

Haverhill (NH) Entrepreneurial Encouragement Committee -- HEEC

October 4, 2019

Ms. Brigitte Codling, Town Manager
Town of Haverhill
2975 Dartmouth College Highway,
North Haverhill, NH 03774

Dear Brigitte:

At our monthly meeting on September 25, the Haverhill Entrepreneurial Encouragement Committee (HEEC) discussed again the importance of keeping you updated on our activities and soliciting your input as we move forward. As you know, we are sending you our monthly minutes, but we also decided to send you this letter with additional information. We welcome you to share it with the Select Board and, of course, you are always welcome to attend any of our meetings on the fourth Wed. at 6 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for October 23.

As you know, at the April 13-14, 2018 "Better Haverhill" forum, residents identified supporting businesses and new business creation as high priorities for our town. As a result, interested citizens created the HEEC with a goal to support existing businesses, help grow new entrepreneurial ventures, and expand the town's tax base, including:

- strengthening lines of communication between the local government and businesses
- identifying and supporting initiatives to create and grow businesses in Haverhill
- disseminating information to new and potential businesses on start-up and operational aspects of owning a business
- creating a mentorship program connecting current and retired business owners with those looking to start a new business
- strengthening relationships between Haverhill schools and businesses
- supporting efforts to market business properties.

We conducted a survey of Haverhill businesses and issued a report dated January 24, 2018. We made a presentation on this report to the Select Board on February 4, 2019 and sent you a copy on May 11, soon after you started as Town Manager. In our report (attached) and at the February meeting with the Board, we made a number of recommendations including these addressed to the Select Board:

Cell Phone/Broadband Solutions. This needs to be a high priority activity for the town, and we urge the town officials to actively seek support including possible grant funds.

A More Proactive, Business-friendly Town Government with a Strategic Marketing Plan. We suggest that Haverhill develop and implement a comprehensive strategic plan for town that includes marketing to attract outside businesses.

Business Development as a Town Manager Priority. We recommend that this be emphasized in the job description.

Promoting Town Unity. We encourage a fresh look at ways we can promote Haverhill as one town, not just a collection of precincts, including invigorating the website with a prominent section on business promotion as well as creating pro-business materials that promote the town as a whole.

Greater Collaboration with School Board. We believe that the town and business environment would be strengthened by greater collaboration and regular meetings between the Select Board and School Board and between the Town Manager and Superintendent.

We are interested in any updates you can provide us relative of these five recommendations. Has there been any discussion of these topics among the Select Board members or do you have any other information or suggestions?

With respect to the first item, as you know we have been meeting with a number of vendors and stakeholders to discuss possible cell phone/broadband solutions. We are planning a public meeting on Tuesday November 5 at 7 pm at Haverhill Cooperative Middle School and appreciate your support of this important effort. Of course, we welcome you and any members of the Select Board to attend and would welcome you to share a few words with those in attendance if you would like.

We look forward to hearing from you and are always available to meet with you or the Board to answer any questions or hear your ideas and suggestions. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Kevin Shelton, Doug Teschner, Jeff Stimson, Wayne Fortier, Joe Mitchell

Attachment: HEEC Haverhill NH Business Survey, dated January 24, 2019