

Windham Economic Development Committee
Draft Meeting Minutes
March 11, 2011

Present: Ralph Valentine , Chairman; Jay Yennaco, Vice Chair (arrived at 8:15am); Amy M. Spencer, Secretary; Sally D'Angelo (left at 8:48), Paul Gosselin, Bob Young, Bev Donovan (left at 8:51), Diane Wasilisian (arrived at 7:35)

Absent: Sy Wrenn, Charlie McMahon

Excused: Al Letizio,

Also in attendance: Laura Scott, Community Development Director, Donna Morris, Greater Salem Area Chamber of Commerce, Jonathan Sycamore, Planning Board, and Heath Partington, ZBA

Chairman Valentine called meeting to order at 7:32am

Review of Meeting Minutes for January

Motion to accept and approve the minutes as amended made by Bob Young, Paul Gosselin seconded. Vote 8-0-0

Greater Salem Area Chamber of Commerce

Bev Donovan, Donna Morris, Sally D'Angelo, and Laura Scott gave updates on forthcoming Chamber events.

Laura talked about the July 20th Chamber Business After Hours Barbecue and Baseball Event at Searles Chapel and Function Facility. This event will highlight the partnership between the Chamber and the town while showcasing how the facility can be used for functions. Jay Yennaco talked about Windham Baseball being involved with this event and their intent to partner more with local businesses. Laura is excited to create an interesting partnership with Baseball, Chamber, and Searles School for this event.

Sally talked about intentions to schedule a lunch in every town to meet with businesses as part of a member-driven-programming outreach. This is tentatively scheduled to take place on Fridays between now and June 10th to find out what businesses would like to see from the Chamber.

Tuesday May 3rd is the tentative date for an Economic Development Event at Castleton. Showcasing an Economist with 3 stories of development coming up in our area. Bev is now on the list for the Chambers Economic Development Committee to act as liaison between two groups. This group is populated by members from every town.

Donna talked about the Chambers role of supporting and getting involved in future WEDC and Department Events while continuing to support the business community in general.

Community Survey Results

Ralph and Bob presented the survey to the Board of Selectmen and Planning Board in February. Bob Young feels that both boards were satisfied with how the survey was conducted and the integrity of the results. During the Planning Board Presentation a member asked for an executive summary. Another member of the board suggested that the presentation be used as the executive summary.

Discussion about the negative spin and publicity of the “not like Salem” article, survey results. Laura handled damage control with potential businesses and in a letter to the Salem Selectmen pointing out that Salem is on both lists of least and most and emphasizing that the article was not reflective of the Committee or other Town representatives.

A motion to accept the presentation as the Executive Summary to be available on the website was made by Jay Yennaco, Seconded by Bev Donavan. Passed 8-0-0

Chairman Updates

Sewer Study, Phase III did not pass at Town Meeting. We missed our window of opportunity to incorporate sewer before completion of I-93. Discussion about accepting private funds to complete the study and educate the town about the results and benefits of moving forward in this direction. Laura felt that this was not feasible due to the vote and would not be a good use of time or money. The general consensus of the committee is that the results of the vote are highly unfortunate and will negatively impact certain types of development and businesses from choosing to locate in town. Bob Young thanked Laura and Ralph for all of their hard work on this process.

Recreation Master Plan Update. That plan has been worked on and will be presented to the Recreation Committee for discussion on the 17th. Once the Committee is satisfied it will be presented to the Planning Board.

Cost of Community Services Study. Conservation Commission did the study and it was presented at their last meeting. Some edits have been made and a final copy will be made available shortly. The results are advantageous to commercial and industrial development.

Community Development Department Updates, Laura Scott

The Business Education Series has been well attended and will most likely continue to be a regular biannual offering. Deb Titus, Organize and Prioritize for Business Success on March 24th at Breath of Sun. Diane Wasilisian, Social Media & You on April 28th at WHS. Timothy M. Roberts, Networking 101 on May 23rd at Searles School and Chapel

All but 2 of the proposed Zoning Amendments passed at Town Meeting. The sign ordinance passed loosening a lot of the previous restrictions and the citizen petition to rezone parcels along 28 passed. Workforce Housing Amendment failed leaving us in violation of State Law.

Planning Board will be working on design review guidelines for Gateway, Neighborhood Business, PB&T starting in April.

Wall St. public meeting was held in February and all the material is on website on Wall St. Page.

Laura will be working on the Community Development Departments Strategic Plan, which is due April 1st, and will share it with WEDC at the April meeting.

The Web Site will be done by the end of the month

The marketing material will be distributed to DRED, elected officials, and will be sent out to commercial brokers by the end of the month.

The 24th is the Souper Bowl at WHS. 10 Businesses were secured to donate soup for this fundraiser to benefit New Horizons

Artistic Creation was selected the National Matrix Share the Love Award winner. They will be doing events all year in partnership with local organizations

Community Clean Up on April 16th Go Green.

Spring into Savings Event in the process of being planned to welcome new businesses to Windham.

Other Business

March 24th Meeting was cancelled. Next meeting is Friday, April 8, 2011 7:30am

Motion by Bob Young to adjourn the meeting at 9:10. Seconded by Paul Gosselin. 6-0-0

Submitted by Amy Spencer, WEDC Secretary