

1 **MINUTES OF THE**  
2  
3 **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (EDC)**

4  
5 **October 17, 2023**  
6

7 The Economic Development Committee held its inaugural meeting on Tuesday, October 17,  
8 2023, at the Salem Town Hall, 33 Geremonty Drive, Salem, NH.

9  
10 **Committee Members Present:** Carla Billingham, Bianca Carlson, Rick Dobzelecki, Emily  
11 Samatis, Baoguo Wei; Bonnie Wright (Town Council Representative)

12  
13 **Committee Members Excused:** None

14  
15 **Staff Present:** Crayton Brubaker, Community Development Program Manager

16  
17 *The meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm.*

18  
19 **1. Committee Organization**

20 **a. Elect Officers**  
21

22 The members of the Committee Members introduced themselves and their background related to  
23 economic development.

24  
25 Mr. Brubaker stated that at the last meeting, the Committee opted to table the election of officers.  
26

27 The Committee discussed each members' interest in each position. Ultimately, the Committee  
28 decided to elect two co-chairs rather than a Chair and Vice Chair and for the two co-chairs to  
29 split the responsibility of the Chair and Vice Chair. These changes will be reflected in updated  
30 bylaws at the next meeting.

31  
32 **MOTION BY: Carla Billingham**

33 *To nominate Rick Dobzelecki and Baoguo Wei as Co-Chairs of the Economic Development*  
34 *Committee (EDC) and to nominate Emily Samatis as the Secretary of the EDC.*

35 **SECOND BY: Bianca Carlson**

36 **VOTE: 6-0**

37 **The motion passed unanimously.**  
38

39 Mr. Brubaker informed the Committee that there were no applicants for the most recent call for  
40 candidates. The Committee discussed putting out another call for candidates for a seventh  
41 member. Town staff will put out another call for candidates and send information along to the  
42 Chamber of Commerce for potential distribution to their members.

43  
44 **2. Review of July 18, 2023 and September 19, 2023 Minutes**  
45

1 A discussion was held as to the approval of the July 18, 2023 meeting minutes. The Committee  
2 did not have a full committee at the first meeting. Because of this, the Committee opted to accept  
3 the July 18 minutes rather than approve due to the limited number of members who were at the  
4 first meeting.

5  
6 **MOTION BY: Carla Billingham**

7 *Move to accept the July 18, 2023 minutes as presented due to the limited number of members*  
8 *who were on the Committee at the time of the meeting.*

9 **SECOND BY: Bianca Carlson**

10 **VOTE: 6-0**

11 **The motion passed unanimously.**

12  
13 **MOTION BY: Bianca Carlson**

14 *Move to approve the September 19, 2023 minutes as presented.*

15 **SECOND BY: Bonnie Wright**

16 **VOTE: 5-0-1 (Baoguo Wei abstaining)**

17 **The motion passed.**

### 18 19 **3. Town Council Charge**

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21 Mr. Brubaker introduced the Town Council charge again and reiterated that this was what the  
22 Town Council charged the Economic Development Committee with a mission, goals, and  
23 objectives. The group discussed the charge.

24  
25 Ms. Carlson stated that she spoke with Beverly Donovan, the Economic Development Director  
26 of Derry, NH. From her conversation, she noted that the charge is good, and that the Committee  
27 may have been misinterpreting elements of the charge at the last meeting. Ms. Carlson stated that  
28 the Committee should be looking at potential zoning changes to spur on economic development  
29 opportunities for business attraction and redevelopment. Ms. Samatis stated that is similar to  
30 what she concluded from her research.

31  
32 The Committee discussed the concept of looking at zoning around town. Councilor Wright noted  
33 that zoning amendments used to require a warrant article at Town Meeting, but now can be done  
34 at the Town Council level due to the new charter.

35  
36 The Committee discussed the lack of land availability in Salem and the need for redevelopment  
37 opportunities because of that.

38  
39 The Committee discussed that the charge states that it will need to look at barriers related to  
40 bringing in jobs with high wages and benefits, increasing business retention and attraction, and  
41 review rules, policies, and procedures that may affect economic development in the Town.

### 42 43 **4. Discussion of Research on Other Economic Development Committee / Department** 44 **Organization**

1 Ms. Samatis spoke about her research into other communities' economic development committee  
2 or department organization. Exeter and Portsmouth had quality mission statements the Salem  
3 Economic Development Committee could use as inspiration. The Keene Economic Development  
4 Director partnered with a marketing company to get the word out about Keene businesses and  
5 economic development. Ms. Carlson stated that Burlington, Massachusetts does something  
6 similar. Mr. Dobzelecki noted that he liked the holistic approach of the various communities  
7 found in the research.

8  
9 The Committee decided to have Emily Samatis and Carla Billingham draft a mission statement  
10 for review at the next meeting.

11  
12 Ms. Billingham stated there should be a connection between what this Committee does, public  
13 input regarding economic development, and the upcoming Master Plan wording regarding  
14 economic development.

15  
16 Ms. Carlson noted that the Communications Committee could help gather community feedback.

17  
18 Mr. Brubaker will send out information on RSA 91-A to the Committee and will forward Ms.  
19 Billingham's list of economic development resources.

20  
21 Mr. Dobzelecki discussed his spreadsheet of census data and demographic / economic data. He  
22 discussed various points of data including median household income, number of employers,  
23 population, and tax base valuation. This spreadsheet can be used to establish benchmarks for  
24 future progress. The Committee also discussed tax base valuation data.

## 25 26 **5. Discussion of Bylaws / Revision of Previous EDAC Bylaws**

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28 The Committee discussed the inclusion of residents or a person representing a business or  
29 organization in Salem as a member of the Committee. The Committee consensus was to keep  
30 both options for membership eligibility in there as presented.

31  
32 The Committee consensus was to amend the language for officers to include language for a chair  
33 and vice-chair or two co-chairs.

34  
35 The Committee consensus was to remove page 6, which is a condensed version of the Town  
36 Council charge, from the bylaws. The Committee will work to develop a separate document(s)  
37 for items such as a mission statement, measurable goals, etc.

38  
39 Town staff will come back with the amended bylaws at the next meeting.

## 40 41 **6. Schedule of Future Meetings**

42  
43 The Committee decided the following to be the next three meeting dates:

44 Tuesday, Nov 21 at 5:30 pm

45 Tuesday, Dec 19 at 5:30 pm

46 Tuesday, Jan 16 at 5:30 pm

1 **7. Other**

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Councilor Wright stated that she would like to add an item to the next agenda. She received an email from Councilor Sweeney regarding a proposed Broadway Overlay District and would like the Committee to discuss it with Councilor Sweeney. The idea of the district is to allow for more mixed-use development and allow for higher story buildings in the district. Town staff will reach out to Councilor Sweeney and add this to the next agenda. A discussion ensued regarding density and fire suppression requirements.

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11  
12  
13

Ms. Carlson stated that the Depot Village Advisory Committee is helping to create a plan in the Depot area. Councilor Wright noted that in the 2024 budget, there is currently money allocated for a Depot Village Master Plan. The Committee could potentially collaborate with DVAC in the future.

14  
15 **MOTION BY: Carla Billingham**

16 *Move to adjourn at 6:26 pm.*

17 **SECOND BY: Rick Dobzelecki**

18 **VOTE: 6-0**

19 **The motion passed unanimously.**

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21 **ADJOURNMENT AT 6:26 pm.**

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23 Notes/minutes taken by: Crayton Brubaker

24

25 Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

26

27 Date: \_\_\_\_\_