

Wolfeboro Economic Development Committee

Tuesday, November 15, 2016, 8 a.m.

Town Hall Annex Meeting Room

Meeting Minutes – Approved

Members present: Chair Kathy Eaton, Vice Chair Cindy Patten, Mike Roush, Alan Harding, Dr. Craig Gemmell, Steve Durgan, Board of Selectman/EDC Liaison Alternate Linda Murray

Members/staff absent: Board of Selectmen/EDC Liaison Dave Bowers, Lisa Lutts, Denise Roy-Palmer, Steve Johnson, Jeff McGuiness

Staff present: Town Manager Dave Owen, Recording Secretary Larissa Mulkern

Call to order: Chair Eaton called the meeting to order at 8 a.m.

Approval of Minutes: A motion to approve the minutes of the October 18 meeting as amended was made by Mrs. Murray, seconded by Mr. Harding. Members voted and the motion passed.

1. New Business:

- a. Business/General Updates:** Mr. Owen reported the oil tanks at the Freight House are being removed today. A nonprofit group is coming together with a proposal to move the Klickety Klack Railroad in the Freight House in a public/private partnership with the Town of Wolfeboro. A wealthy donor contributed the funds to remove the tanks. The nonprofit group is proposing to split the cost of renovating the Freight House with the Town. The Town does not yet own the property, with the oil tanks removed, per condition of the purchase and sale agreement. Mr. Owen said he would ask the Board of Selectmen's approval to proceed with the transaction.
- b. Pickering House:** Chair Eaton said had talked to Patti Cooke regarding the status of Brummitt Court as a private access way. There are drawings where it appears as a public right of way; by way of background, Mrs. Murray said the Town had attempted to take the road by eminent domain but lost in court. Mr. Durgan said when he was a police officer he recalled that roadway to be private property. The previous owners asserted their rights to the private way.

2. Old Business:

- a. Community Profile Updating:** Members reviewed the draft of the Community Profile which Mr. Owen will send to the New Hampshire Department of Employment Security: revisions included updates to employment numbers at GI Plastek and the Children's Center, and adding Middleton as a donor town to the Governor Wentworth Regional School District. He asked members for any other changes. Discussion ensued regarding the category, 'outdoor facilities for swimming.' The form does include the listing for three outdoor beaches. Mr. Harding read an article about the new swimming coach and learned the team travels to Laconia to use the indoor pool. He advocated the town pursuing an indoor pool facility. Mr. Owen said they were expensive. Mrs. Murray said there have been attempts to build an indoor pool in Wolfeboro, but those efforts were hampered by costs. Mrs. Eaton said part of the EDC's role is to look at planning over the next 10 years and every time they see an opportunity to improve facilities – or dream – to put that dream on a list. That's what planning and the future is all about. She added that Wolfeboro has a history of successful private/public partnerships. An indoor swimming facility is one thing the town is missing and an amenity that would attract people to Wolfeboro. An indoor swimming facility could be an asset to Brewster Academy and the Town. Mrs. Murray mentioned the small pool at the Back Bay Rehabilitation Center; and access to the indoor pool at the

Windrifter Resort is available for a fee. Mr. Durgan, the chair of the Wolfeboro Area Chamber of Commerce's Economic Development Committee, said the committee is seeking a way to advocate for a swimming pool. They are gathering information on how other towns pursued a pool project. Mr. Harding said a pool could be a community unifier. Members suggested a couple of locations for a swimming pool. Gunstock Inn has a swimming pool, as well as Purity Springs Resort. Dr. Gemmell asked if anyone had done a conceptual report on the return on investment on a pool facility, or had prepared a cost estimate. Members responded they didn't think the concept got that far in the past. Mr. Durgan, a former athletic director at Kingswood, noted the Chamber's EDC has just identified a swimming pool as a desirable amenity and as such could benefit the Town's economic development. Mrs. Murray said it didn't have to be a municipal pool. Mrs. Eaton added the pool could be brought in as part of a hotel project.

- b. Economic Development Chapter of the Town's New Master Plans:** Members received copies of the draft chapter. A two-phase survey is underway by the town's Planning Board regarding the Master Plan. Mr. Owen said to accommodate economic development, the Town's water and sewer needs to be extended out to Route 28 to at least North Line Road. Ms. Patten asked if the system could handle expansion. Mrs. Murray said a pilot program is underway utilizing a rapid infiltration basin. She added the Town has talked about being a walkable community. Sidewalks on Bay Street and Elm Street could be added to create a walkable circuit. Discussion ensued regarding areas where redevelopment is needed, such as the Allen A Resort area, and whether the town's water and sewer infrastructure can accommodate development. The limits are with effluent disposal. Mrs. Murray suggested obtaining an estimate from Public Works Director Dave Ford regarding capacity of the system. Regarding infrastructure, Ms. Patten noted that the lack of options for Internet connectivity was an issue as well. Residents have Verizon and MetroCast; a lot of people are working from home and the lack of options can be considered one of the weaknesses. Mr. Owen said several of the town's large organizations like the hospital and Brewster are on Bay Ring Networks. Mr. Owen said the Town, which already has its own Municipal Electric capacity and poles and towers, could provide Internet access. There are municipal models for this service: Shrewsbury, Mass., and Braintree, Mass., operate their own cable systems, he noted. Mrs. Eaton said this could be a huge economic incentive for the Town of Wolfeboro. Mr. Owen will look into bringing in an organization that does this for towns. The service would be in addition to MetroCast, not a replacement. Mr. Durgan said the public looks to its public officials to seek options and choices in Internet services. Mrs. Murray said technology is changing so quickly; cable might even become outdated. Ms. Patten said, from economic development point of view, members need to consider what newer customers want, which might be different from the current Baby Boomer customer wants or needs. Communications lines are key to economic development, added Mrs. Eaton.

Mr. Owen provided some background information on the new Director of Planning and Development, Matt Sullivan, a young man with great technical and planning skills. His work with the Town of Durham master plan received the Plan of the Year Award by the New Hampshire Planners Association. Sullivan will work with the EDC; he will work with the Planning Board with updating the Town of Wolfeboro Master Plan. Mrs. Eaton wrapped up the conversation by encouraging members to talk about the economic development options and opportunities, and to keep ideas in the forefront without being stifled by potential costs.

3. **Other Business:** BR&E Committees: The Special Event committee is working on organizing an event for New Year's Eve; three performances of Wildlife Encounters are planned. The Chamber of Commerce is hosting the fireworks. Mrs. Murray said another idea is night bingo. An e-mail questionnaire regarding First Night Revival preferences and interests is being prepared. Mrs. Murray asked for clarification on the Special Events Committee roles and responsibilities; Mrs. Eaton said it was a Town Committee [as it evolved from the Business Retention and Expansion project]. Thus, the meetings will be posted and noticed. In other business, Ms. Patten said we're trying to drive people to the town's website and there is also a social media piece to economic development with the town. Rob Houseman took on that task in the past; but should the town have a part time media person? Mr. Owen said a part-time position was put in the town's budget and the Budget Committee supported the idea last week. Mr. Owen said the Economic Development budget would go before the Budget Committee on Wednesday, November 30 at 6:30 p.m.

Wolfeboro hosted the New Hampshire Economic Development Association meeting a week ago Friday at Abenaki Lodge; about 50 people from around the state participated. The BR&E survey was discussed; other communities are going through the process. Afterwards, participants were taken on a tour on Molly the Trolley. Mr. Roush brought the afternoon class at the Technology Center to meet the group and was very pleased with the interaction.

Dr. Gemmell discussed Brewster's Mission Statement that was ratified six months ago. The statement includes engaging the students more with the Town and to increase partnerships and access. Brewster is also starting to work with a highly rated campus planner on its Master Plan update. He asked what are the appropriate mechanisms to engage the town in this process. Discussion ensued about the interactions between the public and the students. Mrs. Eaton suggested holding a Brewster Day at the shops and restaurants in town. Brewster students hosted a tour of the town for potential new students, added Mrs. Eaton, and Black's Paper Store was the place to go for the kids. The business community needs to reach out to the students and parents. A Taste of Wolfeboro hosted by Brewster is a great idea. The Great Hall is equipped for catered events.

December EDC meeting date: Members agreed to hold the December meeting of the EDC on December 13 at the Town Hall Annex, 8 a.m.

4. **Town Manager/Selectmen's Representative Report:** Fisherville Committee: Mrs. Murray – January 23-31 is the targeted date for bobhouses going in. The selectmen approved the snowmobile trail. A Brewfest is possible during the town's Winter Carnival. A fishing derby is planned for March 3-4; the Fisherville Committee needs more help. The Town of Wolfeboro is building a bobhouse; the Chamber has someone to build its bobhouse, but is seeking sponsorships to support both the fireworks and the bobhouse. Brewster Academy will have a bobhouse.

5. **Adjournment:** A motion to adjourn was made, seconded, voted on and passed at 9:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Larissa Mulkern, recording secretary