

DRAFT
MEETING MINUTES OF THE PORTSMOUTH
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

January 12, 2018

City Hall, Conference Room A

7:30 a.m.

Members Present: Bob Marchewka, Vice-Chairman; Cliff Lazenby, Sarah Lachance, Alan Gold, John Pratt, Philip Cohen, Ron Zolla (via teleconference) and Dana Levenson (via teleconference)

Excused: Everett Eaton, Chairman; Jen Zorn, Nancy Pearson

City Staff: City Manager John P. Bohenko, Economic Development Program Manager Nancy Carmer

In the absence of Chairman Eaton, Vice-Chair Marchewka opened the meeting at 7:35 a.m.

Welcome new City Council Representatives to EDC

Mr. Marchewka introduced and welcomed Councilor Lazenby to the EDC. Mr. Lazenby provided his background and stated he was pleased to serve on the Commission. Councilor Pearson is the other City Council representative but was participating in a Chamber function and could not attend.

Approval of draft meeting minutes of December 1, 2017

Commissioner Pratt moved, and Commissioner Lachance seconded a motion to approve the draft meeting minutes of December 1, 2017. The motion carried unanimously.

Presentation on NH Sector Partnership Initiative (SPI), Phil Przybyszewski, Project Director of the Workforce Solutions initiative of the Community College System of NH (CCSNH) and Michael Powers, Director of the NH Workforce Opportunities Program made a presentation on the NH Sector Partnership Initiative. The program is essentially an industry-led effort to create partnerships that address ongoing workforce challenges that are the direct result of the aging demographic in the state as well as the skills gap created by changes in technology and jobs and the loss of college students to other states. Currently middle-skill jobs make up the largest part of America's and NH's labor market and NH industries struggle to find enough sufficiently trained workers to fill these jobs. The SPI program develops viable solutions to educating a workforce to meet this need. The SPI model has been successful because it is highly responsive to industry demand compared to traditional models and because it is problem-oriented, not program oriented, it addresses skills needs collectively, not independently; and it works with multiple companies, not as individual firms. The steps involved in a successful training include:

- Identify target sectors, job skills, education & other requirements
- Mapping assets to identify existing assets/resources to support the sector
- Identifying sector champions and advisors to manage sustainable leadership teams & working committees.
- Sector launch that are in-person events to share data, findings, etc. and develop high-level plans for partnership next steps.
- Post-launch activities that involve working committees that drive detailed initiatives to meet workforce needs.

The program is funded through grants, tuition payments, job training program reimbursements, other service support. Examples of successful programs were identified in the manufacturing, technology, health care and hospitality sectors. Local assistance can be provided to identify potential industry stakeholders, submit ideas or examples of industry challenges and possible training solutions, and in helping to "spread the word" on SPI to our network.

Old Business

Approval of final draft of Economic Revitalization Zone (ERZ) Request for Islington/West End

The Commission reviewed the proposed ERZ area as revised at the December 2017 EDC meeting. Following a brief discussion of the area, it was the consensus of the Commission to amend the area further to include Plaza 800 and Bank of America properties. Commissioner Pratt moved and Commissioner Gold seconded the motion to approve the ERZ area as amended and to apply to the State of NH for approval. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of final draft 2018 Action Plan

Commissioner Lachance led a discussion of the 2018 EDC Action Plan as amended from the December 2018 EDC meeting. Amendments included inclusion of the downtown conference center and the importance of a balance of commercial/residential uses in the downtown as advocacy items and the addition of which city boards the EDC would partner with to advocate for specific actions. Commissioner Pratt moved and Commissioner Cohen seconded a motion to approve the plan as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business/Project Updates

McIntyre Project Update and Public Input Process

City Manager Bohenko reported on the status of the project noting that the next step in the process is for the incoming City Council to ratify or modify the proposed plan for public input recommended by the outgoing City Council as well as the recommended development partner. The Mayor would like a decision on the development partner no later than the February 4th City Council meeting. The City and partner would then enter into a non-binding agreement to allow the process to move forward in anticipation of submitting an application to the GSA under the Historic Monument Program.

EDC Officer Elections

City Manager, Bohenko acting as Chairman Pro Temp asked for nominations for EDC Chair for the 2018 calendar year. Commissioner Cohen nominated Commissioner Marchewka to be Chair, seconded by Commissioner Pratt. The motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Marchewka then asked for nominations for EDC Vice-Chair for the 2018 calendar year. Commissioner Lachance nominated Commissioner Cohen to the position, seconded by Commissioner Pratt. The motion carried unanimously.

Confirm Next Regular Meeting: March 2, 2018, 7:30 AM

Public Comment – No members of the public were present to provide comment.

Adjourn

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Carmer
Economic Development Program Manager