



Town of Warren, Rhode Island

Minutes of the Economic Development Board

The Town of Warren, RI Economic Development Board met at a Regular Meeting on November 15, 2010 at 6:00 p.m. at Town Hall, located at 514 Main Street. Board Members present included Sara Volino, Paula Silva, Karen Dionne, Brandt Heckert, and Spencer Morris. Kristin MacDonald was present at the meeting to serve as Secretary to the EDB. Ex officio member Caroline Wells was in attendance, as well as Town Council members David Frerichs and Davison Bolster. Andre Asselin was in attendance, as well as Linda Brunini.

The meeting was called to order at 6:15 p.m.

1. Review and Approval of Minutes from the Regular Meeting of October 18, 2010

The minutes from the regular meeting held on October 18, 2010 were reviewed by the members via email. A motion was made to approve the minutes with the following corrections:

1. Mr. Bolster (not Mr. Heckert) stated that he would speak to Caroline Wells regarding the posts for the parking signage.
2. Mr. Morris clarified that Keri Cronin is the neighborhood representative for the Liberty Street School.
3. Ms. Silva stated that 7 out of 39 communities in the state are designated arts districts; several communities have Arts Councils and Economic Development boards.

A motion was made to approve the minutes, the motion was seconded, and all members were in favor.

2. Update and Discussion on Liberty Street School

In the discussion of the negotiations for the Liberty Street School, the Board focused on the upcoming workshop scheduled for Thursday, December 2, 2010 at 7 p.m. The Board emphasized the benefits of a mixed-use commercial development for the building as opposed to solely residential use. The Board advocated for the need to have an impartial moderator run the meeting to facilitate the sharing of ideas and concerns between the developer, the Town Council, and neighbors and taxpayers. Suggestions for moderators included June Speakman, Lisa Raiola, and Caroline Wells. Mr. Frerichs agreed that having a moderator run the workshop would help to facilitate the workshop. The Board will submit a list of names for Mr. Frerichs to consider in selecting a moderator.

3. Update from Caroline Wells on CDBG grants

Ms. Wells reported that the Town received a total of \$200,000 in CDBG grant funds. The Hope and Main project will receive \$110,000 for an elevator at the Main Street School. The home repair project will receive \$60,000, and \$20,000 is allocated for administrative support. Ms. Wells stated that the Hope and Main project is a priority, and that she did not request funds for the storefront improvement project at this time.

4. Discussion regarding the draft on the 2010-2011 Work Plan

The Board decided to postpone the discussion of this item to the end of the meeting if time is available.

5. Discussion on Warren Arts Council

The Board decided to table this item until new members are appointed to the EDB in January 2011.

6. Update and Action on Parking Signage program

Mr. Bolster updated the Board on the Parking Signage program. Fifty steel sign posts have been ordered at a total cost of \$5,000, which is the total amount of funds allocated to this project. Additional funds of \$2500.00 will be required to cover the cost of fifty parking signs. The Department of Public Works might have funds in its budget to purchase parking signs. Mr. Bolster stated that he would follow through with seeking funding for the signs and with scheduling a meeting with the Traffic Safety Group.

7. Update on Second Story Theatre

Ms. Volino stated that she had emailed Ed Shea. She plans to meet with Lynne Collinson, Executive Director at Second Story, to discuss ideas about marketing the theatre and how the EDB could be of service to their business. The Board discussed hosting a workshop/informational session in winter 2011 to provide an open forum for local business people to exchange ideas and concerns.

8. Update from Mr. Frerichs on possible meeting with owners of Narragansett Electric property

Mr. Frerichs reported that he is working with Narragansett Electric/National Grid regarding their plans for the property on the Warren River. There are environmental and remediation concerns which have the potential to hold up the development of this property for many years. Mr. Frerichs stated that the Town needs answers regarding the future of this gateway property. In going forward, he plans to contact Representative Felag and also Alan Crissman regarding negotiating with National Grid.

9. New Business

Linda Brunini presented the Board with her concerns and information about commercial development for the property at 335 Market Street, as well as property currently on the market in Touisset on the Kickemuit River (corner of Long Lane and Barton Road). She also discussed three restaurants in Warren: the Wharf Tavern and the National Porter Inn, both on Water Street, as well as the Tuscan Tavern on Metacom Avenue.

A new representative is needed for the Metacom Steering Committee. Mr. Heckert offered to be the EDB representative, and Mr. Morris offered to be an alternate member.

The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for Monday, December 13, 2010.

A motion was made to adjourn by Ms. Dionne, Ms. Silva seconded, and all members were in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristin M. MacDonald

*Minutes submitted by Kristin MacDonald
December 11, 2010*

