

## MEETING MINUTES OF THE PORTSMOUTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

December 5, 2025 8:00 AM- 9:30 AM

**Members Present:** Chair Tom Watson, Jacob Lehoux, Councilor Vince Lombardi, Anne Weidman, Ben VanCamp, Andrew Ward, Bob Marchewka, Anna Howard, Assistant Mayor Joanna Kelley

**Excused Absence:** City Manager Karen Conard, Vice Chair Sarah Lachance

**Absent:** Phil Cohen

**City Staff:** Assistant City Manager Sean Clancy

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*Chair Watson* opened the meeting at 8:00 am.

*Chair Watson* outlined the 2026 meeting calendar and proposed edits to the members on the January 2026 date as well as the July 2026 dates. Both were amended from the first Friday of the month to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of the month due to the proximity of national holidays.

*Chair Watson* lead a discussion of a good date to schedule the 2026 annual retreat/workshop and the consensus was January 30<sup>th</sup> from 1:00-4:30 pm. A motion was made by Commissioner Howard and seconded by Commissioner Marchewka to adopt the proposed date and time. The motion passed.

A motion was made to accept the minutes of the December 5<sup>th</sup> meeting with one typographical correction by *Councilor Lombardi* and seconded by *Assistant Mayor Kelley*. The motion passed.

Office of Economic Development Update: *S. Clancy*

- There is a proposal withing the 2027-2032 CIP to review expanded public transit options via COAST
- Congress Street construction will commence the week of January 5<sup>th</sup>, weather permitting. This new approach from public works is intended to move the required water-sewer separation project along with less impact to the summer tourism season
- Retail and hospitality businesses reported slow November sales and bookings

Chamber Collaborative Update – *B. VanCamp*

- A new relocation guide (print/digital) is being developed for release in fall of 2026 (Livability.com)
- Approximately 20 restaurants have advised the Chamber that they will be adding credit card fees to patrons' bills
- The list of 2025 Chamber award winners can be found on thew Chamber's website

City Council update - *Councilor Lombardi & Assistant Mayor Kelley* provided a high-level update on the City Council's work on the 2027-2032 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). There will be a City Council orientation for the seven incumbent councilors and two newly elected City Councilors on January 10<sup>th</sup>.

*Commissioner Ward* advise the format of the 2026 annual retreat which is expected to be facilitated by an outside resource. Material for review will be distributed by December 11<sup>th</sup> and feedback from EDC members is requested by Friday January 19<sup>th</sup>

Nicole Bellabona introduced students participating in each CTE program. Students provided an overview of the programs including the value which they derive by participation. This is a great connection between CTE programs, local businesses, and secondary educations opportunities.

Public Comment: N/A

Motion to adjourn by *Councilor Lombardi*, seconded by *Commissioner Weidman*, and the motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 9:35 am.

Submitted by,  
*Sean Clancy*  
Assistant City Manager for Economic & Community Development