

Town of Haverhill
Economic Development Committee
Minutes of Meeting
July 25, 2011

Present: Connie Smith, Liz Shelton, Kevin Shelton, Rich Clifford, Homer May, Jim Hobbs, Jeff Gould, Scott Nichols, Richard Fabrizio, Howard Hatch, Dick Guy, Nancy Millette Doucett, Nathan Brown, Shawn Bigelow, Scott Moody, Edward Patten, Timothy Boudreau, Bob Fagnant, Wayne Fortier, Wendy Warcholik, Glenn English.

Agenda: See attached

Wayne Fortier opened the meeting at 6:35 pm. He read the procedure for keeping minutes and introduced State Senator Jeannie Forrester. The following officers were elected unanimously:

Chair – Kevin Shelton

Vice Chair – Connie Smith

Scribe – Glenn English

Kevin Shelton chaired the balance of the meeting. It was decided that the meeting would run no longer than 2 hours and be devoted to discussing the first two of the following goals:

Goal One: To accurately identify the current business climate that exists in Haverhill.

Goal Two: To formulate ideas and strategies for improvement.

Goal Three: To enhance our support for existing businesses within the community.

Goal Four: To develop strategies to attract new development.

Major Discussion Points:

Nathan Brown identified problem of getting visitors to stay in Town for more than a day and that despite new visitors coming in we were losing our kids who were all leaving the area because of lack of jobs

Liz Shelton said her business was doing well with an influx of visitors from Mass, Conn.

Nancy Doucett said that a Town Chamber of Commerce needs to be established.

Wayne Fortier pointed to the success of Belfast, Maine which was one of the hand-outs. He related the problem in getting Central Street swept. He sighted the problem of limited sewer allocation for the Business Park.

Connie Smith suggested we break down the different issues and address them separately so that each area could be worked on.

Jim Hobbs suggested a professional website for the Town. Scott Nichols agreed and said when you “google” Haverhill you don’t get good info.

Howard Hatch said that the young people who stay in the area can’t read or write and that is the employment pool that is available.

Nathan said he has heard of things happening but hasn’t really seen it. Nothing happening in Business Park or downtown Woodsville (Henderson Block).

Wendy Warcholik said that we should focus on helping businesses that are here – Business Outreach by addressing utility issues, downtown initiatives.

Connie preferred that we deal with infrastructure first to spur existing and new businesses. Nathan agreed. What is our existing infrastructure and focus on improving it. Connie asked the Town to report back to the Committee on its marketing of the Business Park.

Nathan said the Town is archaic and dead. Cell service and other utilities are inadequate and behind other places.

Howard said don’t give Business Park lots away like the Town did for Woodsville Industries. He said he knew that they shouldn’t get personal but the main problem was that everything goes through Glenn English and he and the office are negative.

Nathan felt the return on investment in the Business Park was too slow.

Dick Fabrizio said the Conn River Valley is a great place for visitors and Rt. 302 has a heavy traffic flow to and from White Mountains which we should take advantage of. He said there are 30 or so good businesses in downtown Woodsville.

Shawn Bigelow said there was a lack of funding ability for his District to fix the water pressure issue in the Business Park.

Edward Patten said the Town should buy the Henderson Block for a dollar and raze it for a parking area. He said the main problem is to abolish the precincts and all the fire departments and act like one Town.

Wayne said the elimination of precincts would be difficult but we need to improve communication between them and the Town. The Town needs to step up and help fund precinct improvements which

help the Town such as the expansion of the Woodsville Treatment Plant and the North Haverhill water system.

Howard said volunteerism is dying out. We should pay the Selectboard members more since they are the CEO's of the Town and so that they can get things done. He constantly hears that things are not getting taken care of.

Nancy volunteered to be the Town Promoter for free as long as she has an office and a phone.

Nathan asked for an agenda for each meeting in advance. Ed Patten said there should be a regular monthly meeting night for the Committee. It was decided that the Committee should meet every fourth Wednesday of the month at 6:30 pm at the Town Offices and that meetings would not exceed two hours. Connie suggested we keep in touch between meetings on individual issues, maybe set up issue subcommittees.

Next meeting would be August 24th and the subject will be "Infrastructure".

Jeannie Forrester suggested a S.W.O.T . analysis for the Town, a visioning session, and a retail market analysis. CDBG grants for infra structure improvements. Glenn English said that federal and state grants were used to build the Business Park infrastructure.

Ed Patten made a motion to adjourn seconded by Nathan Brown and all approved.

Meeting adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Minutes transcribed by Glenn English.