

MEETING MINUTES
PORTSMOUTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

April 7, 2006

Conference Room A

7:30 a.m.

Members Present: Dana Levenson, Chairman; Everett Eaton, Vice-Chairman, Cliff Taylor, William Gladhill, Edward Hayes, Robin McIntosh, Paul Harvey Sr., Thomas Ferrini, Ned Reynolds, John P. Bohenko; City Manager
Member Excused: Michael Murray, Lisa DeStefano
Staff present: Nancy Carmer, Economic Development Program Manager, David Moore, Community Development Program Manager

Minutes

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to accept the minutes of March 17, 2006 as amended. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gladhill and passed unanimously.

Presentation: Quarterly Reports on Tourism and Business Development for the period January 1-March 31, 2006

Marge Hubbard, Tourism Manager, Greater Portsmouth Chamber of Commerce and Ginny Griffith, Business Development Manager, Greater Portsmouth Chamber of Commerce distributed report packets and described the tourism and business development activities during the reporting period. Ms. Hubbard also provided an analysis of the value of the travel writer articles about Portsmouth. The total value for the articles written in FY 2005 was \$800,000.

Presentation of 2006 Chamber of Commerce Government Affairs Committee (GAC) Activity and Priorities

In the absence of Tim Fortier, the Chamber liaison to the Government Affairs Committee, Dick Ingram, President of the Greater Portsmouth Chamber of Commerce gave a presentation on the GAC's activity. The Committee exists to research, testify on, and inform local businesses regarding legislation proposed by state representatives. The group tracks bills and sends representatives or letters to Concord to provide input on bills likely to have a positive or negative impact on the local community. The committee hosts a legislative reception for local and state lawmakers as well as forums for bringing candidates to the area. The committee organizes a trip to Concord for local businesses which includes tours the State House and Legislative Office Building and provides an opportunity for attendees to meet the Speakers of the House/Senate and have lunch with local representatives.

Request for Renewal of Chamber/City Public Private Partnership for FY 2006-2007

Dick Ingram, President of the Greater Portsmouth Chamber of Commerce submitted a proposal to extend the City/Chamber of Commerce Partnership for the seventh year at the \$35,000 level. This request includes \$5,000 for production of the *Guide to the Seacoast* brochure, \$15,000 to support the Tourism Manager & programming, and \$15,000 to support the Business Development Manager & programming. He noted the accomplishments of the partnership over the past year noting the successful Save the Shipyard effort and the many activities of the tourism and business development programs as outlined in the quarterly reports to the EDC

Chairman Levenson thinks that the partnership has been successful and supports extending it for another year with a prioritization of what the partners wish to collectively accomplish. Commissioner Eaton echoed Chairman Levenson's support for the partnership. Commissioner Taylor moved and

Commissioner Harvey seconded a motion to recommend to the City Council approve the \$35,000 in UDAG funds requested to extend the partnership for another year.

Old Business and Updates

City Council Action on EDC Recommendations:

- *Group License Policy for High Hanover Parking Garage*

The City Council approved the EDC recommendation to create a group license policy as proposed. It also approved Wenberry Associates' request for a group discount for the lease at 155 Fleet St. with Desktop Standard.

- *Tax Increment Financing*

Ms. Carmer informed the EDC that the City Council voted to hold a public hearing at the April 14, 2006 City Council meeting on the adoption of RSA 162:K. Members of the EDC are welcome to attend and speak at the public hearing.

- *Subcommittee Reports*

The EDC WiFi subcommittee (Dana, Robin, Scott Campbell, Ginny Griffith and Alan Brady) met and developed a strategy to explore four options for a municipal wireless network before making a report back to the City Council.

Updates:

- *Update on the NH DOT Citizen's Advisory Committee's Long Range Transportation Business Plan*

Commissioner McIntosh updated the Commission on the April 4th public input session held in Newington on the proposed plan. The plan outlines opportunities to improve transportation infrastructure in the region without sacrificing the quality of life. Goals include mass transit, more pedestrian opportunities, and diverting toll money to activities other than highway construction.

Public Comment Period

Ms. Hubbard encouraged the EDC and others present to attend the Governor's Arts Awards at the Capital Center for the Arts on April 13th when Portsmouth will receive an award for Community Spirit.

Next Meeting Date

May 5th, 2006 is the next meeting date. The meeting will be held at Pease Tradeport in the conference room of the Pease Development Authority.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy M. Carmer, Economic Development Program Manager