

Economic Development Committee Meeting  
April 23, 2009

Preliminary meeting minutes

Attendees: TammyJo Girard, Tom Ursia, Leo Binette, Chris Binette, Doug Foglio, Kerry DeAngelis, Steve Eveld, Diane Holden, Sue Rocray

Public attendees: ejayne

WELCOME & OVERVIEW: Meeting called to order at 3:30 by Tom Ursia. Tom explained he would be the facilitator of the first meeting and had put together an agenda. Chair and secretary to be elected during the meeting and chair would run future meetings.

TammyJo welcomed members to the first meeting of the EDC, briefly explained how the committee came to be and thanked Steve for not only hosting the first meeting at Raven Hill Orchard but also providing some refreshments

EDC MEMBER INTROS: Tom asked each member to tell the rest of the group a little about themselves and what they would like to see the EDC accomplish

Doug felt the town needed to be more welcoming and supportive of businesses and create a supportive business structure in the community. Felt there was a need to update zoning laws, the comprehensive plan and bring the town as well as the planning board together on creating a friendlier business environment.

Kerry stated her expertise is marketing, branding and public image and would like to bring that talent to the EDC. She feels that Waterboro needs to work on the town's image to include such basics as fixing our welcome signs entering into town.

Steve wants to become more involved in the community and feels the EDC can bring about positive and attractive development and he would like to be apart of that.

Diane worked for the town for 27 years and has an understanding of how the town functions. She agreed that the image of the town needs to be improved by creating a more welcoming and attractive community. She feels the town needs good clean jobs and increased local businesses to help the town's tax base.

Sue sees a lot of room for potential improvements in Waterboro. She deals a lot with local businesses and see a lot of frustration from business people who feel the town is not business friendly. She also agrees the image of the town needs to be made more attractive to potential businesses.

Chris recognizes the incredible growth the town has seen over the years and has compared Waterboro with other small towns and questions what Waterboro isn't doing that other successful communities are. He suggests we visit other small towns that are finding success and

learn from other's mistakes. Feels we need to ask some very probing questions to get the answers on how to make our community as successful as others. Chris agreed with the others who felt the town's image needed to be improved, cleaned up and made more attractive. Inlets and outlets of the town need to be attractive and we need to find ways to draw the public into other parts of town other than the main thru-fares of 5 and 202.

Leo would like to take the enthusiasm he has for his business and pour it into helping improve the town. Most notably, Waterboro is recognized for having the Lake Arrowhead development and feels we need to promote that Waterboro is more than just one large development. Would like to see bring more industry to 202, tap into the heavy traffic coming into town via 202 and 5 and improve Waterboro's image. Feels it is important to develop a guide for potential local business owners who are considering Waterboro which details the process from start to finish and gives contact info for everyone they may need to contact or who can offer guidance and assistance. Feels this guide would also help bring everyone, administrators and planning board, on the same page.

TammyJo also agreed there was a lot of potential for growth in Waterboro bringing in services and jobs. She felt the town image needed to be cleaned up and improved and would like to explore Main Street Improvement grants as well as involving more community members and groups in the project. Feels if more people are involved, more residents will take pride in their community. TammyJo encouraged the group to be honest in their assessments of all areas that needed improvement even if a member felt it may be critical or insulting of her position. Be it good, bad or indifferent, TammyJo wanted all members to be comfortable and open as open communication was going to be essential for the success of the committee.

Tom sees what other members of the committee are saying about the perception of the town from both the public and private sectors. He feels Waterboro can "survive or thrive" but in order to thrive will need to attract more business. Tom feels Waterboro is prime and would like to see an exploration of a business park, help get the town focused on how to attract business and recognize that in the given market we need to be cleverer than other communities when trying to get the attention of potential new businesses. Need to improve village and comprehensive planning, bring them up to date and look at how to improve current zoning ordinances.

**CHAIR & SECRETARY ELECTIONS:** After discussion of chair duties and responsibilities, Leo motioned for Chris Binette to serve as chair. Motion was seconded by Sue Rocray and passed unanimously.

Chris motioned for Kerry DeAngelis to serve as secretary, seconded by Diane, passed unanimously.

#### **CLARIFICATION OF ROLES OF EDC AND WAB BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE:**

Waterboro Association of Businesses (WAB) is a membership by fee based group comprised of local businesses. Leo explained that the Business Development Committee is a sub-committee of WAB and acts as an advocacy group serving as a voice for local businesses. The sub-committee is

exploring a career day at MHS, will be hosting a business expo, will be printing the second WAE business guide and has recently created and will be compiling results from a local business survey. The WAB hopes to help compliment and support the work of the EDC but is not a town committee and does not report to the selectmen.

EDC MISSION: A discussion on how EDC can be most productive and meet future goals was tabled due to time constraints.

MEETING SCHEDULE AND VENUE: Committee members discussed times that were most convenient not only for members but also encouraged business and public participation. For the next few months the group will meet on the second and fourth Thursday of the month from 4:30pm to 6 pm at Waterboro town hall. This schedule will be re-assessed in July. The group will also meet for a goal setting session facilitated by Tom on April 30 at 4:30 pm at town hall.

PUBLIC COMMENT: ejayne explained she had an interest in the committee as she is looking to develop a communication model. She asked how the committee intended to communicate with the public as a whole and what communication model the committee intended to follow. Due to time constraints, Tom felt the detail that ejayne was looking for would be best suited for another EDC meeting and ejayne said she would like to see this discussed further as part of a future agenda.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:15pm.