

Town of Swanzey  
Economic Development Advisory Committee  
October 7, 2008 organizational meeting

*Minutes are not final until reviewed and approved by the Committee. Review and approval of minutes generally takes place at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Committee.*

**Attendance:** Arthur Boufford, David Cairns, Bill Hutwelker, Greg Johnson, Gus Lerandeau, Mary E. Ryan, Eric Stanley. Board of Selectmen Chair Nancy Carlson and Town Administrator Beth Fox also were present.

**Committee establishment and staff support:** Carlson called the meeting to order at 5:30. She administered the oath of office to Committee members, and members introduced themselves.

Fox said that Town staff is available as needed, although time constraints will prevent staff from regularly attending Committee meetings. Fox recommended Town Planner Carbonneau as a local resource for zoning issues and for providing information about Swanzey's business activity. Fox offered to arrange visits from other resource people, including James Robb (DRED), who has expressed interest in talking with the Committee about how the State might help the group fulfill its mission. She said that Town staff can assist with posting Committee information (preferably prepared in Word format) on the Town website. Fox encouraged Committee members to identify anticipated expenses, and prepare a budget and request for appropriation to present to the Board of Selectmen by early December.

Fox said that four members constitute a quorum, and a simple majority may make decisions.

**Background and information:** Members received and reviewed . . .

- the Committee's mission/charge
- membership list, including contact information and terms of membership
- copies of two recent Keene *Sentinel* articles (August 14, 2008 and September 14, 2008) related to economic development in Swanzey
- information on the Right to Know law, focusing on electronic communication
- Swanzey ordinance (adopted by 1995 Town Meeting) describing and regulating conflicts of interest
- Swanzey zoning map, showing the location of Business, Village Business, Commercial/Industrial, and Industrial Park districts.

Fox advised members to restrict Committee use of e-mail to disseminating information (like the meeting agenda), setting dates, and other non-policy applications unrelated to making Committee decisions that must be part of a public process. She said that the Town Conflict of Interest ordinance is more restrictive than State law, and asked members to contact her when they have specific questions.

**Pending deadlines:** The group considered time available for accomplishing changes to the zoning ordinance. Fox said that text must be prepared by the third week in December, in order for the Planning Board to conduct two public hearings before publication of the warrant on January 20, 2009. Hutwelker

asked whether the Planning Board has considered amending the zoning of the portion of the Industrial Park that has frontage on Route 32. Fox will find out. Hutwelker requested that Fox present background and information the Town's tax increment financing district, possibly at the next meeting.

**Initial discussion of goals and approach:**

Johnson would like the Committee to invite speakers from the State and from other communities with similar issues; to solicit input from MEDC and Southwest Region Planning Commission; and to solicit input from the Swanzey Planning Board, Board of Selectmen, Conservation Commission, and Town water and sewer commissions. He also would like the general public to have a voice.

Lerendreau envisions a Town-promoting role for the group, which he thinks should actively look for businesses that will be appropriate for Swanzey. He spoke about the airport as a local asset, and said that the group will need information about capabilities and limitations of infrastructure, including accurate maps of water and sewer lines.

Cairns sees the Committee functioning in a role that is similar to a chamber of commerce.

Ryan encourages the group to promote Swanzey's unique qualities, and not to strive to make Swanzey an imitation of Keene.

Carlson sees the group also serving as resource for people seeking information about the community.

Recording Secretary Barlow (speaking as chair of the Swanzey Open Space Committee, the OSC) said that the OSC hopes to help the Committee accomplish its charge, and also offered the services of Buck and Ike, the town's bovine ambassadors of open space protection.

Fox encouraged the group to identify the assets of Swanzey that motivate business owners to move to town, and to determine what qualities of the Town to emphasize to the business community.

**Election of officers:** Members recessed from 6:15 to 6:20 to consider election of officers.

Committee members elected Greg Johnson as chairman, Gus Lerendreau as vice chairman, and Eric Stanley as secretary.

Members agreed that the chairman's role is to set the agenda, facilitate work with staff (for example, to coordinate engaging speakers), and to be responsible for communicating in a non-partisan fashion on behalf of the Committee.

**Meeting schedule:** Members agreed to meet on the second Monday of the month, with meetings beginning at 5:00.

**Next meeting:** 5:00 on November 10, 2008 at Swanzey Town Hall.

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 6:35.

Respectfully submitted,

Victoria Reck Barlow  
Recording Secretary