

**MEETING MINUTES OF THE PORTSMOUTH
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
September 6, 2019**

Members Present: Bob Marchewka, Chairman; Vice Chair; Assistant Mayor Cliff Lazenby, Everett Eaton, Nancy Pearson, Sarah Lachance, Tom Watson, Alan Gold, Ron Zolla, and Dana Levenson

Absent: Katelyn Kwoka, Philip Cohen

City Staff: City Manager John P. Bohenko, Economic Development Program Manager Nancy Carmer, Juliet Walker, Planning Director

Chairman Marchewka opened the meeting at 7:35 a.m.

Approval of draft meeting minutes of May 10, 2019

Commissioner Gold moved and Commissioner Eaton seconded a motion to approve the draft meeting minutes of May 10, 2019. The motion carried unanimously.

Presentation on local workforce development/training: programs and case studies

Lynn Szymanski, Program Manager for Workforce Development, Great Bay Community College made a presentation on business training resources through the College's Business and Training Center. She gave examples of programs that her office has provided to Sig Sauer at Pease International Tradeport for CNC and Excel training as well as frontline supervision. At Teledyne it has provided apprenticeship training. Other companies that the school has worked with on teamwork and communication skills include Strawberry Banke, OneSky, Chinburg Properties and the Sheraton Hotel. The program basically responds to employers' specific needs for which the college will develop the training using college faculty or outside instructors with the expertise needed for the desired training. The employer pays for the training or in some instances where the State Workforce Training grant is applied, the employer pays only 50% of the cost. One idea that the City Manager thought might benefit local municipalities is training for wastewater treatment operators. He will follow up with Ms. Szymanski on the concept.

Other Business/Project Updates

- *Establish date for EDC retreat* – Potential dates for an EDC retreat in September and October were distributed. Commissioners were instructed to respond to Nancy Carmer with dates that individuals are available.
- *Parking Principles feedback*- The City Council asked the Planning Staff/Board undertake a review of the original parking principles with input from land use boards and the EDC. Planning Department staff suggested modifications which were the topic of facilitated work session discussions in the spring. The Planning Department is now looking to provide a consolidated list of the committees' feedback on the recommended parking principle modifications so that it can respond to the City Council. A red-lined version of the proposed modifications based on the work session input has been circulated for comment from the boards. Ms. Walker recommends that the EDC submit their comments on the proposed modifications to Nancy Carmer who will transmit them to the planning staff. Ms. Carmer will send out an email soliciting the EDC's feedback for transmittal to the planning staff. After the Planning Department consolidates all the feedback, the EDC will have another opportunity to weigh in on the draft document.

Following this conversation, members of the EDC discussed specific aspects of the modification such as the tenet of adding "shared employer responsibility" to the parking principles and suggested that it might be presented as a "city responsibility with business cooperation." Also discussed were the concepts and messaging that "Portsmouth is open for business" as well as potential local resident and regional resident

discounts to drive traffic to the Foundry Place Garage. The City Manager said that the Parking Traffic and Safety Committee and the Fee Committee are already discussing these types of concepts. The Commission also expressed interest in the principles of alternative transportation and employer incentives for using alternate modes of transportation such as ride sharing.

- *Update on status of recommendations in Report on Land Use Permitting Process* – Ms. Walker stated that the City Council has asked the Planning Department to report back on its progress implementing the EDC subcommittee’s recommendation on streamlining the land use process. She said that her department is are working on that request and needs additional time to quantify the impact of the strategies that have been implemented including the online permit application process, the impact of the program manager coordinator, and data on permit application timelines, etc. She said they are also continuing to define the internal responsibilities once a project has been submitted for preliminary review which now involves a point staff person for the project throughout the process including communication as it goes to the Building and Inspections Department. She noted that it is very helpful if the developer/applicant likewise identifies a single contact for communication throughout the process.
- *Establish subcommittee for Microtransit recommendation* – Ms. Walker recapped the process to date of soliciting RFP’s for a pilot microtransit program that is focused on a shared ride opportunity to complement the City’s other transit initiatives. The consultant VIA, was selected to work with the City on this initiative. Ms. Walker said that there is a cost to providing such a service and before proceeding with a pilot program it is important to understand the level of interest of residents and businesses in participating. A subcommittee would be useful in finding out businesses’ interest, needs, and how best to assist employees getting to work. It was suggested that VIA make a presentation to a subcommittee tasked with gauging this interest of residents and businesses in participating in a program. The presentation would include how it might work, case studies of cities that have a similar program and associated cost. It was suggested that perhaps the presentation might be made to a joint subcommittee consisting of members from Parking Traffic and Safety (PTS) Committee and the EDC. Members concurred with this strategy. The idea of a survey for gauging program interest was also suggested as part of the subcommittee’s work. Staff will work on finding a date for a joint meeting of the EDC and PTS.
- *Status of McIntyre Building project* – The City has submitted the Historic Monument Program application to the National Park Service for acquisition of the Thomas J. McIntyre Building. The Service has 45 days to respond and if there are changes needed, it may take another 30 days for review. Next step is for the project to go through the land use permitting process.

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

Confirm Next Regular Meeting: October 4, 2019, 7:30 AM

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Carmer
Economic Development Program Manager