



# Falmouth Economic Improvement Committee

## Meeting Minutes Wednesday, October 17, 2018

Pamela DiPietro-Hale <i>Chair</i>	✓	Sandra Lipsey	✓	Andrea Ferrante <i>Council Liaison</i>	✓
Chris Wasileski <i>Vice Chair</i>	-	William Lunt III	✓	Nathan Poore <i>Staff</i>	-
Dimitri Balatsos	-	Mindy Schwartz	✓	Theo Holtwijk <i>Staff</i>	✓
Brian Bakke	✓			Meredith Sells <i>Staff</i>	✓

Two additional guests attended the meeting: Kimberly Darling, Town of Falmouth staff, and Jeannie Madden, Falmouth Memorial Library. The meeting was called to order at 4:30 pm.

### 1. Review of Draft Minutes

The draft minutes of the October 3 meeting were approved as written.

### 2. Business Forum Planning

- a. November 15, 2018: John Wasileski
- b. January 2019: STEM
- c. March 2019: Energy Efficiency

Theo reported that he had reached out to school leadership following the STEM discussion in the previous FEIC meeting. The school leadership has indicated interest in a business forum, and will bring it to the district STEM meeting on November 1<sup>st</sup> to identify a point person for the Town to work with on the required details. Theo will follow up with an update to the committee at the first November meeting.

Kimberly Darling provided an overview of the energy efficiency topic for businesses. Kimberly spoke about the lessons learned from the business energy fair held last April in partnership with the Community Chamber. She stated that the business interest was there, but the fair had low attendance. Kimberly said one major challenge with the business side of energy efficiency is that there are often different players for a property, such as the owner and renter(s), who may have different viewpoints. She attributed that part of the challenge of the fair was the significant time commitment to organize it. Kimberly thought that a business forum would be a better platform to present the information, and that the content could be scaled down. Sandra asked about how the Chamber had supported the fair, and Kimberly responded that the Chamber focus had been primarily on Chamber members.

In preparing for the logistics of the next forum, Sandra stressed the importance of aligning the date with the school calendars. Sandra also mentioned that there was a business movement towards

viewing the Town TV station to stay updated on Town news, which could be a great location for event advertising.

Kimberly and the committee discussed the content of the energy efficiency forum. Sandra suggested testimonials from local businesses. Mindy suggested tackling one theme within energy efficiency at a time, with the opportunity for other themes to be addressed at future energy efficiency forums. The committee talked about the effectiveness of case studies and agreed that case studies don't have to be Falmouth specific. Sandra emphasized the importance of scale when selecting case studies to align with typical business sizes in Falmouth. Theo mentioned that with the time constraints of a business forum format, the message, speakers, and content should be targeted.

Kimberly will draft a proposal for the energy efficiency forum with a suggested date, location and program details.

### **3. Incubator Programming with Falmouth Memorial Library**

Theo reported that he and Meredith had met with Andi Jackson-Darling and Jeannie Madden at Falmouth Memorial Library to understand the ongoing efforts by the library towards incubator business development. The library is interested in collaborating with the FEIC and Community Chamber to develop regular future programming for (small) businesses.

Jeannie, the Community Engagement Librarian, provided an overview of the resources and programming geared towards small businesses. The library is looking for feedback on what small businesses want to help guide future library programming. Mindy suggested financial literacy, presentations, a guide to helpful resources on the shelf, or a series where business owners could ask an expert. The committee and Jeannie were quite excited about the idea to "Ask an Expert," such as a lawyer, accountant, financial advisor, or human resources manager, because many small business owners operate from their homes and are building their businesses from scratch. Brian added that these business owners often have great ideas, but may get stuck on legal or financial hurdles. The committee agreed that speakers should be local, if possible, and the series could contain multiple events. Theo suggested that the FEIC help design and implement the lecture series. He thought it would be a great idea to try out in 2019.

Pam asked how the committee could share the library's program and resources. Jeannie said there was an electronic and print version of the library's newsletter for subscribers. The committee suggested social media as a great tool to increase outreach to businesses. Theo felt that coffee shops and Staples may be worthwhile advertising opportunities to capture the attention of telecommuters.

Pam asked each member to think about how they can contribute to the Library efforts, and suggested that each member email Jeannie directly to offer feedback.

### **4. Very Merry Falmouth 2018 Update**

Kimberly gave an overview of the 2018 Very Merry Falmouth event in December. Kimberly reviewed a draft of the invitation, schedule and location. Kimberly stated that there was a need for an additional event on 12/1 from 10 am – 12 pm and asked the committee to give or send her any ideas for such an event. Jeannie suggested that the Falmouth Community Volunteer Cooperative

(FCVC) host an event during that time slot. Kimberly recommended that Jeannie work directly with Erin to further develop. Kimberly provided an overview of the cook-off event and asked for help in getting more participants. The committee agreed to help find more restaurant participants, and asked for more copies of the contract. Theo and Kimberly will email a version with Kimberly's contact information. The committee also asked what the capacity was for participants. Town staff responded that the tent for participants could hold 20.

Bill asked when the invitation would be finalized, so that he could place in local businesses. Kimberly will supply packs of the final version of the invitation at the next FEIC meeting.

## **5. Project Updates**

Theo provided an update on the Route 100 project, Falmouth Center development project, and two new business tenants in Falmouth.

Theo also gave the committee an update on business visitations. Theo and Nathan will be visiting TideSmart on 10/18, and will be rescheduling the meeting with Tyler Tech.

## **6. Next meeting**

The next meeting will be on November 7<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 PM. The business forum on November 15<sup>th</sup> will serve as the second meeting in November. December meeting dates were set for the 5<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. Theo will not be able to attend on the 5<sup>th</sup>, but will check with Nathan to see if he can be available.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:45 PM.

Draft minutes prepared by Meredith Sells, October 24, 2018