

Town of Barrington
Economic Development Committee
Meeting Minutes
March 10, 2016

Members Present:

Matthew Amaral, Robert Humm, Mark Etheridge, Jim Sanderson, Buddy Violet, Joan Warren and Dick Wilbur. Also present: Town Council liaison Michael Carroll, and Member of the Public Ms. Allison Wilbur.

1. Call to Order at 7:07 PM
2. February 11 Minutes were approved unanimously with two small amendments.
3. Chair Rob Humm welcomed the newest member of the EDC, Ms. Joan Warren. As the former (and most recent) Town Business Liaison and longtime resident, Joan brings a wealth of knowledge of the town and its business community to the EDC. Rob noted that Joan represents a numerical replacement for Ed McKinlay, who has resigned from the EDC.
4. Members who attended the recent Town Council forum on the Access to Public Records Act and the Open Meetings Act provided a read-out to the group. Rob shared the written report Dick had drafted, which outlines specific responsibilities of committees and commissions and identifies specific information required to be included in meeting minutes. Members were reminded not to “reply all” to emails coming from the Town Clerk, as the Clerk is the only one authorized to communicate directly with EDC members as a group outside of regularly scheduled meetings. As well, members should refrain from talking about EDC business between them when there are more than two members at any one time or place. Matt reminded everyone that the hand-out on Ethics contains valuable information and recommended that everyone read it. Mark suggested that the EDC by-laws - a requirement covered at the Town meeting - should be similar to those of other Town commissions.
5. The Meeting continued its discussion of whether the Town should hire a Business Liaison/Economic Development person to support business in Barrington. Joan, as the last person to hold such a position, went into length describing her experience, the structure of the position and duties assigned to her at the time, and - from her perspective - the limitations her mandate at that time. This was a part-time position, with funding to cover only approximately 12 hours per week, and so she relied heavily on the support of other Town officials and departments. Joan reported directly to the Town Manager and needed to coordinate with other Town employees, all of whom had full-

time jobs and other responsibilities. Under the circumstances, Joan felt that her ability to implement a strong liaison and support program for town businesses was necessarily limited. In her opinion the Town does need a business liaison position, but that specific duties ought to be decided upon to allow the position to be most effective. Rob noted that these duties are part of what the EDC is mandated to propose to the Town Council. Rob agreed to approach Phil X to understand better what continuity there has been since Joan left the position years ago, and how Phil provides support for businesses in his current role as head of planning. Following up on last month's discussion of the roles and duties of the Bristol business liaison position, Matt agreed to invite Bristol's new business liaison, Ms. Jessica Pflaumer, to join us at the April meeting to provide input into her scope of work and job responsibilities.

6. The Meeting next returned to the discussion of issues related to food trucks in town. Issues discussed included the difference between inviting food trucks to specific events such as a high school football game, and the regular presence of food trucks in town on any given day. Mark reminded the Meeting that the Cranston regulations governing food trucks in the Town of Cranston appear to be comprehensive, and as such could serve as a guide for regulating trucks in Barrington. After further discussion - including comments from resident Ms. Wilbur - Rob asked EDC members to come prepared at the April meeting with a list of regulations members believe the Town should impose on food trucks.
7. Rob apologized for including the issue of signage on the agenda, noting that this topic is to be discussed in detail at the April meeting. The topic was therefore tabled until then.
8. Future EDC meetings dates have been set as follows:

April 21, May 19, June 16, July 21, Aug 18 and September 15. Two members noted a potential conflict on April 21, and Rob asked these members to confirm as soon as possible so that the meeting date for April can be rescheduled as necessary.
9. Open Discussion: Matt passed around a two-page print out on a national program called "Main Street America." He noted that Bristol has joined this network and that the East Bay Chamber of Commerce has expressed interest in the work of the organization as well. Mark brought up the potential need for a Town-wide communications program such as Mail Chimp that could be used to inform the business community and residents of important events, issues related to safety and security, and any other information of broad interest. Related to this, Mike reminded the Meeting that our mandate includes not only helping the business community to improve revenue and otherwise better serve the business community, but also to enhance the living experience of the greater community.

10. The Meeting adjourned at 8:46 pm.