



## Town of Warren, Rhode Island

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# Minutes of the Economic Development Board

The Town of Warren, RI Economic Development Board met at a Regular Meeting on September 20, 2010 at 6:00 p.m. at Town Hall, located at 514 Main Street. Board Members present included Davison Bolster, Paula Silva, Karen Dionne, Brandt Heckert, and Linda Brunini. Kristin MacDonald was present at the meeting to serve as Secretary to the EDB. Both Sara Volino and ex officio member Caroline Wells were absent. Town Council member David Frerichs was in attendance.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

### **1. Review and Approval of Minutes from the Regular Meeting of August 16, 2010, and Review and Approval of Minutes from Special Meeting of September 2, 2010**

The minutes from the regular meeting held on August 16, 2010 and the minutes from the special meeting held on September 2, 2010 were reviewed by the members via email. A motion was made to accept the minutes, the motion was seconded, and all members were in favor.

### **2. Discussion and Action on budget for completing banner project**

The Board discussed the current EDB budget and the need to purchase mounting hardware for the decorative banners which have been completed for Main Street. Mr. Heckert made a motion to purchase the hardware for the banners and to have them installed as soon as possible and removed by Thanksgiving, the motion was seconded by Ms. Dionne, and all members were in favor.

### **3. Discussion and Review of Downtown parking signage**

The Board discussed the time recommendations for Downtown parking spaces. Mr. Bolster initially suggested 3 hour time limits for all spaces, with the exclusion of a 1 hour time limit for the small lot on Saunders Street. Mr. Heckert suggested that the Saunders Street lot should have a 15 minute time limit since it primarily services parking for the post office. The Board discussed the merits of 3 hours and 2 hour parking, and also discussed the importance of enforcement of the time limits for parking. Mr. Heckert made a motion to recommend a 2 hour time limit for most Downtown parking spaces and a 15 minute time limit for Saunders Street, Mr. Bolster seconded the motion, and all members were in favor.

Mr. Bolster and Mr. Frerichs agreed to organize a meeting with the Traffic Commission. Mr. Bolster noted that the cost of posts for the signs have doubled over the last year. He stated that he has discussed the possibility of using money from the highway fund to cover the cost of the posts with Town Planner Caroline Wells.

#### **4. Discussion and Review of 2010-2011 EDB Work Plan**

Ms. Brunini led the discussion of the 2010-2011 EDB Work Plan and provided a draft of the updated work plan for the Board to review. Ms. Brunini noted that the outline she has prepared for review is more detailed than the initial EDB work plan. She requested the Board to consider each objective for consideration. The Board discussed the merits of several items, including creating a venue for a Warren Works retreat/seminar for smart growth, a business retention program, an updated marketing brochure program for commercial real estate, and support for agriculture and the community garden. Ms. Brunini asked the Board to consider if the creation of the Warren Arts should remain an objective for the EDB now that Diane Horton is no longer on the Board. Ms. Silva suggested that the EDB could serve the community more efficiently as a liaison to a committee focused on promoting the Warren arts community.

One recommendation offered by Ms. Brunini was to eliminate time limits on items in the work plan; she offered that items in the work plan are an ongoing process. Instead, time limits should be placed on work groups and subcommittees. Mr. Bolster noted the need for a delineation high priority goals, as well as immediate items such as parking, banners, etc. Ms. Silva stated that even though an objective may take a long time to complete that there are short term actions to consider. Ms. Brunini and Ms. Dionne agreed to work together to define short term and long term goals for the EDB.

#### **5. Discussion on status of Liberty Street School**

Ms. Brunini presented the Board with a copy of the Town Council meeting held on September 14, 2010. She stated that she had obtained the copy of the meeting to review the decision made between the Town and Brito Associates regarding the Liberty Street School. Ms. Brunini reported that she had contacted Mr. Brito and stated that the EDB could be facilitators during the 90 day negotiation period in helping the developer understand the town's goals for the Liberty Street School property.

The Board questioned the fact that Ms. Brunini did not read the letter of EDB recommendations for the Liberty Street School at the September 14<sup>th</sup> Town Council meeting. Mr. Bolster reminded the Board that the EDB audience is the public and that the members need to be responsible to the public by following motions with agreed upon actions, such as the reading of the letter. The letter of the EDB's recommendations for the property will be forwarded to Town Council for the October meeting. Mr. Bolster also cautioned the Board about email, stating that the entire Board needs to be vigilant about sending information by email. Mr. Bolster concluded this item by stating that the EDB should go forward in a positive direction. A motion was made by Linda Brunini to arrange

a special meeting with the EDB and Brito Associates regarding the RFEI for the Liberty Street School, the motion was seconded by Ms. Silva, and all members were in favor.

## **6. Update on Narragansett Bay Seafood Co-op**

Mr. Bolster reported that the Co-op is currently in the process of talking to Al Bilideau about the use of his building on the Warren Town Wharf as a seafood processing facility. He reported that in the near future the Co-op will be ready to meet with the Town to seek planning and zoning approval.

## **7. Discussion of Pedestrian Speed Zone**

Due to the time, the Board agreed to postpone this item until a later date.

## **8. Discussion and Review of RI We Mean Business Expo Materials**

Ms. Brunini briefly reported that she had attended the event in the company of Councilman DePasquale and Councilwoman Tattrie. She said that the event was will attended and that the Corliss Center was represented.

## **New Business**

Ms. Brunini expressed her concerns about communication difficulties between EDB Board members due to issues with technology, such as not checking or responding to email in a timely manner, full mailboxes on cellular phones, not being able to open documents electronically, etc. She said that she would like to be able to attend meetings from her Florida residence using Skype or a similar video conferencing program.

Mr. Heckert stated that the Town is currently advertising for new Board members for the EDB.

The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for Monday, October 18, 2010.

Given the time, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristin M. MacDonald

*Minutes submitted by Kristin MacDonald  
October 14, 2010*



