**Medford Township
Economic Development Advisory Commission**
Minutes of the January 13, 2022 Meeting
Held via ZOOM On-line Conference platform

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm
 **Present**: Sarah Cooper, Abbie Galie, Tom Juliano, Mike Pagnotta, Brian Seltzer, Beth Portocalis (Twp Liaison), Mayor Chuck Watson, Councilwoman Donna Symons
**Absent:** Vittorio Anepete

**Board changes:**Joe Burgoyne & Jim Priviti both left the EDC, and were thanked for their service & wished the best in their future endeavors.

**Intro of new members:
S**arah Cooper: She is from England and has lived here since 2012. She is applying for citizenship. She is employed by Holman Enterprises full time, and enjoying living in Medford she wanted to have civic involvement, which will also help for becoming a citizen.

Brian Seltzer: He has been a resident since 2015. His wife has been a teacher in Medford for 20+ years. He also serves on the NSAC Board since early 2016 and wanted to expand his role in the community

**New and re-appointed members were sworn is by Beth.** Please sign oaths and return to her ASAP.

**Nominations:**Mike nominated Abbie as Chair, Tom seconded. All voted in favor
Abbie nominated Mike as Vice-Chair; Tom seconded. All voted in favor
Abbie nominated Vittorio as Recording Secretary; Mike seconded. All voted in favor

**Merging with NSAC:**Beth: Council is looking for EDC & NSAC to meet on the same evenings so that the Boards can function independently but can work together on projects & tasks.

According to the NSAC committee, who met earlier in January, they are okay with this “merger” but the majority of members have commitments on the 2nd Thursday of the month and would need to meet on the 1st Wednesday of the month.

Abbie motioned to change the meeting dates to the first Wed of the month; Tom seconded. All voted in favor. (Vittorio had emailed Beth that this date would be okay for him)

This will create some efficiency with Kathy & Beth so that one or both can be at every meeting. We'll still work on agenda/minutes etc as the EDC and Beth is still the designated liaison. Council gets involved with each committee. The two Boards will remain independent, but will be able to share project tasks together as needed.

**Minutes:**Motion to approve the December 2021 minutes by Abbie; seconded by Mike. Sarah & Brian abstained. All others in favor.

**Assignment of Champions:**Mike Pagnotta: Rt 70 Corridor. Sarah: Taunton & Tuckerton. Tom: Stokes Rd corridor.
Brian: Crossroads. Abbie: Main Street. Vittorio: double up on Route 70 & float as needed

Mayor Watson suggests an assistant from NSAC doubling up with the EDC Champion on each district.

**5 Largest Vacancies:**Champions should keep this Google doc updated for their district with at least the 5 largest vacancies in each district:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1KDFTvlcWS4ItulYUIyD2CC\_bDOaSgSkz3xZ86Jkn1LM/edit#gid =1666060801

**Goal for 2022:**Beth suggested as a project with the NJ Film Industry/Commission/Council (met at the NJLM) to go out and take photos &/or videos of the scenic parts of Medford to submit to this group, which they keep in an inventory so when they get a request for a specific type of location, they have it in their database. NJ gets many requests to film here, since it is less expensive than NYC & Philadelphia. The Council is familiar with Medford, and for those shows & movies that have some tie-in with the Pine Barrens, we would have ideal locales.

Mayor Watson stated that this project could go hand in hand with NSAC because they're working on forming a sub-committee to get the history of Medford. The NSAC is archiving Medford History of years past. If we are documenting today, it would be a perfect match.

Board members posed some questions about the future use of the South Street Meeting House, the former library, etc., specifically if the EDC should assist in finding tenants? The Mayor advised that the Council may designate these properties for a Redevelopment study; but there is already some interest in the Meeting House. The Mayor stated he is open to any suggestions, and anyone interested can be referred to him and/or Kathy Burger.

**Legacy Marks of businesses:**Giving acknowledgements for # of years in business 10, 25, 50, 100, etc.? Is Braddocks Tavern or Harriett’s now the longest tenured business operating in Medford? If a business is coming up on X years of operation, maybe Council could quarterly give a shout out to recognize these businesses.

Perhaps do these at the Medford Business Association Meetings and Council does this in partnership.

**Update the "Opening a Business in Medford" Brochure:**Update this info electronically as it appears on the website rather than printing a bunch. Councilwoman Symons offered to send it to the Burlington & Camden County Board of Realtors. Perhaps after we gather some of the legacy business info we can include that as well in the brochure

**Ribbon Cuttings**: available for new businesses, events, etc. via the "Invite Council to an Event" link on the website.

**Outdoor Seating Extended:**Council will continue to extend as long as the state allows it. Council passed a Resolution at the Re-Organization meeting on January 4th to extend through December 2022.

**Anniversary:**This year is the 175th Anniversary of Medford Twp. February 4th is the actual date when we seceded from Evesham.

**MBA:**
The Township might be open to hosting annual community organization summit, but the community room size is limited to approximately 50 people.

**District Updates:**

**Taunton & Tuckerton:** Shopping Grocery store proposed, & going in front of Planning this month, they already have preliminary approval. It's already approved, now it's just phasing for final approval. Things always change, because the original approval was 2014/15.

**Rt 70:** Maggie Moose is almost ready. Adding a "party space" to their second storefront location. Whole Hog's vacancy will be filled by Tigas.

**Stokes Rd:** Ironstone Village has been really struggling for a long time. The ownership is not sure about specifically the Council/Township wants, but the extior of the buildings, grounds and signage is looking really rough. What can EDC do to help them? A new real estate agent is there that's doing a good job. Sushi place in Ironstone. Former Sports Paradise is repainted. Not many first floor vacancies are actually available. Councilwoman Symons mentioned a lease may have been signed for the former Starbucks space on the end unit along Stokes Road.

Atlantic States Group received Planning Board approvals for 338 Stokes Rd a couple of years ago; and they're coming back in to the Planning Board for an extension of approvals. Initial plan was to house and insurance company.

**Medford Village Update:**

* Main Street Money launched & doing great, sponsorship by Investors Bank.
* Merry Main Street did great, estimated over $500,000 spent during the holidays at minimum. Senator Jean Stanfield pulled the winning ticket & the winners were locals who had just settled on a home
* Upcoming Chocolate Walk in March
* Upcoming First Fridays & 3rd Thursday Food Trucks to resume in March
* Beth says Honey Post opening inside the former Wonder World Toys. Father/Daughter combo.

Motion to Adjourn by Mike, Seconded by Tom.
Meeting Adjourned at 8:22 pm.

Next Meeting will be on Wednesday, February 2nd at 7pm. Determination of in-person or via Zoom will be made closer to the date.

Prepared by Abbie Galie,
Acting Recording Secretary