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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING

MINUTES

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 11, 2023 @ 7:00 PM

Medford Town Hall Community Room

ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm.

Present: Sarah Cooper, Michelle Voorhees, Avril Dickerson, Dave Miller, Beth Portocalis, Erik Rebstock-Council rep.

Absent: Brian Seltzer, Mike Pagnotta and Mike Baublitz

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Sept 6, 2023 meeting. Avril Dickerson made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Dave Miller. Unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS / ON-GOING PROJECTS

- I. Updated spreadsheet of available commercial properties – All
 - a. Awaiting Dory's move to Village of Taunton Forge – market goods; not a restaurant. The Medford True Value and card store in Taunton Forge are closing due to retirement of owner; not lack of customers.
 - b. Avril – The Artery has relocated and their space is available. There is also office space available at 2 N. Main behind the Cabinet Gallery
 - c. Beth – the gas station at Rt 70 and Jones Road will be before Zoning Board for variances to convert the repair center to a mini mart.
 - d. Dave – Jennings Farm new owners opened up Farm 1857 on weekends selling produce, meats, eggs, etc and some prepared food; plus other farm attractions. Sarah Cooper will update the effective date and send the file to Beth Portocalis for submission to the Council.

- II. Feedback received back from Surveys & business visits:
 - a. Two received from Main Street businesses (Avril). Discussion about MSM Assoc. and Downtown Medford and some businesses on Main St. asking to be more informed about events, and could the Township take on wider scale marketing. Other topics mentioned were pedestrian safety, digital mapping w/ a QR code listing all the businesses, a centrally located informational kiosk, and any possibility for public restrooms.

- i. Councilman Rebstock suggested a QR code could be easily done, but would the EDC take the lead to develop and maintain the list of businesses? The question arose if the list would be all inclusive (inc. professional offices) or just retail shops, eateries, and breweries? Majority in favor of all businesses. Suggestions made for a kiosk for with the QR code and an easy map of Main Street (akin to food truck night map)
 - ii. Additional discussions about placement of the Twp. website; and printing of business cards to include the QR Code, purchased by the Twp. to be placed at each business.
 - iii. Done prior to Holidays??? Beth will speak to Kathy and then bring to Council.
 - b. Podiatry Center in Ironstone Medical offices also responded to the survey, but offered no comments or suggestions
- III. Sarah Cooper, champion for the Taunton & Tuckerton Business District, will coordinate with David DePetris to speak to the EDC's November meeting
- IV. Miscellaneous
 - a. Digital LED message board sign at Freedom Park- Beth Portocalis confirmed the Township Council has budgeted funds for this.
 - b. Main Street Merchants Fall Festival is Oct. 21st; Discussion on additional services such as Police, Trash etc. ED Table? Vote: No
 - c. MBA Octoberfest feedback– EDC flyers were available. 3 EDC members supported/manned the EDC table. Suggestion made to have “swag” for next year?? Or spin wheel with local business discount coupons or gift certificates as prizes. Also suggested to have the list of vacancies available.
 - d. Michelle – question if Medford Lakes has an EDC or akin that works in collaboration – general consensus was no precedent.
- V. Update on “Opening A Business in Medford” Brochure - All
This is on hold till 2024
- VI. Other Business
 - a. Feature on Medford Main Street by NJ Business Magazine in their September issue.
 - b. Andrea Davis is opening Physical Therapy Center at 338 Stokes, a long vacant building. Ribbon cutting in a couple of weeks. EDC members should go. Oct 26 at 6pm.
 - c. Councilman Rebstock suggested EDC to go to future grand openings
 - d. Bob Meyer idea: Use part of office building at corner of Himmelein & Stokes as small hotel rooms for family visiting residents at the Farmstead in Medford.

ADJOURNMENT

8:18pm Michelle Voorhees proposed to adjourn the meeting. Dave Miller seconded.
Unanimously approved.

****NEXT MEETING – WEDNESDAY, November 1 @ 7:00 pm**