



EXECUTIVE
DEPARTMENT

CITY OF SOUTH PORTLAND

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Scott Morelli
City Manager

DRAFT MINUTES

Economic Development Committee

Wednesday, March 28, 2018

6:00 PM

City Hall – City Manager’s Office

Attendees:

Martha Riehle – District 1
Ross Little – District 2
Bob O'Brien – Business

David Wakelin – District 1
Joel Ouellette – District 2
Joshua Reny – Asst. City Manager

Absent:

Stephen Bushey – District 3
Fawn Dunphy – Business
Ed Palmer – Business

Bruce Bennett – District 5
Brandon Mitchell – Business

1. Committee Chair Ross Little called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.
2. Presentation from GWI – Colin Haley, Sean Byrne, and Keith Ellis provided the Committee an overview of the fiber optic network that has been built in the City over several years. The Committee discussed fiber optic technology, options for high-speed data throughout the community, and strategies to deploy the network in more locations throughout the city. It was affirmed that this project is as much about people attraction as business attraction. Independent workers will require more stable connections and faster bandwidth in the coming years. The EDC committed to working with GWI on a strategy to continue the expansion of infrastructure, and assist with communication to residents and businesses what their options are for high-speed internet. It was recognized that a critical mass of prospective customers is necessary to justify the cost of a build-out. To date, the focus has been connecting a backbone between City and School buildings. The next phase will focus on neighborhoods and businesses.
3. Minutes – Motion by Ouellette second by O'Brien to approve the minutes of the January 31, 2018 meeting. All in favor.
4. ED Office and EDD Position – Josh reported that the Job Ad had been posted for about a month and recently closed. There were several applications received. The City Manager has asked the EDC if a member would volunteer to assist with interviews. It was agreed Bob O'Brien will serve on the interview team, and if

there is room for a second then either Marty or Joel may participate. The renovations at the Planning & Development building are now underway. There was some asbestos flooring that required removal and the Economic & Community Development office will be finished in the coming weeks, with new furniture and workstations. The renovations also include a new conference room area, and future meetings of the EDC could be moved there. Once the work is complete, staff will plan a ribbon cutting and EDC and other City officials will be invited for the occasion.

5. TV Advertising & Marketing – Josh updated the committee on conversations he has had with Kenneally & Company. They are the firm that has assisted the City of Biddeford with its television commercial promotions. They have proposed creating some promotional videos for the City and rolling out TV commercials in the spring. The Committee reviewed the proposal and cost estimate and discussed the idea. It was decided that although worth pursuing, the timing may not be right because of the work that needs to be done to create the new ED Office. Perhaps once the new EDD is hired and acclimated in the position, this program can be pursued.
6. Branding Initiative – Josh provided several products to the Committee via email, including design concepts for wayfinding signs, a website homepage template, and a branding strategy document. Ross asked that the information be re-sent to the group, and will be discussed at the next meeting.
7. Roundtable – The group discussed several new businesses and projects.
8. Future meetings – the next meeting will be on April 25th and the guest will be Sam Fraton, chair of the Maine Angels, to discuss venture capital and strategies to assist startup businesses.
9. Adjournment – Motion by Wakelin second by Ouellette to adjourn at 8:11 p.m. All in favor.