



City of Rochester, New Hampshire
Office of Economic & Community Development
33 Wakefield Street, Rochester, NH 03867
(603) 335-7522, www.rochesterredc.com

Rochester Economic Development Commission
Minutes – January 25, 2021
Rochester City Hall Annex – Online Teams Meeting
33 Wakefield Street, Rochester, NH

Members Present: Jonathan Shapleigh, Whitney Apgar, Marsha Miller, Ron Poulin, Mark Hourihane, Paul Giuliano, Kris Ebbeson

Members Present Remotely: n/a

Members Absent: Janet Davis, Kristen Bournival

Others Present: Mark Sullivan, Mike Scala

- A. B and C: Chairperson Giuliano called the meeting to order at 8:05am.
- D. Roll Call attendance was taken.

Meeting Agenda

- A. Roll call attendance was taken as part D of the preamble.
- B. Ron made a motion to approve the December minutes. John seconded the motion. Roll call was taken, all in favor.
- C. Blank
- D. Economic Development Fund Overview & Host Fees
Mark Sullivan explained the Economic Development reserve fund and article 7-63. The last time the Economic Development fund collected the funds was in FY15. Mark explained that a majority of the Economic Development projects have been getting their funds from the General Unassigned Fund Balance. Only three projects have used funding from the ED Fund Balance.
Mark's recommended action is to have a capitalization threshold of \$1.5m. REDC and the Economic Development Department submit a resolution to City Council each time funds are requested to be drawn for use on a project. The funds received from land sales should also go back into the ED SRF, not the general unassigned fund.
Ron noted that the Waste Management Host Fees should never have been going into the General Fund to begin with and is symptomatic of the lack of a system of checks and balances. Mark has assembled a team to investigate the allocation of Host Funds from Waste Management.
John asked if there are any new upcoming projects that are slated to need funding from the ED Fund Balance. Mike noted that there are not current projects on the forefront. He did note that the fund is also used for situations such as when Covid-19 hit and the fund was used as a micro-loan program for small business within the city. He noted that with adequate funding in the ED Fund Balance, the ED and REDC would be able to move quickly on projects in order to further the Rochester Master Plan.



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Ron noted that the City Council should be reminded of this fund allocation and to start thinking about the eventual shutdown of Waste Management program in Rochester. Mike and Mark noted that once abandoned, the land currently being utilized by Waste management will be undevelopable.

Mark recommended that the ED and REDC submit a 3-yr development plan with established categories and programs for use of the funds. Mark will be packaging the documents presented to REDC today, along with some other documents to present to City Council in the upcoming month(s).

Marsha asked if there was a reason why prior administrators didn't follow the ordinance. Mark explained that certain Councils wanted to keep the Commissions coming to the Council for any allocation of money, not just final approval. The current systems takes approximately 45-60 days to get approval to used funds for Economic Development because of all the meetings and multiple approvals.

Mark will send out the package for further individual review and comment by the REDC members. REDC members will then send their comments, questions, etc to Whitney Apgar to compile for the February REDC meeting. Mark requested that members of the REDC attend the meeting and speak to the allocation of funds. Meeting date is TBD.

E. REDC Ordinance and City Council March Update

Mike reviewed the Chapter 7 Administrative Code 7-35 to start changing the language in the ED ordinance to better reflect the current operations of Economic Development. The original language is from 1992, and was last amended in 2008. Paul will make a presentation to the City Council in March to introduce new City Councilors to REDC and what the commission does. The current language only describes industrial and limited business operations, when the REDC currently looks at all aspects of Economic Development including aspects of industrial development, all levels of business and housing. John noted that Jenn has previously emailed out segments of 7-35. REDC members will review article 7-35. Economic Development Commission in full and will come with recommendations/suggestions to the February REDC meeting. The language is not to be dramatically altered; it is only to make the language accurate of the time.

Ron asked if the REDC should look at the qualifications for REDC members to make sure it is not limiting potential member candidates. Ron, Mark and Paul noted concerns over the residency clause. The REDC wants to make sure that owners of Rochester businesses could sit on the board, even if they do not reside in the City.

Marsha asked why education is absent from Section A. She noted that there are missing professions/occupations from membership potential.

F. Master Plan

Mike stated that the Economic Development Master Plan expires in 2023. He would like to get the master plan redone sooner since the City has changed so much. Mike and Mark agreed that he would like to use the ED Fund Balance to fund the Master Plan. Master Plans typically expire every 5 years. This would go out to bid via RFP. Ideally, this would be completed in the coming year.

G. Other

A. Mike stated that Blaine Cox, City Manager is establishing a Parking Review Group within the city. One of the members will be from the REDC. Mike clarified that Rochester does not yet



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have a parking problem, but there is a *convenient* parking problem. Ron noted that traffic downtown has a significant impact on perceived parking areas. Marsha voiced concern over parking for residents in the new developments downtown including the Chinburg property and 55 No. Main. She also voiced concern over older adults ability to walk from ancillary parking locations to access the downtown. Union Street Parking is already scheduled to be redone. Ron nominated Marsha to represent REDC and Kris to represent a downtown business owner on the Parking Review Group. Mark seconded the nomination. All in favor. B. Paul noted that this will be Mark H.'s last meeting with the REDC.

Marsha made a motion to adjourn at 9:42 am, Kris seconded. All in favor.

The next meeting will be held at the Cocheco Conference Room on February 22 at 8:00am.

Respectfully Submitted,
Whitney Apgar