

Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC)
Meeting Minutes – January 11, 2016

Call to Order:

The regular meeting of the Swanzey Economic Development Advisory Committee was called to order at 5:16 p.m. by Chairman Steven Bittel.

Committee Members Present: Chairman Steven Bittel, Greg Johnson, Lynn Rust, Beverly Bernard, Don Skiba, and Alternate Bill Hutwelker.

Absent: Guy Pronesti, Arthur Boufford.

Others Present: Director of Planning & Community Development Sara Carbonneau.

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes:

- December 12, 2015 were considered. Rust **moved** to accept the minutes of December 12, 2015 seconded by Hutwelker and all were in favor. ***Motion passed.***
- October 12, 2015 were considered. Skiba **moved** to accept the minutes of October 12, 2015 seconded by Rust and all were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

NEW BUSINESS:

Carbonneau informed the members of an initiative by individuals from the town of Winchester. She said Winchester has an Economic Development Corporation which is not a town-sponsored entity and they have won a \$40,000 USDA grant. The grant provides funding to conduct an inventory of available land for business development, to assess the needs of businesses which might consider locating in Winchester, and how to market the land. She asked if this might be something that Swanzey could collaborate with Winchester on. The organization is headed up by Mark Tigan who is a professor at Clark University. Carbonneau suggested talking to Tigan to get his views on collaboration between the towns. There was a discussion about possible broadening the number of towns involved. There was a discussion about Vermont economic development organizations. Carbonneau pointed out that non-government entities don't have to follow right-to-know laws and other regulations and therefore they are a bit more flexible and can take quicker action.

There was a discussion about a new person representing Cheshire County with New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development (DRED). Bittel asked Carbonneau to invite the new person to attend an EDAC meeting. Johnson said that Keene is not the right focal point and he said it's his opinion that the small towns have more energy and commitment to growing business, along with infrastructure and land.

Bittel said he would be willing to meet with Tigan on a date other than a regular EDAC meeting to discuss possible cooperation. There was some discussion about the Keene Chamber of Commerce possibly doing some recruiting. There was a discussion about broadband availability. Johnson suggested asking the Board of Selectmen to write a letter in support of expanded funding for broadband availability/improvements. The members agreed to review the matter once the bills could be reviewed at the next meeting.

There was a discussion about a past event that concerned the Open Space Committee. Johnson also suggested a candidate's night for the office of Selectman.

Next scheduled meeting: February 8, 2016

Adjournment:

A **motion** to adjourn was made by Skiba with a second from Bittel and all were in favor. Adjournment occurred at 6:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Beverly Bernard".

Beverly Bernard, Recording Secretary