

TOWN OF STOW  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION

Minutes of the September 23, 2021 Economic Development & Industrial Commission Meeting

Members Present: Thomas Farnsworth, Bob Collings, Serena Howlett, Mary Bradt-Mintz, Kevin Whalen,  
Andrew Bluestein

Thomas Farnsworth called the meeting to order at 5:30

**Previous Meeting Minutes**

*Thomas Farnsworth moved to approve the minutes of the September 9, 2021 meeting as written  
Serena Howlett seconded*

**Roll Call Vote:** Thomas Farnsworth -**Yea**; Bob Collings -**Yea**; Serena Howlett -**Yea**;  
Mary Bradt-Mintz -**Yea**; Kevin Whalen -**Yea**, Andrew Bluestein -**Yea**

**Appointment with Sarah Cressy, President & CEO, Assabet Valley Chamber of Commerce -  
Massachusetts Innovation Network Application for FY22 Regional Economic Development  
Organization Grant (REDO) Program – Letter of Support**

Sarah Cressy introduced herself to the EDIC as the president and CEO of the Assabet Valley Chamber of Commerce for the past 30 years. Sarah Cressy recounted the history and accomplishments various organizations which are seeking funding by the REDO program and requested the EDIC submit a letter of support. Commission members asked several clarifying questions about the targeted groups for continued programming and previous activities.

Sarah Cressy summarized that the grant will allow for continuation and further growth of entrepreneurial educational modules and existing business mentorship programs. Sarah Cressy said that letters of support from area economic development committees demonstrate support that makes the grant application more attractive.

Serena Howlett asked if the Commission should use language provided by Sarah Cressy for a letter of support. Sarah Cressy said that the letter is just an example and may be customized by Stow as needed.

*Kevin Whalen moved to draft a letter in support of the Massachusetts Innovation Network FY22 REDO application  
Tom Farnsworth seconded*

**Roll Call Vote:** Thomas Farnsworth -**Yea**; Bob Collings -**Yea**; Serena Howlett -**Yea**;  
Mary Bradt-Mintz -**Yea**; Kevin Whalen -**Yea**, Andrew Bluestein -**Yea**

Sarah Cressy requested that the EDIC provide the letter of support before the next Monday.

Bob Collings said that he is interested in getting more information about how educational modules have been conducted, and suggested that Sarah Cressy collect zip codes from attendees. Sarah Cressy invited

EDIC members to join the mailing list of the Assabet Valley Chamber of Commerce. Bob Collings asked if Sarah Cressy had reached out to new principal of Nashoba High School, Sarah Cressy said they have not, but would be interested in having a closer relationship with the school given the reputation of having an excellent robotics program.

### **Member Updates**

Mary Bradt-Mintz said that she intended to join this committee years ago and is happy to finally be able to follow through. Mary Bradt-Mintz recalled her background as a businessperson and retail merchant, as well as her background serving on a school committee. Mary Bradt-Mintz said she is looking forward to helping the EDIC further their mission of making Stow a better community in which to do business.

### **Membership with Greater Merrimack Valley Convention & Visitors Bureau**

Assistant Planner Malcolm Ragan said that Stow Business could benefit from listing in the marketing materials distributed by the Greater Merrimack Valley Convention & Visitors Bureau. Tom Farnsworth said that it could be an opportunity to more actively market some Stow attractions in the region. Serena Howlett raised concern that the \$350 fee could be better spent on some other way to market local business. Mary Bradt-Mintz raised the idea that the EDIC could work closer with the local cultural council to promote Stow businesses. Bob Collings said that he is concerned that other groups could continue to ask for funds and membership dues from the EDIC. Tom Farnsworth said that the EDIC should table this discussion until members can do more research. Tom said that the EDIC should hold off on enrolling at this time.

### **Ongoing Business**

Assistant Planner Malcolm Ragan updated the EDIC that a private, athletics-focused school has proposed to purchase and develop the Bose site. Serena Howlett asked if the private school would provide some tax revenue benefits for the town. Malcolm Ragan said that the proposed use would be for-profit and the investors have proposed investing roughly \$28 million into the site.

Andrew Bluestein said that some business owners will be circulating a petition to present to Special Town Meeting regarding the enforcement of the sign bylaw.

Bob Collings said that the abandoned gas station in Lower Village would be suitable for Electric Vehicle charging stations, and listed reasons why that would be convenient for Lower Village shoppers. Members agreed that that would be a good use for the site.

Kevin Whalen said there are rumors about Butternut Golf Course selling to an area nursery.

*Thomas Farnsworth moved to adjourn*

*Kevin Whalen seconded*

Respectfully submitted,  
Malcolm Ragan