

Committee Members

Khalid Abdi, Chair
Liam McDermott, Vice-Chair
Richard Di Iulio, Member
Mark Schultz, Member
Cassandra McKenzie, Member



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TOWN OF MEDWAY COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes

Thursday, June 15, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.
Medway Town Hall – Sanford Hall
155 Village Street, Medway

Members Present: Khalid Abdi, Chair, Mark Schultz, Liam McDermott, Jessica Chabot, Patrick Herlihy, Larry Presswood

Members Absent: Cassandra McKenzie

Also Present:

Barbara J. Saint Andre, Director, Community and Economic Development
Jeremy Thompson, Planning and Economic Development Coordinator
Stuthi Balaji, Recording Secretary (via phone)
Kristen Salera (via phone)

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

1. New Business

Welcome New Members

The committee welcomed Patrick Herlihy as a new member of the committee!

Re-organization of Committee

On a motion made by Ms. Chabot, seconded by Mr. Abdi, the Committee unanimously voted to appoint Liam McDermott as Chair of the committee.

On a motion made by Mr. Abdi, seconded by Mr. Presswood, the Committee unanimously voted to appoint Mark Schultz as Vice Chair of the committee.

Since Chair McDermott was absent from the meeting, Vice Chair, Mark Schultz led the remainder of the committee meeting.

Initiatives to assist local businesses

Mr. Schultz opened up the floor for any thoughts on how to help local businesses. Ms. Salera mentioned that small businesses without a storefront have been asking for help covering the cost of marketing their business. Compared to brick-and-mortar stores, those without a storefront are struggling with marketing. These businesses are looking for marketing grants. Marketing is a huge cost, it would help if this committee could help connect small businesses with the grants and resources they are looking for. Mr. Abdi inquired whether there were such grants offered in other locations. Ms. Salera mentioned that there

are a few digital marketing grants, but they fill up quickly and have long backlogs. She offered to share a few grants that she has applied for as a small business owner, with the committee. Ms. Chabot proposed that the committee start compiling a list of any grants that might help small businesses to post on the committee's website. Members discussed how to keep the list current and keep track of when grants open and close. Ms. Chabot explained that this list would only be a starting point for small business owners – they would ultimately be responsible for determining deadlines and application requirements. Mr. Herlihy asked if the concern was finding such grants, keeping the resources up to date or helping business owners apply for these grants. Ms. Salera mentioned that it's a combination of those issues. Ms. Chabot suggested that the committee attend a Medway Business Council meeting and ask its members what they are struggling with. Ms. Saint Andre mentioned that our local communications person, Sandy Johnson, routinely highlights local businesses. However, she has had trouble with getting businesses to participate. Ms. Chabot mentioned that local sports teams have been trying to get local businesses to sponsor their teams and perhaps connecting those teams with businesses could help both entities out.

Participation in Medway Pride Day

Mr. Abdi reported that there was a lot of foot traffic, the committee shared a tent with the Medway Business Council. Julie Dennehy helped get 30-40 surveys filled out. Mr. McDermott has the surveys. Ms. Chabot recommended that the Committee have an activity to keep kids busy while adults fill out the survey. Ms. Saint Andre asked if we want to participate in Pride Day again next year. Mr. Abdi noted that this survey was short, which was better for people to fill it out and that we can try the same again next year. Ms. Chabot also mentioned that partnering with the Medway Business Council was a good idea and we should do that again.

Committee Member Recruitment

The committee has an opening for one more member. Ms. Chabot asked Ms. Salera if she would be interested. She stated that she started a business in the middle of the pandemic and has been an active member of community so thinks that she would certainly bring something to the table. Mr. Abdi stated that one other member of the community had also expressed interest and that he would forward his email to the new chair, Mr. McDermott.

Master Plan Initiatives

Ms. Saint Andre explained that the committee has a copy of the master plan includes an action plan, which has a number of items that EDC can help achieve. As an example, she stated that strategy 1A was by nearly unanimous consensus revitalizing Route 109 to make it a much more functional commercial area. There are many other points in the master plan so we don't have to attack this one, but it was the most popular ask. Some members expressed concerns regarding the fact that since these are long term goals, none of the members might be able to see their execution through to the end. Ms. Chabot recommended starting with a few small term projects. She suggested, as an example, working with the Medway Cultural Committee to make the new town parcel on Route 109, next to the Muffin House, a more attractive building. Although the Town is looking at potential re-uses for the site, that won't happen for a while. In the meantime, could we facilitate some short-term uses with the Select Board, such as set up food truck festivals in the parking lot and increase traffic to that space.

Mr. Presswood asked how much room the committee has to improve Route 109. Ms. Saint Andre explained that the town owns one piece of property which is under the jurisdiction of Select Board. Ms. Chabot also explained that there's another property behind Sullivan Tire – the town bought the front parcel and the back parcel was then gifted to the town.

Ms. Chabot suggested that perhaps the committee can talk about the Action Plan but start by talking to Michael Boynton. Route 109 is a very ambitious goal and won't be accomplished imminently. The members discussed foot traffic on 109 and whether there was a way to increase it.

2. Reports

Planning and Economic Development Board

Ms. Chabot reported that there were no open preapplications or permits for anything on Route 109 before the board. Chipotle and Jersey Mikes are going in where the old McDonalds was. They have started renovations on the interior. The new daycare has taken over a good chunk of the parking lot. So, a lot of the traffic will be rerouted. The driveway to Starbucks will be reworked as well. Mr. Presswood asked about the traffic light at the entrance. Ms. Chabot stated that once the medical building next to Walgreens is finished, signal light will be reevaluated, but DPW currently controls that light and has strict rules about its operation. There's a new multi-family development proposed on Summer Street by the firestation, near Independence Lane. Plans are on the website. There are 3 new members on the PEDB.

3. Approval of minutes

On a motion made by Ms. Chabot, seconded by Mr. Presswood, the Committee unanimously voted to approve the minutes from May 18, 2023.

4. Any other business:

Mr. Herlihy inquired whether there is some kind of flyer that small businesses can use. Ms. Saint Andre cautioned that there are specific regulations on what the Town can put in with town water bills. The Town also needs to be cautious on marketing materials and suggested partnering with the business council. Mr. Herlihy offered to join Ms. Chabot at the next Medway Business Council meeting to discuss this matter with them.

5. Next meeting scheduled for July 20, 2023

6. Adjournment

On a motion made by Ms. Chabot, seconded by Mr. Presswood, the Committee unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
Stuthi Balaji

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