

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

May 1, 2026 7:30 AM- 9:00 AM

Members' Present: Vice Chair Sarah Lachance, Tom Watson (via Zoom), Anna Howard, Wendy Clement, Bob Marchewka, Joshua Cyr, Jason Goodrich, Councilor Blalock, Councilor Flynn, City Manager Karen Conard

Absent (Excused): Phil Cohen, Chair Andrew Ward, Ben VanCamp, Anne Weidman

City Staff: Assistant City Manager Sean Clancy

Vice Chair Lachance brought the meeting to order at 7:35 am.

Vice Chair Lachance entertained a motion to accept the EDC meeting minutes from April 3, 2026. The motion was made by *Commissioner Watson* and seconded by *Commissioner Cyr*. The motion carried with a roll-call vote, which was unanimous.

Vice Chair Lachance provided the summer meeting schedule update as follows:

- June 5, 2026 – Conference Room A
- July 10, 2026 - Meeting will be held at Pease Development Authority (airport – to be confirmed)
- August 7, 2026 – Conference Room A

Vice Chair Lachance requested updates from the working groups:

- 1) The Future of Work – Infrastructure needs, Workforce needs, Smart City, Education (CTE)
Working Group: *Councilor Blalock, Vice Chair Lachance, Commissioner Cyr, Commissioner Goodrich*
Commissioner Cyr reported that the WG is planning next steps to include interviewing key people, in regard to the “future of work” in Portsmouth and research on other cities that have undertaken this type of study/effort.
- 2) Parking & Transportation
Working Group: *Commissioner Weidman, Commissioner Clement, S. Clancy*
No update was provided.
- 3) Arts, Culture, and Enrichment
Working Group: *Councilor Flynn, Commissioner Howard*
Commissioner Howard outlined three areas of investigation that the WG has landed on: a) looking at the ability to activate underutilized commercial space, b) investigating activation of gateway neighborhood centers (master plan) from cultural perspective, c) use public art as a starting point for additional commercial/business wayfinding information (QR code?).

City Council Update – *Councilors Flynn and Blalock*

- *Councilor Blalock* provided as preview of the City Council meeting scheduled for May 4th.
 - Prescott Park stage expansion review, Sewer Fees, Resident (RAPP) parking pilot

Office of Economic Development Update: *S. Clancy*

- Art ‘Round Town – May 1st
- Hit the Decks, unofficial kick-off to Summer – May 7th
- Master Plan focus group with Hospitality industry leaders - May 14th
- Public Art Exhibit opens at City Hall - May 18th

[Events Calendar - Chamber Sponsored Programs](#)

City Manager Update – *K. Conard*

- Farmer’s Market open May 2nd - City booth is available for public outreach
- Outdoor Dining is moving forward 21 restaurants approved
- Downtown construction on Congress Street is scheduled to be completed by Market Square Day
- Vaughn Mall is open. It is scheduled to be completed from a design standpoint in the spring of 2027

Commissioner Marchewka provided comments of the Master Plan process and what we may want to keep in terms of physical assets. Is there a potential incentive that the City could/would offer to current property owners residential, commercial, and industrial?

Public Comment – Resident, Jim Wilson commented positively on the Master Plan process

Motion to adjourn by *Commissioner Cyr*, seconded by *Commissioner Marchewka*. The motion carried with a roll-call vote.

Meeting adjourned at 8:11am.

A full recording of this meeting can be found on the city website.

[Economic Development Commission | City of Portsmouth](#)

Submitted by,

Sean Clancy

Assistant City Manager for Economic & Community Development