



Town of Hopkinton

330 Main Street, Hopkinton NH 03229-2627 - (603) 746-3170 – www.hopkinton-nh.gov

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, September 6, 2023 – 6:00 P.M.
Hopkinton Town Hall

Members Present: Louise Carr, Sam Delgado, Andrea Folsom, Jim Fredyma, Ian Hart, Alexander Pooler, Steven Whitley
Members Absent: none
Public Present: Scott Clay, Katherine Mitchell
Staff Present: Anna Wells, *Economic Development Director*

CALL TO ORDER

Ian Hart called the meeting to order at 6:02pm in Hopkinton Town Hall.

Andrea Folsom made a motion, seconded by Sam Delgado, to allow Steven Whitley to attend the meeting remotely by telephone. There was no discussion.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Sam Delgado	Yes
Andrea Folsom	Yes
Jim Fredyma	Yes
Ian Hart	Yes
Alexander Pooler	Yes

MOTION PASSED 5-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES from [August 16, 2023](#)

Mr. Hart opened a general discussion about minutes. He stressed that while the content of public comment should be recorded at a higher level in the minutes, members of the public are always welcome to submit written comment should they wish their opinion to be precisely worded for the record. He does not recommend any changes to the minutes of August 16, 2023. Andrea Folsom made a motion to approve the *Economic Development Committee minutes of August 16, 2023*. Jim Fredyma seconded. There was no discussion.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Sam Delgado	Yes
Andrea Folsom	Yes

Approved: October 4, 2023

Jim Fredyma	Yes
Ian Hart	Yes
Alexander Pooler	Yes
Steven Whitley	Yes

MOTION PASSED 6-0.

At this time, Louise Carr joined the meeting.

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

1. Review of [Strategic Objectives](#) and [2023 Ongoing Projects](#)

The Committee discussed updates to their Strategic Objectives document. Ms. Wells explained that she would like to make some formatting changes, and the group agreed. Mr. Hart would like to add a column for priority level (i.e. High, Medium, Low). Ms. Folsom would like to add the committee's mission statement and an introduction or outline to the beginning of the document. She expressed that the outreach endeavors continue to be important so that both business owners and the general public can be kept informed about the committee's activities. Additionally, she appreciates the emphasis the group has placed on the regulatory, zoning, and policy action items, as the committee has learned how important that scaffolding is. Mr. Whitley mentioned that business outreach and gathering feedback from businesses should continue to be of high priority and that should be a point of emphasis going forward. Ms. Carr expressed that she previously had concerns that the committee was focused only on village businesses, but these objectives show that the committee has a broader outlook. Ms. Wells thanked the committee for the discussion and will rework the Strategic Objectives and present them at a future meeting.

2. [TIF Districts](#) Discussion

The committee discussed the creation of a new TIF District that would encompass the so-called Bio-Energy property along Maple Street across from the Rowell Covered Bridge. The TIF Plan for the new district would be similar to the Hart's Corner TIF Plan. Ms. Wells will bring draft language to the committee for the next meeting.

3. [Commercial/Industrial Construction Property Tax Exemption \(RSA 72:80-83\)](#)

The committee revisited the idea of recommending to the Select Board that the adoption of this tax exemption be considered at Town Meeting. After some discussion, the group would like to know more about how the exemption has worked in other towns, for example, Henniker. They would like to know what types of businesses have used it, what for, and whether it has been an incentive for growth. Ms. Wells will look into this and report back at the next meeting.

UPDATES

1. [Zoning Amendments](#) Draft Language

Ms. Wells reported that the proposed amendments have been submitted to the Planning Board for their consideration.

2. Riverway Park

Ms. Wells provided the committee with an update about the Department of Public Works' plan to loam and seed the park during the week of September 11, following the final outdoor Farmer's Market. Additionally, invasive species will be removed and native plantings will be installed for erosion control along the riverbank at no cost to the Town (through a grant program being administered by the Merrimack River Watershed Council).

3. Water/Sewer Expansion

Ms. Wells updated the group that a Sewer Superintendent is soon to be hired. Additionally, she updated the group on the ongoing Asset Management program being carried out with a grant from NH DES. She is in ongoing discussions with the Town's water/sewer engineers regarding expansion of both systems up to I-89 and to the west of I-89.

4. Grants Update

- a. [AARP Community Challenge Grant](#) (Walk Audits) – Mr. Hart reported that he participated in the most recent Walk Audit and had a fantastic experience. He enjoyed great conversation and the group made interesting observations. He noted that he became mindful of the potential challenges that exist in walking between, for example, the Slusser Center and the Post Office, especially for anyone with mobility challenges.
- b. [Community Center Investment Program](#) – Ms. Wells is working on gathering necessary information/documentation for the various projects. The group will discuss this topic at the next meeting.

5. Business Outreach Update

Mr. Delgado and Ms. Carr reported that they met with Ms. Wells to plan business outreach activities. They plan to organize a business breakfast and a business 'happy hour.' Ms. Folsom asked if the whole committee should attend and all agreed they should if members are available. Ms. Carr explained that since the housing shortage is such a pressing issue for employers, there may also be potential to coordinate with the Housing Committee.

6. EDC Budget

Ms. Wells informed the group that CIP requests are due soon and budget proposals are due in October. The EDC's budget will be a discussion item at the next meeting.

7. Other Board/Committee Updates (as necessary)

None at this time.

OTHER

Public Comment

Mr. Clay brought up the location of the snowmobile trail through Riverway Park and how that might be affected by any upcoming work. Ms. Wells responded that the work will not impede snowmobile travel. Ms. Mitchell asked for clarification about the earlier discussion regarding details in the minutes. Mr. Hart clarified.

Upcoming meetings: **FIRST WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH AT 6:00PM**
October 4, 2023 6:00pm Town Hall
November 1, 2023 6:00pm Town Hall
December 6, 2023 6:00pm Town Hall

ADJOURNMENT

Andrea Folsom moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Sam Delgado. There was no discussion.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Louise Carr	Yes
Sam Delgado	Yes
Andrea Folsom	Yes
Jim Fredyma	Yes
Ian Hart	Yes
Alexander Pooler	Yes
Steven Whitley	Yes

MOTION PASSED 7-0.

There being no other business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 7:36 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Anna Wells
Economic Development Director