

# ASHLAND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

## MEETING MINUTES

September 16, 2014

6:00 pm

Ashland Fire Station

### **Steering Committee Members Present**

Susan MacLeod, Cheryl Cox (Planning Board ex-officio), Steve Felton (Board of Selectmen ex-officio)

### **Steering Committee Members Absent With Notice**

Jill White

### **Ad Hoc Committee Members Present**

Scott Stephens (Plymouth Regional Chamber of Commerce)

### **Others present**

Jae Demers, Rick Ash, Fran Newton, David Toth

This meeting of the Ashland Economic Development Committee was called to order at 6:00 pm by Chairperson MacLeod.

### **Disposition of Meeting Minutes**

A motion was made by Steve Felton to accept the minutes from the August 19, 2014 meeting. The motion was seconded by Susan MacLeod. The vote was 3-0 in the affirmative.

### **Facebook Page/AEDC Page**

No update on the Facebook page. There is now a page on the Ashland town website for the AEDC. Mardean Badger will update as needed. Steve Felton will communicate with Mardean to include the committee's mission statement, a list of the committee members, links to other organizations involved with economic development and updates on related activities such as Jeannie Forrester's tour of the mill.

### **NH Economic Development Association**

Steve Felton and Fran Newton recently met with a representative from the NH EDA. There may be grant money available though we will need to create a detailed plan to move forward with any grant requests. Grants are not given for privately owned property. Creating a TIF (Tax Increment Financing) District in Ashland would be an option to work with private owners to encourage economic development.

*Reference:* <http://www.nh.gov/oep/planning/resources/documents/tif.pdf> for more information about TIFs.

### **PSU Center for Rural Partnership**

Scott Stephens is working with Daniel Lee, of the Center for Rural Partnership at PSU to gather demographic data to assist in determining the types of businesses that would most likely succeed in Ashland and the greater southern Grafton county area. This type of data would always be very useful in applying for grant money.

### AEDC Projects

- The consensus of the committee was that we need to:
- Develop printed marketing materials on the benefits of Ashland as a place to start a business that could be provided to potential business owners.
- Limit the scope of our projects to specific town areas; the downtown area, the mill area, the West St. area.

### “Business After Hours” Forum

Rick Ash made the suggestion the AEDC be positioned as an advocate for Ashland businesses. After some discussion, it was agreed the mission statement for the AEDC should read:

***The Ashland Economic Development Committee’s mission is to enhance the vitality of the local economy by supporting and advocating for existing business and attracting new business to Ashland.***

Several locations are being considered for the “business after hours” which is tentatively scheduled for November. After some discussion it was agreed it would start at 5 pm and run for about two hours. The goal of the forum will be to define at least one short term goal and one or two longer term goals. The committee then may form sub-committees to work on the projects.

### Other Topics

Benoit “Beno” Lamontagne, of the NH Division of Economic Development, recently moved to Ashland and will be invited to the October AEDC meeting.

A motion was made by Steve Felton to recommend a letter of support be written for the application being submitted for a Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grant for sidewalk improvements. The motion was seconded by Cheryl Cox and approved 3-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40pm.

The next meeting will be held on **Tuesday, October 21, 2014 at 6:00 pm** at the Ashland Fire Station, ***unless notified otherwise.***

*Minutes submitted by Cheryl Cox*