

Falmouth Economic Improvement Committee
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 4, 2019

Present:

Pamela DiPietro- Hale, <i>Chair</i>	✓	William Lunt, III	✓	Janice De Lima, <i>Council Liaison</i>	✓
Chris Wasileski, <i>Vice Chair</i>	-	Mindy Schwartz	✓	Nathan Poore, <i>Staff</i>	-
Brian Bakke	✓			Theo Holtwijk, <i>Staff</i>	✓
Paul Bergkamp	✓			Marguerite Fleming, <i>Staff</i>	-

Others Attending: none

Pam started the meeting at 4:30PM.

1. Quorum

A quorum was established.

2. Committee Member Resignation

Pam mentioned that Ed Pierce had resigned from the committee, due to his busy travel schedule. She hoped the Council would appoint new members soon.

3. Review Draft Minutes of August 21, 2019 Meeting

Bill motioned to approve the minutes of 8/21/2019 and Paul seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Review of Meeting Materials

Theo said that the handout was a sneak preview at a portion of the Council Work Plan that contained the FEIC items.

5. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

6. Council Liaison Report

Janice reviewed below some of what was discussed in the Council Retreat.

7. Feedback from 2019 Council Retreat

Janice said that the Council has broad responsibilities and appreciated getting a broader perspective. She suggested that perhaps each committee should address the Council once or twice a year, so the Council could get such a broad perspective.

She noted that committee attendance can sometimes suffer as “life happens.” She said it was the role of the Chairperson to keep track of committee attendance. She said that it may be good to recommend to any prospective committee member that they attend one meeting of their committee before being appointed to make sure it is right fit.

Janice said that the Falmouth Business League concept resonated with the Council. The next question is how it will be implemented, what is the staff capacity for it, and will there be any Chamber involvement.

She noted that the Council was interested in having a roadmap for developers. She thought that the FEIC might be able to give feedback to developers as to what the community’s needs are. Is there a broader need or gap, such as with artists or telecommuters?

Janice said that she has become more acquainted with the Council rules. She stressed that as the Council’s Liaison to the committee she is merely the conduit to and from the Council and does not represent the Council. The rules stated that liaisons should attend committee meetings at least once every three months.

Bill said that the liaison was the committee’s connection to the Council and that it was good to know the Council’s rules. He said that the committee had changed a lot, and that the original committee came into being as there was a perception that the Town zoning made it difficult for businesses, especially when an existing building changed its use.

Pam said that in light of having the Council liaison may not be present at each meeting, perhaps the Liaison Report agenda item should be deleted.

Pam asked the FEIC items can be worked on simultaneously, or if one had to follow another.

Paul said that those items should now be worked into a FEIC work plan.

Bill said that the Council priority may not necessarily be the Committee’s priority.

Theo suggested that the top two items should be worked on, but that the third item could be added as time was available. He said that the committee should think of the October through June to work on this.

Pam wondered if the Chamber could be represented on the FEIC and will connect with the Chamber president. Mindy thought that a representative from the library may also be good. Paul if there could be other representatives from other areas. Bill felt this was an issue that fell with the Business League. Through that work, other people may become interested in the FEIC, he said.

Paul envisioned that the committee this fall does some interviewing and socializing, and then in first quarter of new year try out some things, with the hope that in third quarter there will be some pieces that have momentum.

Mindy envisioned that the first two work items would become one.

Paul suggested connecting with the school's guidance counselor and with some elderly.

Mindy mentioned SCORE and a transition mentor program in Aroostook County on how students can be successful in college. She saw four components: apprenticeship, promoting local, best practices, and celebrations.

Paul felt that the library's opening would be a good occasion. He wondered how to get feedback from the business community, such as the real estate sector, restaurants, etc.

Mindy wondered if there was a database that could be consulted.

Pam thought that the Chamber may have a business directory.

Paul suggested interviewing business owners. The committee brainstormed several names, such as Jonathan Culley, Jonathan Cohen, Peter Kennedy, David Chase.

Brian mentioned that communication was important. Paul agreed and said that people may well ask what the Business League is. It would not be good to give multiple answers to that.

Pam said that as next steps the Chamber will be contacted and the committee will determine what questions need to be asked in its interviews, and what information should be provided about the League, and if they have any interest in the concept.

Bill asked if the League would be under the control of the Town. If so, he said, that could backfire.

The committee agreed that the League can be an independent entity. Paul added as long as the League fits the Town's values. Bill suggested to be careful with how to proceed.

Janice suggested to articulate the value proposition for the Business League.

Bill felt that its participants need to feel that the League is getting input from them. Pam said that the League needed to get input from the library as well.

Bill reiterated that there should be a protocol on how to have conversations with interested parties that lays out what questions needed to be asked.

8. Other Business

There was no other business.

9. Set Date and Agenda for Next Meeting

The next meetings are scheduled for September 18, 2019. The agenda will be to discuss the Business League protocol and have a conversation with the local Chamber leadership.

Mindy said that she would be away for business and next meeting.

There was a question when the projected completion for certain projects was, such as the library and Route 100. Theo will look into that.

10. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 5:47 PM.

Draft meeting minutes prepared by Theo Holtwijk, September 9, 2019