

## Economic Task Force Meeting

### Minutes of

January 8, 2014

Attendees: Danielle Loring, Caroline Paras, Laurie Forbes, Sharon Dodson, Elissa Gifford, Rolf Olsen, Teresa Sadak

Meeting called to order 6:30.

Approval of Minutes. Minutes were approved with changes. Motion made by Sharon and seconded by Laurie. Minutes pass (with changes).

Wording for final recommendations is still in progress. We will work on wording together so that everyone is happy with what is presented to the Board of Selectmen.

Presentation and discussion of organizational models.

Caroline. One of the charges of this group is to find a model suited for Raymond, which includes staffing. Four different models that other towns use to help. (Municipal department, Quasi-public, Local or Regional, and Redevelopment Authority) Chart handed out to group members. There are others but these are the major ones. Chamber of Commerce is also a possible model.

Pros and cons of each for assigning a person for economic development. Not the only job that the economic development person does...can do other jobs as well. Wears several hats. This could be a con to this position because of needing money from the general fund to pay for this position when it is a staff person. This person can drive the business in the town. They are the single point of contact. Economic Development person can be the first responder for businesses. The "Go to Person". Portland has 3, Windham has 2 ED people.

Municipal...con...inherent conflict between regulating and promoting business, also in position to reject business. Another challenge is staff turnover. Economic development person needs to make connections with people. When that person leaves, then the new person has to take over and start brand new making contacts. Portland, South Portland, Falmouth,

Westbrook, Gray, and Bridgton have full time ED people (but they also do other jobs as well). Money for funding comes from general fund.

Quasi – full time ED director but is at arm's length...has office out of town (Gorham and Freeport). Employee of town but doesn't have office in town. Has a board of directors. Municipality has a lot of control over it. TIF can fund the ED position. Plus is you can bring in a lot of diversity with board of directors and business diversity to town. Big challenge is funding and staff turnover (career position).

Rolf – what is staff turnover attributed to? Caroline...definitely burnout... could also be politics.

Local or Regional – nonprofit and not publicly funded or chartered. Might look the same but the difference is municipality as a lot less control. They are not the major funder. Greater degree of dependence. Portland received a grant to get it all started. Now, they are taking a hiatus.

Downfalls...always trying to prove self...(local/regional)...one town wants to control money/situation.

Most out there model is the redevelopment authority (the Base Maine Port Authority). One attraction is eminent power and domain of taxation.

What other models would we like Caroline to add?

Rolf – problem with local is home turf problems. Hard feelings can hurt it because all work would be done for one town and not others (Perception becomes reality). How would they handle that kind of conflict? “What did I get for my money” theory? Various issues that would arise with local because each town feels cheated. How do they keep people at peace on the board? How do the models promote themselves and publicize themselves? Visibility is a huge thing.

Conflict in this town wouldn't be staffing. There has to be some separation between attraction and enforcement. Two different hats. Enforcement would be preventing problems happening before getting too far down the road.

Standing committee for economic development could be a possibility. Sole members are the board of selectmen/council. Assignment rotates amongst the members. Advisory committee group is another model (a small

committee organized by appointments). Revitalization group would be another possibility.

Major concern is ... money. Need to have a structure for someone to report back for interaction. Make use of the strengths that everyone has. We need to use the resources that we have because we are not a big town. That's what makes Raymond strong. Pull on peoples' strengths.

Business association. (Cumberland and Fryeburg) People wanted a higher level or networking. How would that work? What is the formal relationship? Caroline will check into this. (Revitalization committee advocates for the town)

Maybe it might be a good idea to go back through the surveys and invite people to the Revitalization meeting to do some networking.

How do some of these other towns interface with their chamber of commerce's? Some towns are getting rid of theirs and joined the bigger Chambers of Commerce groups. (Gray)

What about outside group or agency idea? What about GPCOG? What can they do for us? Full staff ED is just Caroline. Has part time loan officer and some office support. Primary job is create the region's economic development strategy for Cumberland Country to apply for funding and second, help member communities fund the projects that they want to do in their towns. Lots of benefits to help communities.

How do these towns go about publicizing themselves? How are they letting the outside world know that they are available? How can we get ourselves out there to make our model work? If nobody knows about it, what good is it?

Caroline – marketing is one of the biggest challenges. Town's website is huge help. Integrate into the other towns' websites as well. Need to market on EVERYTHING...cards, website, signs in town, everything. Towns join forces. Idea would be to hire an outside firm to come in to help brand our town. Rebranding. Has to be a big project in order for it to work. Use a slogan that makes Raymond...Raymond.

What is the costing and financing side of the models for the budgets? I.E. how much does each town spend on economic development? Salary and benefits is the biggest of the spending. Full time with benefits could be

around \$100,000 for ED. What is the breakdown? Factoring in all costs (help from IT and others).

Can we get costs for towns of similar size? Windham, Bridgton, Gray, Yarmouth (they also have task force like ours), Cumberland, Westbrook. Caroline will work on this.

Town Committees? Are we interested in charges for ED Town Committees? Gray and Bridgton, which she has.

Advocate positions? Tasks? How does that play into the town?

We are looking at taking the best of the first two off the list of 4 to fit what is best for Raymond (Organization models).

Danielle...Wayne had brought up that he was interested in 3D printing. Danielle contacted Ass't Director Greg and he offered to do a fab lab and production office. USM is willing to bring part of their business to Raymond as a model. Town is going for a planning grant for fixing up Chipco building. Bringing technology and quality of life together. Big advantage to Raymond is Greg has a list of entrepreneurs to fill building. We wouldn't lose the look and feel of Raymond with this new business coming in.

Email Rolf everyone's thoughts of the first two models and then he will send out a compilation to everyone. Email them to Rolf by the 23<sup>rd</sup>. Can pull in some of the older ideas if people like them.

"Quality of life meaning". Read by Elissa. (Given to her by Sally Holt)

"Livability is the sum of the factors that add up to a community's quality of life including the built and natural environments, economic prosperity, social sustainability and equity, educational opportunity, and cultural, entertainment, and recreational possibility." Partners for Livable Communities, Washington D.C.

It is different for everyone!

Meeting Adjourned 7:57 p.m.