

TOWN OF STOW
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
AND INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION

Minutes of the March 22, 2018 Economic Development and Industrial Commission Meeting

Members Present: Kevin Whalen, Tom Farnsworth, Bob Collings, Serena Howlett, Jen Gero

Absent: Andrew Bluestein, Jean-Claude Sureau

Kevin Whalen called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

Meeting Minutes of February 8, 2018

Tom Farnsworth moved to approve the minutes as amended.

Bob Collings Seconded.

VOTED: (4-0) Unanimously in favor (Kevin Whalen, Tom Farnsworth, Bob Collings, Serena Howlett- Yea).

Member Updates

Serena Howlett said that as an abutter to Linear Realty, she received a public hearing notice with the Conservation Commission regarding the installation of water filtration facilities, and asked for more information. Jesse Steadman said that Linear Realty has requested to amend their existing Order of Conditions in order to comply with new standards from Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection on manganese levels.

Kevin Whalen said that he recently met the owner of Great Road Gun Shop, and noted that the EDIC should ensure that welcome letters are being sent to all new businesses. Kevin Whalen and the EDIC agreed to invite the owner to a future meeting as part of their ongoing interviews with local business owners.

The EDIC asked for an update on the Lower Village Traffic Safety Improvement Project. Jesse Steadman said that the project is ready to begin as soon as the snow melts.

Jen Gero arrived.

Small Business Administration Workshop

Valerie Oorthuys said that she had recently spoken with Lisa Welch of the SBA, and that they would be willing to bring workshops to Stow for the benefit of local businesses.

Valerie Oorthuys said that the workshop could cover a range of subjects, such as access to capital and lending institutions, business counseling opportunities, financing, and how to grow your network. The EDIC agreed to host an SBA workshop for entrepreneurs, and will look to schedule the workshop in May.

Job Fair

The EDIC reviewed a draft schedule for planning a Stow job fair. Jen Gero offered to coordinate the job fair, noting that the Stow Women's Business Alliance and Super Stow Moms would be interested in organizing as well.

The EDIC agreed to hold the job fair at the Pompositticut Community Center in late June or July, either on a weekend morning or on a weekday evening, depending on the availability of the function room. Jesse Steadman said that members could come to the April 5th Community Housing Fair to see how the room is set up.

The EDIC offered suggestions to increase the reach of the job fair. Tom Farnsworth noted a state organization that could offer grants for job training. Jesse Steadman said that Cyndy Bremer of the Stow Independent provided a contact at Nashoba Regional High School and noted that there are local job training programs that place young adults with disabilities with jobs. Bob Collings said that employers looking for interns should also be invited to the job fair.

The EDIC discussed whether the fair should be restricted to Stow based businesses, agreeing that they would focus on Stow first, and if there is a need for more businesses to attend, businesses in surrounding towns could also be invited.

Sign Bylaw Next Steps

The EDIC reviewed a letter from the Planning Board which lays out next steps for the revision of the Sign Bylaw. The EDIC agreed to discuss revisions further at a time when Len Golder of the Planning Board could attend a meeting as a Working Group member. The EDIC agreed that they would first like to discuss the legal framework of a bylaw, prior to specifying priority changes they would like to make.

Preparation for Interviews with Local Business Owners

Serena Howlett noted that she prepared questions to ask of Linear Realty, which are included in the meeting packets. Bob Collings said that he felt that the EDIC should exclude questions regarding businesses' finances. The EDIC agreed that they are most interested in focusing on any concerns the owners may have and how the EDIC can be most helpful.

Meeting Adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Valerie Oorthuys