8th, which has been fairly consistent. In all honestly, we are actually much more favorable than that. He has spoken with those who put the study together and discussed the 10-12 different measures evaluated in determining the overall ranking, and the one area the State gets dinged on is the business profits tax rate, which is 8.5% (high). The State has a business enterprise tax, which is basically a payroll tax. That tax is deducted against the business profits tax. New Hampshire is the only state that has that type of a structure, and most of those formulas don't know how to capture that deduction. We always get dinged a little higher than we truly are as a result of that. He reiterated it does work very well. We don't have a sales tax, an income tax, current use tax, inventory tax, internet tax, etc. If you look at the different taxes, we usually come out pretty favorably.

Chairman Rothhaus questioned how the State compares with regard to utility costs. Commissioner Rose responded the costs are higher in the Northeast and in New Hampshire than a lot of other areas. That is a tough dynamic that does have an impact. Reliable and affordable energy is really important particularly from a manufacturing perspective.

Councilor Boyd spoke of the airport access road, and remarked when traveling north on the D.W. Highway you have the Town of Bedford with performance based zoning, Merrimack is wrapping up its Master Plan and has put in some pieces on the south end, and then there is Pattengill Road. He commented he does not get the feeling Londonderry has the political will to do something there. He is of the opinion if they do something that it will be the linchpin that will help out Merrimack and Bedford. He questioned whether DRED has engaged in conversations with Londonderry regarding building around the airport access road to put the pieces in place so that once it is there it will begin to flourish. Commissioner Rose responded they have had several discussions. They have worked closely with town officials. Within the past 6 weeks or so Londonderry passed a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District, which is an important step forward in trying to help with the development.

Tim Thompson, Director, Community Development, commented Londonderry did adopt a Resolution to establish the TIF District in the last month. They have not set up the financing portion of that in terms of the bond for the construction of the roadway and infrastructure. It is roughly a \$12.3 million bond that would be for the 2 lane section and the sewer infrastructure for the roadway to open up the 1,000 acres. That is where the political will question will really come into play as that will need to gain approval at town meeting (Londonderry is an SB2 town). Director Thompson stated that piece would assist Merrimack's efforts significantly. It is probably the single largest developable industrial land in southern New Hampshire.

From a zoning perspective, that whole area south of the airport is in what Londonderry calls their gateway business district, and they also have the ability to do planned unit development, which essentially would allow the property owners, if they have more than 100 acres, to go in front of their Planning Board and master plan the development, and essentially create their own zoning for that entire area so that there is flexibility. That is the same process the Woodmont project in Londonderry is undergoing.

When asked where advertising is targeted Commissioner Rose responded the greater Boston market is the top demographic, but they are doing a lot more now in New York and Philadelphia. Canada is a primary market as are some other border communities. What they find, particularly with New York and Philadelphia is a travel destination, which works out well because they tend to stay longer, spend more, and are less weather dependent. They have also been doing more overseas marketing; Europe and Japan. They do that primarily as New England as a regional destination. Discover New England is the entity that helps with that. They have seen an uptake in tourism from overseas. They do print ads, some radio, some television, but most is online.

The Council recessed at 8:09 p.m.

The Council reconvened at 8:14 p.m.

2. Annual Review with the Economic Development Citizen Advisory Committee / NH Business Incentives – RSA 162-K

Submitted by EDCAC Chair Susan Lee

Per Town of Merrimack Charter Section 6-6, at least annually, there should be an annual review with the Economic Development Citizen Advisory Committee. This agenda item is to highlight the committee's significant actions, current projects, anticipated actions, and to raise any concerns the Council should know or could act on. The Committee will be presenting the Town Council with the details of RSA 162-K: Tax Increment Financing.

Susan Lee, Chairman, Economic Development Citizen Advisory Committee (EDCAC), informed the Council the bulk of the Committee's time over the past year has been spent preparing the presentation on the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District. The Committee, at the request of the Council, began looking into RSA 79-F, Taxation of Farm Structures and Land under Farm Structures, which is another tax incentive available to towns. The Committee will bring information learned on that RSA in the coming months. The Committee worked with Agricultural Commission, but they have other activities they are pursuing.

A sub-committee has been formed to review new green technologies and programs that are available and how they might benefit the Town and local businesses. One of the activities was attending a local energy solution conference conducted in Tilton last spring. The sub-committee members had the opportunity to meet with a number of people from throughout the region to discuss various ongoing projects and available programs. The sub-committee is putting together a package, which ties in neatly with the 2012 Master Plan. There is a recommendation in the Master Plan that the Town consider forming an energy conservation committee.

Feedback was received from the spring Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) Workshop on Community & Economic Vitality. One of the topics discussed was retention of state graduates.

The Committee has decided it would like to create a recognition award for local businesses, which encompasses more than just the members of the Chamber as there are a lot of businesses that are not members. The Committee is fine tuning how to roll that out. The goal, at the moment, is to try to showcase a section of businesses at the Fall Festival, have voting at that point, and make the award that day.

Several members of the Committee assisted with the set-up of the Fall Festival and were onsite during the day with various activities to help keep things running smoothly. The Committee welcomed a new member this past year; a young man who attended high school in town and is settling here. This gentleman stepped up when there was a need for a co-organizer for the Fall Festival.

Last month the Committee heard from Director Thompson regarding his plans moving forward on a stand-alone economic development website, which will present the Town from a business standpoint.

Ms. Lee provided the Council with a PowerPoint presentation on RSA 162-K Municipal Economic Development and Revitalization Districts or Tax Increment Financing (TIF). She explained TIF is a method of financing public improvements with the incremental taxes created either by new construction, expansion, or renovation of property within a defined portion (district) of the community. TIF is a

finance tool for tax-base expansion. Benefits may also come in the form of increased employment, an improved business climate, elimination of unsafe or unsightly areas, community beautification or enhancement. It is neither a tax freeze nor a tax increase: it is a special allocation method for taxes collected on property value increases within the designated TIF District. Both a financing and land development/improvement tool, the TIF process provides a mechanism for local governments and the private sector to develop public-private partnerships to work on promoting economic development.

Ms. Lee noted adopting the RSA in no way forces the Town to use it, but it allows its use should an opportunity come along. Should the Town identify a TIF District (area of town) a plan would be created identifying improvements for that district and an associated finance structure. Upon creation of the district, a base value would be identified for properties within the district. Over the lifespan identified for the TIF, property owners would continue to pay the exact same amount that any other property within the Town pays on its current assessed value; however, taxes collected on the difference between the assessed value and the base value would be utilized to pay for the improvements identified within the plan. At the conclusion of the lifespan of the TIF, all taxes collected for properties within that district revert to the general fund (improved properties/increased values). It was noted a TIF only affects the Town portion of the tax and does not affect the school or county portion of the tax. Director Thompson explained further the majority of New Hampshire TIFs have been bond based meaning the TIF district is established, there is a base value of what the property in the district is assessed at the time the TIF is established, a bond is floated, the Town begins making payments on the bond, and as development begins to occur within the TIF district and the property value increases above the base, those additional tax dollars are used to pay off the principal and interest on the bond. Once the bond is paid off and the TIF ends all of the tax dollars go directly back into the general fund.

Ms. Lee stated there to be very specific types of improvements that TIF Districts can be used for as it is a requirement that they provide a public benefit. The types of improvements are new or upgraded streets and sidewalks, traffic signals, sewer collection and disposal, public water supply, parking, and landscaping and other public improvements.

Should the Council determine to move forward with adopting the RSA, a Public Hearing would be conducted. When a project is identified for which the desire is to create a district around, the Council would designate the geographic boundaries of a TIF District and put in place a financing plan for how the projects will be funded. On the date the district is formed, the Assessor certifies the base value of the district.

The Town would then appoint a District Administrator and Advisory Board for each TIF District. There are no hard and fast rules about the makeup of the board. In most of the examples reviewed, the District Administrator is typically the Community Development Director or whoever is in charge of planning for the Town. It is a requirement for the Town's Annual Report to include a financial report of any and all TIF Districts.

All monies raised within a TIF District must be spent within that same district; however, if there is excess increment over what is needed to service the bond, some of those monies could be allocated to the general fund. TIF dollars must be expended in accordance with the approved plan for the district. The approved plan is prepared and presented by a District Advisory Board and a District Supervisor and approved by a simple majority vote of the Town Council.

Chairman Rothhaus questioned consequences of requiring developers to make infrastructure improvements in one area of Town and identifying a TIF District in another. Ms. Lee remarked a TIF District would only be considered in an instance where the development would not go forward without some public-private partnership. Director Thompson added there would be the need to go through a process of justifying and determining whether or not any particular situation did in fact fit within this scenario and whether or not it were in the Town's best interest to have that public benefit.

Town Manager Cabanel remarked Merrimack's form of government makes a TIF District difficult because the townspeople would need to approve a bond. It would be necessary to explain the intricacies of each district/project and the benefits to be derived in the long-term in order to gain support for bonding.

Ms. Lee stated there to be no limit on the number of TIF districts a community can have, but there are restrictions; no one district can include more than 8% of a community's assessed value or more than 5% of a community's land area. All districts combined cannot exceed 10% of the community's land area or more than 16% of a community's total assessed value.

For the bonded model of a TIF District it is important to have a development project in hand including a development agreement. You don't rely on a single project to drive the increased assessed value. In the savings account model, a project could be identified along with a structured payment. The district could be created and the work done in phases utilizing monies as they accumulate over time. By setting up a district in this manner you can pay for public benefit projects without having to float another bond. In that case, it does not have to be an underutilized business property it can be something that is truly just for the benefit of the residents.

TIF districts only work if the taxable value of the land and property within the district increases. It requires time and thought and perhaps outside professional assistance from the NRPC or regional economic development organizations. Part of the financing for a TIF can include the costs of gaining professional assistance. The creation of a TIF district should only occur when a comprehensive development plan and financial administrative plan have been completed. It is important to be aware of the legality of combining various tax incentives and funding sources within a TIF district.

Examples were given of TIF Districts established in New Hampshire; citing districts utilizing the savings method and those using the bonding method.

In summary, RSA 162-K provides communities with a tool for funding infrastructure improvements that will foster local economic and/or public development resulting in an increase in the overall vitality of a community. EDCAC endorses the adoption of the RSA 162-K Municipal Economic Development and Revitalization Districts program, as an economic development tool for Merrimack without the establishment of a specific TIF District. EDCAC recommends that the Community Development Department in concert with the Town Manager identify any areas in Town where the use of a TIF would potentially promote development deemed beneficial to Merrimack.

Chairman Rothhaus stated his agreement with having the enabling legislation on the books and ready to go. Councilor Mahon stated his presumption it is likely contemplated in the Master Plan that something

like this would be in place. Director Thompson stated he would not recommend anything if it did not have the backing of the Master Plan.

The Council expressed its gratitude for the work performed by the committee. Councilor Boyd stated his desire to place on an agenda, in the near future, an item for the Council's consideration to get the Ordinance on the books.

Ms. Lee questioned whether there is anything the Council would like EDCAC to take on at this point. Town Manager Cabanel noted the Town was informed about a year ago that the entire census tract that covers the D.W. Highway corridor is eligible for New Markets Tax Credits, which can be extremely beneficial to businesses. She suggested that to be an area the EDCAC could review and report back on.

Director Thompson spoke of the RFP being prepared for the stand-alone economic development website, and stated a desire for the RFP evaluation committee to be comprised of a member of EDCAC, a member of the Technology Committee, and hopefully a member of the Council to work alongside him and Director Micali to help with the selection process once proposals are received.

Public Hearing - None

Legislative Updates from State Representatives - None

Town Manager's Report

The new Swap Shop is open to residents and is located in the trailer next to the Transfer Station building. The Shop has been moved from the Recycling Building. A much more brisk exchange of materials between residents is apparent. The Swap Shop will continue to be monitored to determine whether or not it is a successful venture. Any and all feedback from citizens is welcomed.

Work on the replacement of the Manchester Street Bridge that crosses the Pennichuck Reservoir into Nashua is set to begin the first week of December. Manchester Street will be closed on December 2nd and remain closed for the duration of the project. The new bridge is scheduled to open in the spring of 2015.

Tax bills have been mailed. If you have not received your tax bill please contact the Town Clerk's Office.

Councilor Boyd remarked he was at the Transfer Station the previous Saturday, and is very pleased with being able to get into the recycling facility, drop off his materials, and get out. He noted he took the opportunity to pull in, park, and walk into the Swap Shop where he found it to be relatively neat and orderly. He suggested the one thing that should be considered is looking at some type of traffic pattern coming out of the Swap Shop.

Chairman Rothhaus stated his biggest concern to be items that have fees associated with them ending up inside the Swap Shop.

Councilor Boyd spoke of language at the bottom of the stationary, which reads voted #1 in New Hampshire and 43rd in the nation by Money Magazine 2009, and questioned whether the stationary could be updated to read 23rd in the nation by Money Magazine 2013. Director Micali stated that would be done with any new orders of stationary.

Consent Agenda - None

Old Business - None

New Business - None

Minutes

Approve the minutes from the November 7, 2013 Town Council meeting:

The following amendments were offered:

Page 11, Lines 13 and 15; replace “Senator Tony Pellegrino” with “State Representative Tony Pellegrino”

MOTION made by Councilor Mahon and seconded by Councilor Harrington to approve the minutes of the November 7, 2013 Town Council Meeting as amended. **MOTION CARRIED** 5-0-0

Comments from the Press - None

Comments from the Public - None

Comments from the Council

Councilor Boyd congratulated Brandon Snell on another successful blood drive. Brandon collected over 50 pints of blood for the Red Cross, and should be commended for his efforts.

Councilor Boyd reminded the viewing audience on Thanksgiving Day the Merrimack Rotary will conduct their 5K at the High School beginning at 8:00 a.m. Additional information can be found at Merrimack5K.com.

Councilor Boyd wished the members of the community, staff, and his colleagues a Happy Thanksgiving.

Councilor Dwyer congratulated the Merrimack Cardinals Pee Wee football program on their State Championship, and noted the cheerleaders will be heading to Florida.

Councilor Mahon spoke of the activity that took place earlier in the week at the Conservation Commission meeting. The Commission received a presentation from Nanocomp for the renovations they are doing on an additional 32,000 sq. ft. of their facility. They are moving on to the Planning Board with that process. The Commission will be submitting to the Council a request for Emergency Lane designation and gates on South Grater Road. The Commission will be creating a strategic beaver plan

for the Town as a result of ongoing problems. A bridge project near the Beebe Lane access point to Grater Woods was approved by the Commission.

Councilor Boyd stated he addressed a constituent's concern about the pond off of Baboosic Lake. The resident spoke of how the water was beginning to encroach upon her property. When you look out into the lake you see a huge beaver hut. He conducted some research and learned the Town has a beaver mitigation policy (one page). He credited the Commission with wanting to take on the task as there is a significant beaver population in Merrimack. Councilor Mahon stated the limit (24) provided by NH Fish & Game for beaver removal from the area is 4 away from being reached by the trapper hired by the Commission.

Councilor Boyd questioned whether the Chairman has had the opportunity to continue discussions with the School Board regarding a joint meeting, and was informed the opportunity has not yet presented itself.

MOTION made by Councilor Harrington and seconded by Councilor Mahon to adjourn the meeting. MOTION CARRIED 5-0-0

The November 21, 2013 meeting of the Town Council was adjourned at 9:32 p.m.

Submitted by Dawn MacMillan