

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

Present:

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|-------------------------------------|---|--------------------|---|--|---|
| Pamela DiPietro- Hale, <i>Chair</i> | ✓ | Kevin Moss | ✓ | Marguerite Fleming, <i>Staff</i> | ✓ |
| Chris Wasileski, <i>Vice Chair</i> | - | Mindy Schwartz | ✓ | Theo Holtwijk, <i>Staff</i> | ✓ |
| Paul Bergkamp | ✓ | Ozan Tüzmen | - | Nathan Poore, <i>Staff</i> | - |
| William Lunt, III | - | Nicholas Weightman | - | Janice De Lima, <i>Council Liaison</i> | ✓ |

Others Attending: -

Pam started the meeting at 4:35 pm.

1. Establish Quorum & Introduction of Members

- Quorum was not established.

2. Review Draft Minutes of October 2 and 16, 2019

- The minutes were not reviewed due to lack of quorum.

3. Review of Meeting Materials

- Theo reviewed the meeting packet which included the minutes from the last meeting and the Falmouth Business League concept document.

4. Public Comment

- No members of the public were present.

5. Update on Falmouth Business League Outreach

- Pam said that the takeaway from the business leader interviews was the question of how the Falmouth Business League would be different from the Chamber.
- Paul came up with additional concept ideas for the League based on the feedback he received from his interviews. He presented a revised concept document to the Committee. New ideas included:
 - Partnering with the Chamber
 - Creating two business segments: 1) those who primarily serve Falmouth's residents and workforce and 2) those who do not depend on high volume customer traffic
 - Setting commercial tax revenue goals
 - Ensuring local regulations are competitive
 - Elevating performance and reducing cost of learning

- Governance: each initiative has volunteers from the business community and the Town, FEIC serves as a conduit of interest, partnerships alignment, and performance assessment
- Pam asked, were a commercial tax revenue goal to be set, how that process would work? Councilor De Lima said it would likely be set through the comprehensive planning process.
- Pam said that the bank managers that she spoke with said that small business owners were not interested in paying the Chamber dues. She liked Ozan's idea from the last meeting about the League having digital forms of communication such as a listserv or web-based meetings.
- Mindy said that she has not yet completed her interviews. She would like to interview representatives of the agriculture and healthcare sectors. She liked elements of the original concept document. She was more interested in creating connections amongst the existing business community than attracting new businesses. She felt that she needed to better understand what the Chamber does. She liked the idea of meeting with the Chamber board members. She felt that if the League was successful in helping businesses do better business in Falmouth then interest would peak.
- Paul said that it would be important to know what types of businesses the Town was interested in attracting.
- Councilor De Lima said that PACPAC is doing an assessment of the parks and recreational spaces in Town. At the last PACPAC meeting, Lucky D'Ascanio shared a national survey of municipal recreation resources. Lucky is looking into how Falmouth compares on key measures from the survey. Councilor De Lima said that this document could be presented to business owners as an incentive to locate in Falmouth. Councilor De Lima also serves on the Retail Marijuana Ad Hoc Committee. She said that members of the public have expressed interest in opening retail marijuana businesses in Town. Mindy asked if retail marijuana and, more broadly, the types of businesses that would be allowed in Town, would be addressed in the comprehensive plan?
- Councilor De Lima said that if FEIC members have questions related to the vision and values process that the Council could ask potential consultants to please email the Councilors. The Council is seeking neighborhood liaisons to encourage resident participation in the vision and values process. The Committee discussed how it would be important to include questions regarding the business community in the vision and values process.
- Theo said that the Committee needs to think seriously about whether there is interest in the business community surrounding the League and the proposed initiatives. Paul felt it was important to not present a half-baked plan. He felt that it was important to speak with the Chamber board members before deciding whether to move forward with the League. Mindy said she heard Theo's point that while the FEIC thinks it is a good idea, it could be that the business community is not interested. Kevin said that he is not a proponent just yet. From what he has heard about the feedback, it sounded like people were interested in the League but did not have the capacity to coordinate it. Pam asked if moving forward with the League before the vision and values process was conducted was premature? Councilor De Lima said that she liked Mindy's idea about the League helping existing businesses to thrive.
- Pam said that it sounded like there was consensus around moving forward with meeting with the Chamber board members before deciding whether/how to move forward with the League.

- Pam said that one of her interviewees asked why the Town was not recruiting large companies which could promote economic development. This could be a topic for the vision and values process.
- Councilor De Lima asked if the Committee had discussed involving remote workers in the League. Pam said that the branch managers said that they have several clients who are remote workers and it is hard to determine what their needs are.

6. Other Businesses

- Theo said that the West Falmouth Crossing Public Forum was rescheduled for January 21 at 7 pm, likely at Town Hall. The Intersections of Route 88 Forum will be held on December 11 at 7pm at Falmouth Elementary School.
- The Committee briefly discussed parcels that were still open for development and commercial redevelopment.

7. Set Date and Agenda for Next Meeting

- The next meeting is scheduled for December 18.
- The focus will be reviewing feedback from the remaining business leader interviews and meetings with the Chamber board members.

8. Adjourn

- The meeting adjourned by consensus at 5:52pm.

Draft meeting minutes prepared by Marguerite Fleming, December 12, 2019.