

Committee Members

Zachary Knowlton, Chair
Khalid Abdi, Vice Chair
Richard Di Iulio, Member
Mark Schultz, Member
Cassandra McKenzie, Member
Jennifer Kendall, Member
Liam McDermott, Member



TOWN OF MEDWAY

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes

Thursday, July 15, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

Medway Town Hall

155 Village Street, Medway

Members Present: Zach Knowlton, Chair; Khalid Abdi, Vice Chair; Mark Schultz, Cassandra McKenzie, Rich Di Iulio, Jennifer Kendall, Liam McDermott

Also Present:

Barbara J. Saint Andre, Director, Community and Economic Development
Michelle Cahoon, Recording Secretary

Chair Knowlton opened the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

New Business

Annual Re-organization of Committee: Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

Mr. Abdi nominated Mr. Knowlton to remain as the Committee Chair. Ms. McKenzie seconded the nomination. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

Mr. Di Iulio nominated Mr. Abdi to remain as Vice Chair. Ms. McKenzie seconded the nomination. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

Update on Cultural Council Initiatives and potential EDC involvement

Jennifer Kendall provided an update on Cultural Council initiatives. Ms. Kendall stated that Art in the Park at Choate Park has been well attended and well received by the community. Ms. Kendall stated that the Cultural Council is now preparing for the Pixie Festival and Bridges Event. Some questions emerged as to what the Pixie Festival is and Ms. Kendall shared general information about the event.

Assistance to business owners affected by Covid 19 emergency

Ms. Saint Andre opened the conversation by sharing with the Committee that she has been in communication with Greg Bunn of MassHires Metrowest South in regards to the current challenge of getting employees at local businesses. Ms. Saint Andre shared that unemployment rules have reverted back to old rules, which means those individuals on unemployment are required to document their efforts at job searching. Ms. Saint Andre shared that there will be a statewide MassHire job fair event in August- MassHire would welcome any Medway businesses to participate. The event will take place virtually and is a statewide push to connect businesses with potential employees. Ms. Saint Andre will speak with the Medway Business Council in regards to

joining the event. MassHire has Business Reps. who are willing to go out to businesses in Medway to provide assistance. Mass Hire is a free service that has both training and resources available. Ms. Saint Andre stated that if the members know of businesses that may want to participate, the businesses may email her or MassHire directly. Mr. Knowlton questioned why businesses are facing the challenge of finding employees. He asked is it the quality of candidates or lack of applications? Mr. Di Iulio shared that Canobie Lake is closed Monday and Tuesday as it can't get enough staff. Mr. McDermott asked the members if anyone had heard back from school administration as to potentially working with the Guidance Department to create job fairs. Conversation shifted to TC Scoops and its possible plan to run a food truck, as well as the new restaurant, Dynamite Restaurant which is slated to open in the Medway Plaza. Last business to be mentioned was Medway Veterinarian Hospital which may move to the Central Business district.

Reports

Master Plan Committee

Ms. McKenzie stated that the MPC received phase one of the Master Plan last month. The document is 200 pages and contains a lot of valuable insights and information. Ms. McKenzie shared the intended visibility impact of tabling at events such as farmers market, movie night at Choate Park and summer concerts. Ms. McKenzie shared the Master Plan Committee's intention of "Meeting In a Box"- small gatherings of 4 to 5 people. Each MP committee member will hopefully host one. The goal of the sessions are to educate and get feedback in a small intimate setting as well as to create a ripple effect so more people host a meeting. Get everyone in town involved. Ms. McKenzie shared that the Committee needs people to complete the 38 question survey. MP Committee will report out the results. Mr. Schultz asked if a person is able to save the survey and finish later? Ms. McKenzie believed this to be accurate. Ms. McKenzie stated that there are also hard copy surveys in the Town Hall. Ms. McKenzie stated that the feedback from the survey is what will help to inform Phase 2 of the Master Plan Project. Mr. Shultz asked Ms. McKenzie if he should attend the meetings in person to which Ms. McKenzie replied that the meetings are public.

Use of Economic Data:

Mr. Knowlton mentioned the Strength in Numbers 2021 report. The trend is overall positive with an uptick since Covid bottomed out. No specific data as to what that means for Medway. Town data paints a broad picture. Mr. Knowlton discussed the potential for the Tri-county high school connection as a cross collaboration for filling jobs. Ms. Kendall inquired about skill training. Mr. Knowlton stated that companies appear to be moving towards skill training as incentives to finding employees.

Planning and Economic Development Board

Mr. Di Iulio stated the Board is working on getting up to speed on Battery Energy Storage Systems which will take up a lot of the Board's time. Mr. Di Iulio stated that the Board plans to use a consultant. He has heard concerns by some members of the community that the Board won't get the October report done on time. Mr. Di Iulio stated that a marijuana cultivation company wants to build in the town and that this would be the third such facility in town. Mr. Di Iulio stated that noise and odor can issues. There was discussion around the property at 39 Main Street under construction, with a portion of the units for affordable housing. Glenbrook Way, another affordable housing development, is no longer taking applications (lottery took place last week). The Cutler Street house owned by the Affordable Housing Trust has a buyer, but the sale has not closed yet.

Approval of Meeting Minutes from June 17th, 2021

On a motion made by Mr. Abdi; seconded by Mr. McDermott, the Economic Development

Committee voted to approve the meeting minutes from June 17, 2021, by vote of 6-0-1, with Ms. Kendall abstaining

Next Meeting: August 19th, 2021

On a motion made by Mr. Di Iulio; seconded by Ms. McKenzie, the Economic Development Committee voted unanimously to adjourn at 7:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Cahoon, Recording Secretary

Edited by
Barbara J. Saint Andre, Director
Community and Economic Development