MILTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Type: **Regular**
Date: **Wednesday, January 6, 2016**
Time: **4:00 p.m.**
Place: **Municipal Building Town Manager's Conference Room**
Address: **43 Bombardier Road Milton, VT 05468**
Contact: **(802) 893-1186**
Website: **www.miltonvt.org**

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1. CALL TO ORDER
The meeting was called to order at 3:59 p.m.

2. ATTENDANCE
Members Present: Donna Barlow Casey, Town Manager and Chair; Ann Bradshaw, Interim Superintendent of Schools; Bob Lombard, Community Representative; Louis Mossey, Community Representative; Courtney Lamdin, Business Representative; Tony Micklus, Business Representative; Lori Donna, Community Representative
Members Absent: Jeanne O'Bryan
Staff Present: Jacob Hemmerick, Planning Director; Erik Wells, Director of Administration & Community Services
Public Present: Curt Carter

3. PUBLIC FORUM
None.

4. AGENDA REVIEW
Additions: None.
Deletions: None.

5. STAFF UPDATE
None.

6. OLD BUSINESS
None.

7. NEW BUSINESS

7(A). Election of Officers
Staff reviewed the election process and explained the role of the Vice-Chair and Clerk. Elections were held:

- MOTION to elect Micklus as Clerk; motion SECONDED and CARRIED.
- MOTION to elect Interim Superintendent of Schools as Vice-Chair; motion SECONDED and CARRIED.

7(B). Regular Meeting Day/Time

The Commission discussed scheduling conflicts and agreed upon the second Wednesday of each month at 4:00 p.m. as their Regular meeting date and time.

7(C). Procedural Bylaws of the EDC

Staff reviewed the procedural bylaws of the EDC, noting relevant edits that have occurred. The following topics were reviewed:

- duties and terms of Commissioners;
- code of conduct;
- procedural formats and order of business;
- attendance;
- determining when a quorum has been reached;
- statutory requirements;
- conflicts of interest.

MOTION to APPROVE the Procedural Bylaws of the EDC as presented; motion SECONDED and CARRIED.

7(D). EDC Structure/Goals

The EDC structure was reviewed and goals discussed. Staff presented goals that were listed in the 2013 Comprehensive Plan, and asked Commissioners to prioritize those goals. The following were briefly discussed: community outreach, streetscape planning, coordination with outside agencies such as the Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce, and public infrastructure.

Lamdin questioned some of the listed goals, stating that while the EDC supports the goals, the EDC is not actively working toward some of them. For example, Lamdin felt that natural gas expansion in the Town core (as public infrastructure) was more of a policy statement the EDC supports, rather than a goal that the EDC is actively working toward. Lamdin inquired about making the goals more specific. Barlow Casey suggested each Commissioner review the listed goals and bring their suggestions back to the next meeting. This was agreed upon.

7(E). Milton 4D & Other Infrastructure Projects

Wells gave a recap of the "Milton: Defining Downtown from the Diner to the Dam" (M4D) streetscaping project that the Town has undertaken. In 2015, voters approved a bond for the project, and the Town has contracted with consulting firm LandWorks and engineering firm Dubois & King to assist with the project. Community forums have been held and substantial feedback was obtained. The firms are working now to present a conceptual design to the Selectboard in the near future.

7(F). Interim Zoning & Zoning Bylaw 2016 Amendment

Staff gave an overview of the project and described the work that has occurred thus far. The Planning Commission's timeline was reviewed. Among many objectives, the amendment aims to:

- address the reasons Interim Zoning was put in place;
- unify the Zoning Regulations and Subdivision regulations;
- clearly define expectations;

- address common issues and language in the current regulations that Staff have found problematic;
- streamline the application process to assist applicants.

7(G). EDC Project Proposal: Business/Development Summit

Barlow Casey proposed that the EDC host a Business and Development Summit, the purpose of which would be to reignite passion and interest in the EDC, collect ideas and information from the business community, and bring them back to the EDC for discussion. Brainstorming followed, and the following ideas were brought forth:

- The summit should be well-organized and a process should be developed to facilitate productive conversation. This is where a facilitator would be of great assistance. The Chair mentioned there are several skilled groups in Vermont that will help facilitate the day, at no cost.
- A guest speaker would be a great component of the summit, as this would help garner interest and enthusiasm. The key note speech could serve as a focal point for the summit and provide valuable information.
- The location of the summit was discussed, and the idea of a local business hosting the meeting was well received.

A roundtable discussion followed, with many ideas being bounced about. The reasons businesses do -or do not- choose Milton were discussed. Donna mentioned that many of the businesses she's spoken with worry that they do not know what type of business could go in next to them, and that the Town allows too many different uses along the Route 7 corridor. She has also been told by business owners that Milton is simply not attractive to them. Several Commissioners agreed that Milton suffers from an image problem, both internally and externally. The solution to this problem is not an easy one. Barlow Casey mentioned all of the strengths and possibilities that she sees in Milton, but noted that the EDC needs to develop a clear short-term vision as to what they could ask of the business community, and vice versa. Barlow Casey remarked that the energy, innovation, creativity and expertise that LandWorks brought to the M4D project really changed the conversation, and she would like to see that happen in the EDC as well. Milton has many wonderful attributes, and these need to be celebrated and shared publicly.

The challenges of Economic Development were discussed. The possibilities of some of the remaining open parcels were brought up, and Carter commented that a specific business can't be forced in to a specific spot; rather an environment must be created that makes it attractive to the business to locate itself there. It was agreed that the Commissioners must identify what they want and strategically go after it, as Economic development does not "just happen." Barlow Casey suggested the Commission brainstorm a group of people to invite to the summit, and ask themselves, "How do we start to integrate the downtown that the Town has envisioned with the needs of developers?"

The Commissioners discussed the need to look at the downtown area as a whole, start with a blank slate, and get creative. All agreed that the EDC must look beyond brick-and-mortar storefronts, and instead focus on creating an atmosphere that will naturally bring the brick-and-mortar stores

to the area. The conversation focused on making Milton a destination. Many ideas were mentioned, including expanding on already-successful events such as:

- the 4th of July
- the annual Car Show
- the Music in the Park series
- the Monster Mile

Barlow Casey suggested the Stannard House could sponsor or host re-enactments. Donna suggested an ice rink, which residents seem enthusiastic about. Lombard thought an equestrian event could be very successful. All agreed that the Recreation committee should be brought in for discussion.

Next Steps: Staff will research: a place/time for summit meeting, a possible facilitator that can be obtained from the community, a key note speaker, and will begin general organization of the event.

MOTION by Lamdin to authorize Staff to organize the Milton EDC's Business & Economic Development summit; SECOND by Mossey. Unanimously APPROVED.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

9. MINUTES

9(A). Approval of the Minutes of February 11, 2015 was unanimously tabled.

10. ADJOURNED

MOTION by Mossey to adjourn at 5:28 p.m.; SECONDED by Lamdin. Unanimously APPROVED.

Minutes approved by the Commission this _____ day of _____, 2016.

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Donna Barlow Casey, Chair /kt

Draft filed with the Town Clerk this 11th **day of** January**, 2016**

Filed with the Town Clerk this _____ day of _____, 2016