



1 **TOWN OF NORTH HAMPTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE**
2 **NORTH HAMPTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

3 **JANUARY 8, 2020 5:00 PM**

4 **NORTH HAMPTON TOWN HALL**

5 ***DRAFT MINUTES***

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8 EDC MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Richard Luff, Vice-Chair Jeff Hillier, Select Board Rep Kathleen Kilgore,
9 Heritage Commission Rep Nancy Monaghan, David Ciccalone, Gary Stevens, Jonathan Pinette, Renee
10 Locke, Glenn Martin

11
12 EXCUSED: Planning Board Rep Phillip E. Wilson, Leszek Stachow

13
14 ALSO PRESENT: Interim Town Administrator Michael Tully

15
16 **AGENDA**

17
18 Chairman Richard Luff welcomed everyone to the January 8, 2020 Economic Development Committee
19 Meeting and called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

20
21 Chairman Luff said Ironwood was supposed to present their findings tonight after 3 Public Session last fall,
22 but the meeting has been rescheduled for February 5, 2020.

23
24 **Hampton Chamber Regional Economic Development Initiative** – Kirsten Larsen-Schultz

25
26 Kirsten Larsen-Schultz spoke on behalf of John Nyhan of the Hampton Chamber on the economic
27 development position, and said they will be researching what would be involved in the position over the
28 next 6 months. She said they will listen to ideas from key stakeholders, create the position, and then look
29 for funding, private and potentially State and Federal, with the plan to have the position fully funded for
30 the first 2 years. Towns included are Hampton, North Hampton, Seabrook, Hampton Falls, and Rye, who
31 are part of the Hampton Chamber.

32
33 Questions: Chairman Luff asked what the group is focused on and if there was discussion about long-term
34 vs. short-term. Ms. Larsen-Schultz said they recognize towns have their unique differences but they can
35 also pool resources and leverage that to do things like fill storefronts. She said the long-term and short-
36 term goal for the position is to be a liaison between businesses and the State, and the position has the

37 opportunity to highlight the differences but leverage resources together to communicate with businesses
38 to bring them in.

39

40 Vice-Chair Hillier asked how North Hampton is doing with empty storefronts compared to other
41 communities. Ms. Larsen-Schultz said this person will be able to keep a tally; all towns have the same
42 issues with workforce housing being number one. If all goes well, they hope to launch the position on July
43 1, 2020 for 2 years being privately funded. After 2 years, they will evaluate and potentially go to towns for
44 other funding, but there will always be private funding plus any potential grants.

45

46 Ms. Monaghan asked if the position will be to fill in storefronts or to look a bigger regional issues, and Ms.
47 Larsen-Schultz said both. She said an important part of the position is to communicate with town
48 administrations, planning boards, and zoning boards, and be a bridge between them and businesses. Ms.
49 Monaghan asked if the regional position would preclude towns from having their own economic
50 development person, and Ms. Larsen-Shultz said it would not. Vice-Chair Hillier asked what retail might
51 look like 10 years from now, and Ms. Larsen-Schultz said it would be a plus to be able to access the
52 Chamber of Commerce network and resources through the Hampton Chapter.

53

54 Mr. Martin said EDC did not have great success getting key stakeholders to the public meeting and hoped
55 the Hampton Chamber might have more success, and Ms. Larsen-Shultz said they are already looking into
56 holding events. Chairman Luff said the EDC Committee is struggling with what they can do right now to
57 make a difference, and Ms. Larsen-Shultz said the person in this position should be coming to these
58 meetings. Selectwoman Kilgore asked if there was any special focus on Rail to Trail, and Ms. Larsen-Schultz
59 said they discussed identifying key target areas in each town. Vice-Chair Hillier asked if over time there
60 may be some sort of structure from representatives of a committee in each town, and Ms. Larsen-Shultz
61 said that would be a great opportunity to learn from our neighbors.

62

63 **UNH Business Engagement & Retention Program Review**

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65 Chairman Luff said they would review the recommendations of the UNH Business Engagement and
66 Retention Program as pertains to empty storefronts, as the Committee has been focusing more on long-
67 term aspects. Ms. Monaghan said in the Citizens Survey, people requested empty storefronts be filled
68 before developing further. She said the idea was previously raised to hire a consultant for a year to tackle
69 that, and she felt they should hire a part-time Economic Development person who reports to the Town
70 Administrator.

71

72 Mr. Martin said the UNH Business Program suggested using a work-study person to work on filling empty
73 storefronts. Selectwoman Kilgore felt they should reengage the business owners and try to get them to
74 come in and work with the Committee, and said she could see using the core of the Business Retention
75 Program in combination with regional. Chairman Luff said he agreed, and said they should work with UNH,
76 NHBA, or other structures available that might not require taxpayer dollars. Selectwoman Kilgore said
77 they do not have to fill empty storefronts with commercial, and said Rail to Trail gives them an opportunity
78 of 2 years to figure out what they want to see here.

79

80 Chairman Luff said one recommendation was to have a point person in Town who could work through
81 some of the steps (planning/zoning) for someone considering doing business in North Hampton. Interim

82 Town Administrator Tully said North Hampton does not have a dedicated Economic Development
83 Director, but they can have someone in the community start with something regional or use volunteers.
84 He said currently the Town has Rick Millner, Planning & Zoning Administrator, who fills that role.

85
86 Ms. Monaghan said in 2017 the EDC Committee developed a New Business Guide that told people where
87 to go and who to talk to, and a copy was given to NHBA. Selectwoman Kilgore said that document should
88 be made available on the website. Interim Town Administrator Tully said he could help in developing a
89 section of the website that goes toward Economic Development. Ms. Locke said at the NHBA planning
90 meeting in December, one of the things they wanted to do was to hold a lunch-and-learn, or some sort of
91 workshop every quarter, starting with local business owners. She said it is in our best interest to find a
92 few ambassadors to add onto that, and Chairman Luff said he liked the idea and maybe EDC members
93 could be part of that.

94
95 Mr. Stevens said he would like to see a tab on the Town website that says “Business” for people to
96 navigate. Interim Town Administrator Tully said the Town has a company that handles their website
97 design. Mr. Stevens said adding a tab and building on it would be great as long as it is not a maintenance
98 nightmare. Interim Town Administrator Tully said the tabs would need to be updated every time
99 something changed. Selectwoman Kilgore said the Select Board is looking at a possible Document
100 Management System to work in the background. Interim Town Administrator Tully said the Select Board
101 needs to choose a company to move forward, and said they would probably start with one department
102 and move on from there.

103
104 Chairman Luff asked who has the authority to say we want to create a Business tab on the website. Interim
105 Town Administrator Tully if the cost is minor he can move forward, otherwise it would need to be added
106 to the agenda for a Select Board Meeting. Chairman Luff suggested the EDC Committee make a template.
107 Interim Town Administrator Tully said it would be very helpful to bring that template forward to put on
108 the agenda for Select Board discussion and ultimately obtain a cost. Chairman Luff said he was thinking of
109 steps that are easily done to move EDC forward on immediate issues.

110
111 Chairman Luff said he liked the idea of a welcome mat/business tab on the website and said they should
112 also look into UNH Work-Study, and Ms. Monaghan volunteered to contact them. Vice-Chair Hillier
113 brought up real estate brokers, and Mr. Martin said they would use our resources to help with their
114 businesses but not necessarily make it easier for another broker, and said he would not look to them to
115 be partners. Chairman Luff asked what a Commercial Real Estate broker’s role typically is in filling
116 storefronts. Mr. Martin said they will have a party looking for a parcel and they sift through who the real
117 parties are. He said there are some key players that have pocket knowledge of what is going on, but some
118 have to be very confidential.

119
120 Ms. Locke volunteered to put a few people together to work on the website tab, and asked for a
121 teammate; Mr. Stevens agreed to help work on the template. Ms. Monaghan volunteered to take care of
122 where to go for what.

123

124 **EDC Rules & Procedures**

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126 Chairman Luff said Selectwoman Kilgore and Vice-Chair Hillier worked on the EDC Rules & Regulations,
127 based on those for the Planning Board. Selectwoman Kilgore said they basically just eliminated things that
128 were pertinent only to the Planning Board, and Vice-Chair Hillier they basically streamlined the document.
129 Selectwoman Kilgore said it would be beneficial for the Town Administrator to review it for accuracy to
130 our charge, and Interim Town Administrator Tully said he would review it and get back to them.

131
132 Ms. Monaghan said the composition is not quite right. Selectwoman Kilgore said the Economic
133 Development Committee was reconstituted in 2017. Ms. Monaghan agreed and said after that the
134 membership was capped at 11 members. Chairman Luff asked that Mr. Hillier, Selectwoman Kilgore and
135 Interim Town Administrator Tully research the history of the composition of the Board and insert it
136 correctly into the Rules & Procedures to have as a future agenda item.

137

138 **Approval of the Minutes of the December 4, 2019 Meeting**

139

140 **Motion:** To approve the minutes of the December 4, 2019 Economic Development Committee.

141 **Motioned:** Mr. Pinette

142 **Second:** Selectwoman Kilgore

143 **Vote:** Motion approved by a vote of 9-0

144

145 **Any other Item that May Legally come before the Committee**

146

147 Selectwoman Kilgore asked if the Committee could add a period of Public Comment to their agenda.
148 Interim Town Administrator Tully explained that Public Comment allows people to come in and speak for
149 3 minutes and said he would send the Public Comment instructions.

150

151 Kirsten Larsen-Schultz of Post Road said the new business guide and the resident guide to services was
152 already on the NHBA website. She said she manages the website and if anyone wants to add something it
153 can be done quickly. She also said you can easily build a "landing page" and code it into the existing site
154 using I-Frame code, which is a cheaper and more effective way to accomplish their "welcome page". She
155 said the NHBA has their annual meeting on February 4, 2020 at Barley House from 5:00 to 7:00 pm.

156

157 **Next Meeting:** The next regular Economic Development Committee Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday,
158 February 5, 2020 at 5:00 pm.

159

160 **Adjournment**

161

162 Selectwoman Kilgore made a motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Mr. Martin.
163 Chairman Luff adjourned the meeting at 6:07 pm.

164

165 Respectfully submitted,

166 Patricia Denmark, Recording Secretary