

Windham Economic Development Committee

Meeting Minutes Friday, December 10, 2010 (DRAFT)

PRESENT: Al Letizio, Jay Yennaco, Sally D'Angelo, Amy Spencer, Laura Scott, Bob Young, Sy Wrenn, Paul Gosselin, Diane Wasilisian and Ralph Valentine

EXCUSED: Bev Donovan and Charlie McMahon

Meeting called to order at 7:40 and attendance taken.

Bob Young updated us on the survey. There are about 300 full responses (56 incomplete) received to date, with 3 weeks to go. We need about 550 responses. There was discussion about how to generate more responses. All WEDC members to try to email friends/colleagues to encourage participation. Ads will continue to run. Some members offered to ask local businesses help distribute surveys. Laura will email the survey for those who can make copies for distribution. Ralph will call John O'Toole at Tribune to see if he would write an article, and Frank Bass to see if we could piggyback off of the school board survey.

Ralph updated WEDC on Strategic Planning. The Committee has not made much progress in the past 2 months due to time spent by some sub-committee Zoning amendments (drafting them and attending meetings) and efforts by the Chair to insure that the Phase 3 sewer study was included in the 2011 CIP. All members agreed the Plan was critical but good idea to take the Survey results into account. Bob reminded the sub-committee to keep WEDC goals in mind; Jay thought should take things slow / methodical.

Amy updated us on the Harvest Fest. It was a well-attended event with about 34 businesses participating. The WEDC did not have much direct contact with Windham businesses from planning to the final thank you letter. We do realize the event is a Recreation event and thank them for the opportunity, but it is very important for the WEDC to have as many touch points with businesses as possible.

Laura discussed the status of changes to zoning amendments. With some pretty good resistance to some of the bigger changes, a lot of work is needed to advance the proposed changes. Laura and Ralph had been attending PB meetings. Al also attended and spoke as a citizen and business owner. A discussion about proposing too many changes this year ensued. Ralph stated that if no major changes were made this year, that would not be detrimental to development in the short term. Others thought that the public had sufficient time and notice to deal with the changes and they should get more involved sooner in the process. Laura is hoping that many of the housekeeping changes which are needed would be approved. Paul thought getting buy-in from some of the other committees, ie ConCom, Historic, etc. would help.

Laura reminded us that the PTA-WEDC Expo is Jan 27 at the high school which event involved the Windham Business Partners Club. Also, the Business Education series was being planned for Feb thru May, with one event each month. Topics considered: social media, 7 habits of highly effective people, how to start a business by SCORE. Enterprise Bank would be one of the sponsors.

Ralph reported that \$65,000 for Phase 3 of the Sewer study was included in the 2011 CIP. Laura and Ralph had attended PB meetings to speak on the importance of the funding. With so much time between now and voting in March, we have to keep an eye on the funding. BoS could for some reason decide to take it out prior to the vote.

The 2011 meeting schedule will be published soon

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded at about 9:10.