

**MEETING MINUTES
PORTSMOUTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

October 5, 2012

Conference Room A City Hall

7:30 a.m.

Members Present: Everett Eaton, Chairman; Dana Levenson, Ron Zolla, Robert Marchewka, Christine Dwyer, , Josh Cyr, Jack Thorsen, Philip Cohen,
Excused: Lisa DeStefano, Vice-Chairman, Tim Allison, John P. Bohenko
Absent: Eric Gregg

Chairman Eaton opened the meeting at 7:35 a.m.

Approval of draft meeting minutes

Following a motion by Commissioner Marchewka and a second by Commissioner Zolla, the draft meeting minutes of September 7, 2012 were unanimously approved as written.

Update on Activity at Pease International by Pease Development Authority (PDA)

PDA Executive Director David Mullen provided an update on activity at Pease International Tradeport. Highlights include:

- The vacancy rate is declining (8.5% in September 2012 vs. 14.4% in January 201).
- Current employment at the Tradeport is 7,800.
- After several years of no new construction, there is 272,105 square feet of anticipated new construction (161,105 sq. ft. in near term/111,000 sq. ft. in future).
- The golf course has undergone a 7,000 square foot upgrade and expansion.
- Great Bay Community College recently completed a \$10 million upgrade and has land options for future expansion.
- Lonza Biologics now occupies 656,000 square feet with an option on 22 acres of adjacent property for expansion.
- There is net available acreage for development on the non-airport side of the Tradeport of ~60 acres and ~129 acres on the airport side.
- Attracting airlines to the airport continues to be a challenge although there is a possibility of an airline that would do conduct to Florida in the spring.

In response to a question about conversion of airport property to non-aviation use, Mr. Mullen explained that the original agreement with FAA precludes this option for security and other reasons. However, he sees potential in converting the airport property off Arboretum Drive to commercial use which would align well with employees using the new north entrance to Pease from the Spaulding Turnpike.

In response to a question about housing development at Pease International Tradeport, Mr. Mullen responded that the PDA's charge when the property was transferred was job creation and the agency has adhered to that mandate. That is also why there is not much warehousing at the Tradeport as the goal is to maximize jobs per square foot.

In response to a question about the performance of the Port of NH, Mr. Mullen reported that the marine terminal has achieved self-funding. It is currently undergoing storm water system upgrades required by the U.S. Department of Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). One of the EPA's compliance requirements is to relocate the scrap metal "fragment" pile closer to Market Street to prevent leachate from reaching the Piscataqua River. This requirement generated discussion about the visual impact of the scrap metal along the Market Street gateway and the need to inform residents and to accelerate the plan for landscape screening along that section of the road.

Finally, there was a discussion about better integrating the businesses at Pease Tradeport into the greater Portsmouth community through opportunities for corporate citizenship. It was pointed out that the Tenants Association at Pease has provided a venue for this through their charitable contributions and social networks. Another example of the Tradeport contribution to the greater community is through workforce development through the collaboration that

occurs between the colleges at Pease and local businesses.

In thanking Mr. Mullen for the presentation, Chairman Eaton said the EDC would be remiss if it did not recognize the great job the PDA has done in bringing high quality jobs and investment in Portsmouth.

Old Business

Commerce Way Betterment Assessment Update

On September 17, 2012, the City Council gave final approval of the \$1.6 million bond resolution for improvements to Commerce Way under the process for Conditional Road Layout and Betterment Assessment allowed by State statutes.

Arts and Economic Prosperity Report

Portsmouth recently participated for the third time in the Americans for the Arts Economic Prosperity Study. Using a widely-accepted economic input-output model, this study measured the economic impact of the non-profit arts sector to the city's economic vitality. In 2011, non-profit arts organizations in Portsmouth contributed \$41.4 million to the local economy and supported 1,270 full-time equivalent jobs. These businesses also returned \$2.7 million in local government revenue. Copies of a brochure summarizing the results were distributed to Commissioners.

New/Other Business

City Council Work Session on Parking Garage Site Selection Report

A City Council workshop will be held on October 15, 2012 at 6:30 PM on the Parking Garage Site Selection Final Report. A meeting agenda and copies of the report will be sent electronically to the EDC, HDC, Planning Board, Parking and Traffic Safety Committee and Transportation Policy Committee next week.

Wayfinding Advisory Committee

A draft Request for Proposals (RFP) has been prepared for solicitation of proposals for the design phase of the citywide wayfinding project included in the Capital Improvement Plan. City Planner Juliet Walker is managing the project and seeking a member of the EDC to sit on an Advisory Committee for the project. In response to Chairman Eaton's request for volunteers, Commissioner Cyr volunteered to represent the EDC on the Advisory Committee.

Workforce Housing Charrette

The Workforce Housing Coalition is hosting a two-part design charrette on October 10th and 13th. It will focus on the Rock Street Garage area and will include development professionals in the architecture, landscape design, real estate and finance communities; there is opportunity for public input on October 10th from 7 PM to 9 PM at The Pearl. The rollout of the results will occur from 3 PM-4 PM on October 13th. EDC members are encouraged to participate in the public sessions.

Public Comment – No members of the public were present to make comment.

Confirm Next Meeting: Friday, November 2, 2012 /Adjourn

New/Other Business

With no further business the meeting adjourned at 9:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Carmer
Economic Development Program Manager