

**MEETING MINUTES OF THE PORTSMOUTH
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

July 14, 2023 7:30 AM- 9:00 AM

Members Present: Chair Phil Cohen, Vice Chair Alan Gold, Bob Marchewka, Sarah Lachance, Anne Weidman, Andrew Ward, Everett Eaton, Jacob Lehoux, City Councilor Vince Lombardi, Assistant Mayor JoAnna Kelley (Zoom), Tom Watson

Absent:, Anna Howard, Ben VanCamp

City Staff: City Manager Karen Conard, Asst. City Manager for Economic Development Sean Clancy

Chair Cohen called the meeting to order at 7:35 AM

Minutes - Approval of draft meeting minutes of June 16th, 2023 – Motion made by *Commissioner Watson*, seconded by *Councilor Lachance*. Motion to approve draft minutes passed unanimously.

Working Group Updates:

Charter/Mission Review – Final version (post June 30th review) was approved by Legal Department and scheduled to be reviewed by Governance Committee on Monday July 17th. Pending approval; new ordinance language will be presented to City Council for adoption at next available City Council meeting.

Office of Economic Development Update:

Regional Employer Toolkit & video series launched on July 10th and will run throughout July and August. The content includes best practices in attracting, developing, and retaining employees as this continues to be a challenge for all employers. The toolkit is specifically designed for small to medium size employers who may lack fully developed HR departments.

City Council Update:

Councilor Lombardi briefly shared an update on the inaugural City “FlashVote” as well as the municipal agreement between Portsmouth and the Town of Newcastle.

Outdoor Dining Presentation Review

The Commissioners reviewed the working group’s presentation, asked questions, and shared concerns and considerations that will be addressed in the next working group session. There was robust conversation regarding the rights of all abutters as well as a desire to define abutters relative to our Outdoor Dining policy/ordinance. A deeper discussion on full costs and proposed fee considerations of the Outdoor Dining program for 2024 were revisited by the members.

Questions arose regarding design standards and who “would be “responsible” for establishing and then enforcing them. *Commissioner Ward* asked if the working group had consulted the HDC on the matter of design standards. The working group had not.

Commissioner Watson proposed that the EDC recommendation include a maximum height for sidewalk divider, not to exceed 72”.

Commissioner Eaton suggested that the EDC recommendation directly address the “angled/diagonal parking

spaced on Congress Street for reduction and equitable maximum space allowed.

Details can be viewed on EDC Meeting recording (July 14, 2023)

Public Comment – Outdoor Dining

During “public comment” members of the public who were present for the outdoor dining presentation asked questions, shared concerns (including safety & equity), and offered additional considerations to the EDC. Comments of appreciation were offered to the EDC for listening and refining proposed recommendations on (some of) the public concerns voiced at the June 16th, 2023 meeting.

Details can be viewed on EDC Meeting recording (July 14, 2023)

Adjourn

Motion to adjourn made by *Commissioner Lachance*, seconded by *Commissioner Watson*.
The motion passed unanimously.

Next Meeting

August 4, 2023

Submitted by,
Sean Clancy
Assistant City Manager for Economic Development