

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE [EDC]

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

8:00 a.m. July 18, 2023 at Wolfeboro Town Hall

9 Union Street, Wolfeboro NH 03894

**Members Present:** Lucy Van Cleve (Chair), Barry Elliott (Co-Chair), Brian Deshaies (BOS Representative, called in to Chair's phone), Mary DeVries, Carrie Duran, Kathy Fairman, Cindy Fournier (Alternate), Linda Murray (Alternate BOS Representative)

**Members Absent:** Gretchen Gandini, Liz Baker McClain, Jeremy Roberge

**Invited by Co-Chair Barry Elliott:** Joe Kenney, Benoit Lamontagne (NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs)

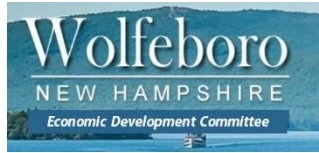
**Staff Present:** Tavis Austin

**The Meeting was called to order at 8:00 a.m. by Chair Lucy Van Cleve.**

***Consideration of May 16<sup>th</sup> 2023 Meeting Minutes:***

**Kathy Fairman made a motion to approve the 5/16/2023 Meeting Minutes with minor corrections. Seconded by Mary DeVries. Approved unanimously (5-0-0).**

- a) Expansion Plans for the PSI Molded Plastics Manufacturing Plant, Wolfeboro NH:** Barry Elliott introduced Benoit Lamontagne, who specializes in Business Retention, Expansion, and Recruitment for the New Hampshire Department of Business and Economic Affairs [BEA]. Mr. Lamontagne's and EDC's comments are paraphrased, below:
- Mr. Lamontagne wants to strategize with the Economic Development Committee about supporting and retaining an important local manufacturing business: PSI Molded Plastics. The company employs approximately 110 people, their plant is expanding, and there is a need for additional electricity for their manufacturing processes.
  - PSI Molded Plastics has several options for their expansion. They may not remain at their present location in Wolfeboro, they have other options. For example, relocating their business elsewhere: to Vermont or to New York State or to North Carolina.
  - This is an opportunity for Wolfeboro, Carroll County, and New Hampshire to retain existing jobs and to create new jobs.



- 'Run The Line to the Plant': To bring additional electricity to the manufacturing plant, the recommendation is for the Town of Wolfeboro to apply for grant funds to build new electrical infrastructure that brings more power to the plant. The cost of this infrastructure improvement is estimated to be approximately \$1 million.
- Potential grant funds, available to eligible municipalities that apply, are reviewed and awarded by the Northern Border Regional Commission: a federal-state partnership for economic and community development for certain counties of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and New York. If funds are awarded, the municipality must provide a grant administrator.

**M. DeVries:** The Chamber of Commerce believes that PCI Molded Plastics is very serious about relocating, time is of the essence. Also, competing energy providers are probably interested in this company's relocation.

**B. Deshaies:** Using another energy provider in this region could result in higher electrical rates by 30% to 40%. Wolfeboro's Municipal Electrical Department [MED] has the lowest rates in New England.

**L. Murray:** We can submit a package to the Town Manager, Jim Pineo.

**K. Fairman:** Wolfeboro's Municipal Electrical Department [MED] has an important responsibility to retain PCI Molded Plastics.

**B. Elliott:** There is a big difference between a capital improvement and providing more electricity.

**L. Murray:** We would need a Warrant Article.

**K. Fairman:** Aren't we having this discussion to apply for a grant?

**Kathy Fairman made a motion for the Wolfeboro Economic Development Committee [EDC] to recommend that the Board of Selectmen [BOS] and the Municipal Electrical Department [MED] make every effort to assist PSI Molded Plastics in obtaining grants to facilitate the electrical upgrades necessary to expand its Wolfeboro facility. Seconded by Mary DeVries. Approved unanimously (5-0-0).**

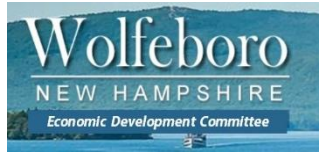
**M. DeVries:** How can the Economic Development Committee act upon and implement this motion?

**L. Murray:** I'll give this to Brian Deshaies, who can present it to the Board of Selectmen, who can then prepare a Warrant Article.

**b) Communications and Outreach by the Wolfeboro Economic Development Committee [EDC]:**

**C. Duran** said that EDC now has an official Facebook Page. This project has taken a couple of years. If anyone wants to forward information to Carrie Duran, she can post it. The focus is on the Town community, including the business community. The content should be non-political.

There are 1000 people on the Lake Winnepesaukee Day Facebook Page, the EDC Facebook Page can be found adjacent to it.



**B. Deshaies:** For Lake Winnepesaukee Day (Friday, August 11<sup>th</sup>, 5:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m.), I need two more volunteers to join us to help organize the Food and the Arts & Crafts for this event. Are we open to groups outside of Wolfeboro?

**Chair L. Van Cleve:** We can consider outside groups in the future.

**L. Murray:** For this inaugural event, our taxpayers are the priority this year.

**M. DeVries:** The Wolfeboro Economic Development Committee is taking the lead on funding Lake Winnepesaukee Day this year. I would say “no” for this year.

**c) The Wolfeboro Economic Development Committee [EDC] Welcomes Cindy Fournier, a new EDC Member!** Chair L. Van Cleve suggests that the two of them meet with Brian when he returns.

**d) Ideas for hosting an Affordable Housing Summit in Wolfeboro:**

**C. Duran** envisions three or four panel discussions for this event, a few ideas:

**1) A Typology of Affordable Housing:** present and discuss local examples of affordable housing types.

**2) A Snapshot of the Current Housing Situation:** C. Duran heard recent testimony by Margot Skelley, a real estate professional familiar with the local market, at the Zoning Board of Adjustment meeting on 6/26. Margot Skelley provided statistics about the current housing situation in this region. Perhaps she could participate?

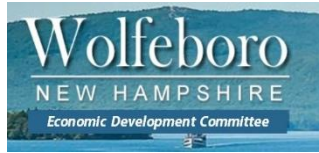
**3) Building Regulations and Affordable Housing:** how do zoning regulations and building codes affect the process of development for affordable housing?

**4) Harriman Hill Affordable Housing:** three phases of development for rental housing: presentation, discussion.

There is interest in this event on the part of the Eastern Lakes Housing Coalition and a dozen other organizations. **E-mail C. Duran for a list of the organizations.**

**C. Duran asked: what is a 10-20 Year Vision for Affordable Housing?** Especially for upcoming generations of young adults: many of whom may not be able to afford to live in the town where they grew up. She would also like to consider: **Recovery Housing** and **Supportive Housing** and working in tandem with social service organizations, such as Northern Human Services and Lakes Region Community Services. She said that Lakes Region Community Developers is now working with the City of Laconia on the issues of Special Needs People and what is needed for a longer-term, sustainable living situation.

**L. Murray suggested taking a look at The Ledges, managed by The Hodges Companies.** It was originally senior housing, but the age restriction was dropped. She also suggested doing an inventory of existing multi-family housing, so the Town knows what it has.



**K. Fairchild** asked **who are the desired attendees** for the Affordable Housing Summit and what is their geographic area? Can EDC reach out to the Lakes Region, in addition to Wolfeboro? She also suggested the possible topic of **Short-Term Rental Housing**, are there any speakers available? Short-Term Rentals are known to have an impact on the housing stock available for Long-Term Rentals.

**"No restrictions" on Short-Term Rentals:** **C. Duran** said there is currently legislation by a State Senator saying "no restrictions" on Short-Term Rentals.

**M. DeVries** said **a Total Solar Eclipse will take place on Monday, April 8<sup>th</sup> 2024:** The northern portion of New Hampshire state will be a great vantage point from which to view the full eclipse. She suggested the EDC budget some marketing money for this spring event. Could both the **Affordable Housing Summit** and the **Total Solar Eclipse** possibly be scheduled back-to-back? If the conference were to be scheduled for the first weekend of April, that event would directly precede a viewing of the Total Solar Eclipse in NH.

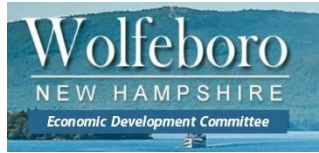
**B. Elliott and L. Murray on the topic of EDC Participation:** Mark Diamond, who met the EDC in a previous meeting, could be a great resource. He's in construction, he offers fresh insights and different perspectives; for example, he compared the functionality of two different Town websites. Chair L. Van Cleve said she would follow up with him. **B. Deshaies** said there are lots of people building houses in Tuftonboro.

**Block Party Rescheduled to September 2024:** **K. Fairman** said the decision was made to reschedule this event for next year, to allow more time for the organizers to raise more money.

**Harassment Prevention Training:** **Chair L. Van Cleve** said she needs to get the link for the on-line training.

**Constant Contact Lump Sum Payment:** **Chair L. Van Cleve** said she has a Zoom meeting scheduled with Constant Contact for this Thursday, 7/20, to arrange payment for the annual subscription.

**Funding for next year's Lake Winnepesaukee Day 2024:** **Chair L. Van Cleve** suggests using ADI funds for next year's event, rather than soliciting local businesses. It has been very time-intensive to raise \$10K for this event. **K. Fairman** concurred, suggesting it might make more sense for EDC to support local businesses in the winter and spring, not in the summer and fall when this area is already very busy. **L. Murray** said it's important to strike the right balance between asking taxpayers and asking local businesses to donate larger sums of money, it took time and effort to raise \$2.5K. **B. Deshaies** said for future solicitations for this community event (for which he envisions increasing participation from the region), he would first approach non-profit organizations and ask for a donation of either volunteers' time or money: 'The Town needs your support: please donate people-hours or donate bucks, from \$10 to \$2K.' **K. Fairman** said, "Lake Winni Day is about taking care of our most important resource."



**Chamber of Commerce Report: M. DeVries** said no one wants to lose **PCI Molded Plastics** or **Hunter's Stop N' Save**. Benoit Lamontagne is the ideal liason between private and public interests in New Hampshire.

- **Sidewalk Sale Day Event:** will be a summer event on a Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.
- **Fall into Fall Event:** will be on fourth Saturday in September. Parks & Rec Dept organizes it.

**Jolly the Trolley Runs for Free this Summer: K. Fairman** said many people enjoy using the trolley to view Mt. Washington.

- **Mondays and Tuesdays, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.** - every half hour.
- **Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.** - every half hour.
- **Parking is available.** Overflow parking at the church is available in July and August.

**At 9:30 a.m. Kathy Fairman made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Lucy Van Cleve. The motion was approved unanimously (4-0-0).**

Meeting Minutes respectfully submitted,  
Eivia M. Nicolescu