

**HOOKSETT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

Wednesday November 18th, 2020

5:00 P.M.

Room 105 Town Office

Pledge of Allegiance 5pm

Attendance: David Scarpetti - Chair, Paul Scarpetti, Mark Chagnon, Jim Sullivan – Town Council Representative, Matt Barrett, Alden Beauchemin, Nicholas Williams – Town Planner

Approval of Minutes: 09/16/2020 Motion to approve made by Jim Sullivan, 2nd by Mark Chagnon Site Walk 10/27/2020 – No motion was made

Discussion:

171) Mike Somers – President & CEO of New Hampshire Lodging & Restaurant Association:

An overview of how the pandemic has impacted the restaurant industry in NH

Nicholas W with the COVID 19 rates and thinking about the “what if “another lock down is possible, I invited Mike Somers here to discuss resources for our local restaurant owners and how best we can support them.

Mike S Our hospitality industry has been impacted on March 16 within days our restaurants and hotels lost so much in food they had to throw out & alcohol revenue for St Patrick’s Day and then employees that were sent home. I sit on the Governor’s Reopening Task Force. I am working on the restaurant & hotel safe guidance applications with the state. The addition to add take out for alcohol we wrote, and it became very helpful, then came outdoor dining guidelines, the COVID numbers declined and we saw revenue for restaurants and hotels climb back 100%. The Governor relaxed restrictions and for some restaurants they were allowed inside seating @ 50 % or what could handle seating with 6ft social distancing. We have worked with owners for ideas to construct barriers between tables and with that we saw most restaurants get creative and found they can seat up to 80%. Some establishments with cares act money were able to get through the tough time but we saw about 10% of businesses that we have lost. Now over the next few months we are looking at our most difficult time. Without so much of the work we have done to keep them going, which it has helped, now the weather has us moving indoors and with media feeding on infection rate and all the COVID negativity it has added to the population becoming more terrified of this thing and they are staying away again, even without a shut down. The state is terrified of the numbers after that happened after Halloween and they know the Thanksgiving Holiday will create a spike. Business is down 50 - 60 % in just the last 2 weeks. We have been actively working with NH.gov for businesses in the hospitality industry that are affected, and congress has to take action to support these businesses. Small business needs it!

Nicholas W in the event we go back into a lock down I would like to have something available on the town web site to possibly help point them in the right direction

Mike S I would not take that on, the guidelines are constantly changing and to maintain the updates takes to much time.

Mike S guide them to the states web site and the state is helping there BEA website. We have a page that we try to take all the information for state and federal and drill it down to information that is specifically for this industry. As far as a shut down from the Governor’s office, we have been assured that it is not going to happen again. It did so much damage the first time and we have more knowledge to do more to help them to in ways other than a shut down. If you close then the loss rate will go out the roof.

Alden B what about indoor infiltration systems?

52 **Mike S** the restaurant air systems are not like an office system. The hood system is so much more that it
53 replaces the air every 8 mins.

54 **Alden B** so it is safer to be in a restaurant

55 **Mike S** It is! We are working on how to get this information out that the air is cycled better. We are
56 working on messaging for that important information.

57 Other air treatments and what is not clear what is that the effectiveness no one really knows, not even the
58 CDC. There is some much out there being sold as effective, but it is not proven, and It is very costly to
59 add these systems to clean the air without scientific proof.

60 **Mark C** it has affected so many, even the churches that are struggling to raise money.

61 **Mike S** the next 3 to 4 months will be interesting. Congress will help, but not right now. Some businesses
62 have capitol that they can pull from to get them through the tough times. The small ones through do not
63 have anything in the till to get them through shutting down.

64 **Jim S** the restaurant I work at is nowhere near peak business. One thing you touch at, was the outdoor
65 dining that was allowed. I appreciate the town did that for its businesses. From the safety end and the
66 safety protocols we have to move to is important. Get out the word they are putting these measures in
67 place.

68 **Mike S** we have tried but it was not picked up by the media they only want the other side of the
69 pandemic. We are struggling to break through the noise.

70 **Matt B** sometimes it is not feasible to only have 50% capacity.

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722) **RSA 72:80 – 83 Commercial and Industrial Construction Tax Exemption**

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74 **Review and revise list of Parcels this exemption applies and motion to recommend to**
75 **Town Council for approval**

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77 **David Scarpetti and Paul Scarpetti have recused themselves from this discussion and action**

78 **Matt Barrett acting Chair** - we are here to make recommendation to Town Council for application of
79 RSA 72:80-83 and the parcels that have been identified for this exemption.

80 **Nicholas W** reviewed the staff report prepared for Town Council - Recommend RSA 72:80. I want to be
81 clear it is a recommendation for Town Council to approve. They can add or remove any
82 recommendations. I have not added or remove any that had been previously recommended.

83 **Mark C** does the property owner get this if they just say they are going to do work?

84 **Nicholas W** they have to apply for site plan approval to Planning Board and present an application to
85 Town Council. There is a 20% of improvement to the property and the exemption is only for a
86 determined amount of time

87 **Roger Duhaime joined the meeting at 5:33**

88 **Jim S** these parcels that is on the list were chosen because of certain criteria, if another parcel is not on
89 this list then they could apply if they meet these criteria?

90 **Nicholas W** So the only criteria required to be designate is IND or COM use. When we looked at this list
91 with Planning Board, these were chosen because they were underutilized or dilapidated. This is the
92 original list.

93 **Motion by send the Staff Report as presented to Town Council for approval was made by Mark**
94 **Chagnon, 2nd by Matt Barrett.**

95 **All in favor, motion passed**

96 **David S** we had a TIF update and the sewer department has agreed to work with customers to set up
97 payment plans for connection fees. We have met with several businesses and we need to continue to
98 get together with these businesses. Things are going along well. These discussions have determined
99 some alternative line locations that provide cost savings to the parcel owners.

100 **Nicholas invited Alden to speak on a new topic.**

101 **Alden B** I am asking for impute from EDAC on a group that wants to develop off Technology Dr, at exit
102 10. They have an agreement in place with Amazon for additional parking. They have used vacant spaces

103 in different locations for necessary parking but now they are looking to flatten a parcel at the end of
104 Technology Dr with blasting. They are in a Mixed Use District and the parking is not an allowed use and I
105 am looking to add remote parking to the allowed use. Nicholas gave me guidance as to help. At the end
106 of the day we want to keep good businesses. We want to keep Amazon and other businesses that need
107 remote parking. In COM districts it is an allowed use, that area of Technology Dr is not zoned COM. The
108 way the rules are written they have to build a building but to justify the construction of a building the
109 size required for that many parking spaces is not realistic. We need to propose remote parking for an
110 accessory use. We don't want to see an ordinance where we allow parking lots but if we allow accessory
111 parking then a site can be shovel ready. The best use may not be parking but if you have the
112 infrastructure then the property will become more valuable.

113 **Paul S** would it be paved? I think it should be required to be paved and have a sunset clause to allow for
114 a 1 yr basis or maybe 2. This may show that we are willing to work with them and we want them to stay
115 and support them.

116 **Roger D** when this has happened in other communities that have been granted temporary parking with
117 and expiration clause and at the end of the term they did end up staying and building.

118 **Alden B** we have a window right now and possibly propose this to the Planning Board. They have an
119 agreement with Amazon and they are ready to go.

120 **Mark C** I was looking over the Ambassador program I would like to tackle bring that back myself with the
121 board approval I think there is a lot we can do with that program.

122 **David S** we can bring that discussion to the next meeting

123 **Motion to adjourn made by Mark C 2nd by Paul S @ 5:50, all in favor**

124 **Next Scheduled Meeting: December 16th @ 5pm**

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126 **Minutes Respectfully Submitted by:**

127 **Kathy Lawrence**

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129 **How to sign up for E-Alerts:**

130 [Go to Hooksett.org](#) > from the home page on the right hand side, in yellow, click on E-Alerts > then you
131 have a list of options to choose from that you may want alerts for. They send to your email when we
132 post agendas, minutes, announcements and meeting updates or cancellations.

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