

Focusing on Economic Development in Fryeburg

Economic development in Fryeburg has been the focus of a series of meetings and discussions during the past year. They began with a discussion of how to lower taxes by creating economic development and how Fryeburg can help foster business expansion. Over time the focus of discussions broadened to include developing a skilled workforce, providing public sewer service, welcoming new businesses in Fryeburg, and addressing specific concerns of Fryeburg businesses. Initially the participants in the meetings were the Fryeburg selectmen and town manager and representatives of the Fryeburg Business Association. During the course of the meetings participation grew to include area education leaders, area economic development partners (e.g., Mt. Washington Valley Chamber of Commerce, Mt. Washington Valley Economic Development Council), and area businesses. Glen Holmes and Mia Purcell with Community Concepts Finance Corporation facilitated the discussions. Below are highlights of accomplishments that resulted from these meetings and a chronology of the meetings, who was in attendance and what was discussed, including action items.

Highlights of accomplishments

- Creating 'A Guide to Doing Business in Fryeburg' by Katie Haley, Town Enforcement Officer
- Actively exploring options for providing public sewer service in Fryeburg
- Greater collaboration among the economic development organizations in the area and the Town of Fryeburg plus area educational institutions
- Proposed revisions to Fryeburg's Land Use Ordinance that would make it more business friendly
- Exploring the possibility for strengthening economic development leadership by creating an economic development committee to guide the Town of Fryeburg

January 9, 2014 – Initial Full Committee Meeting facilitated by Glen Holmes, *Director of Commercial Lending and Economic Development, Community Concepts Finance Corporation*

Goals –

- How to lower taxes by creating economic development
- How do we provide a better environment for current businesses to help them grow

Ideas and review –

- *A Guide to Doing Business in Fryeburg* by Katie Haley, Town Enforcement Officer
FBA to help provide more information
- Invite Areas Economic Groups
- Recognition Program for new businesses
- FAQ section on town web page
- Downtown water treatment/sewer
- Expanding commercial areas
- Industrial Park
- 113 Corridor Committee
- Tax Increment Financing District

February 20, 2014 – Full Committee Meeting

Review –

- FAQ: The FBA is undergoing a new web design for spring.
- Glen will contact state about funding for town sewer
- FBA to offer ribbon cutting ceremony for new businesses
- Discussed Tax Increment Funding (TIF)

March 27, 2014 – Full Committee Meeting

Review –

- Sharon provided notebooks that included information about grants, studies, information to do business, and zoning maps
- \$2000 is included in town budget for economic development seed money [existing money \$3600. The \$2000 passed in the FY 2015 budget to total \$5600]
- Mike developed a handout *How to Welcome a New Business to Fryeburg*
- Discussion of rail revitalization for freight, excursion, passengers
- Discussion of town sewer, parking, zoning maps, industrial parks, social media, utilities

May 13, 2014 – Glen meets with FBA Economic Development Committee

Review –

- Glen suggested charting businesses from the state line to Osgood's; to the fairgrounds, and down Portland Street. Jennifer offered to do this
- Water upgrades would be helpful. Glen will talk with the Fryeburg Water Co.
- Discussed the need to bring jobs to Fryeburg
- Airport Authority information provided by David Cullinan, AA Manager
- Discussed water treatment system, Red Iron Bridge, sidewalks, bike lanes
- Glen suggested the next meeting be with FBA Econ. Dev. Committee to prepare for large meeting in June

June 19, 2014 – Glen meets with FBA Economic Development Committee

Review –

- Reviewed assigned projects
- Discussed the poor conditions of Rt. 302
- Discussed downtown “walkability” i.e. sidewalks and benches
- Reviewed business chart and made suggestions
- Finalized agenda for June 26 meeting with Town Officials, FBA Econ. Dev. and Area Economic Development Partners

June 26, 2014 – Summit Meeting: Town Officials, FBA Economic Development Committee, Area Economic Development Partners - facilitated by Glen Holmes,

Review –

- Each group stated their interests and concerns
- All groups need to work together towards good economic development

- Regional priorities include land use; policies; transportation; affordable housing; food industry
- The biggest challenge is a skilled labor workforce; ideas shared to develop this area of need
- How to partner to avoid duplication?

October 15, 2014 – Summit Meeting: Town Officials, FBA Economic Development Committee, Area Economic Development Partners, Area Education Leaders - facilitated by Mia Purcell, Manager of Economic Development for Oxford County

Review –

- Each Education Leader present reviewed their program offerings, goals and accomplishments
- MSAD 61 & 72 offering WorkReady program to help develop work skills
- Developing more hand-on opportunities and alternative education program
- Working to be sure no child falls between the cracks
- Share educators across state lines and districts; share costs
- Apply skills; more opportunities needed beyond the classroom
- Explore community connections via partnerships
- How to get more businesses involved?
- Plan an Education Leaders meeting and a Business Leaders meeting before year end.

October 28, 2014 – Mia meets with Fryeburg Town Manager and FBA leaders

Review –

- Consider creating an Economic Development Committee for the Town of Fryeburg
- The FBA and its Economic Development Committee would like to hear from the business community.
- Develop a list of the larger businesses in the Fryeburg area and invite decisionmakers from those businesses to participate in a roundtable discussion that is focused on identifying "what we are doing right and needs that are not being met."
- Request a copy of the map of businesses that was created by Jennifer Regan
- Har-Mac needs truck drivers and the school system needs more bus drivers.

November 17, 2014 – **Collaboration Meeting with Education Leaders**

Leaders from FA, MSAD 72, MSAD 61, NH SAU 9 & NH SAU 13; Area Economic Development Partners, FBA Economic Dev. Committee reps; Mia Purcell, Manager of Economic Development for Oxford County – facilitated by Janice Crawford, MWV Chamber of Commerce Director

Review –

- Discussion about "Skilled Workforce"
- Bring parents and students to the table
- A student survey was suggested

- Suggested program development ideas: mentoring program; parent program; business training to work with younger work force; identifying existing programs in area/state districts/opportunities for collaboration; education leadership programs; financial literacy; career fair, student to business networking; interview/resume skills
- Recruit employers to participate in SAU 9 & FA strategic planning

December 1, 2014 – Collaboration Meeting with Business Leaders

Fryeburg Business Leaders, Area Economic Development Partners, Town Officials, FBA Economic Development Committee – facilitated by Mia Purcell, Manager of Economic Development for Oxford County

Review – Discussion of these questions:

What makes Fryeburg a special place to be?

Does this area support business?

How to keep young people here and how to attract young people via affordable housing?

What holds Fryeburg back from being a better place?

How to get people to come out too meetings?

Action Items:

- Research support/opposition to snowmobile registration reciprocity among Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont. (Issue mentioned from Terry MacGillivray)
- Correct the location on Google Maps for businesses that are located on Main Street in Fryeburg (Issue mentioned by Terry MacGillivray)
- Contact David Bernier with the North Conway Water Precinct to discuss extending the sewer line to Fryeburg
- Follow up on the land use and zoning issues that pertain to commercial development in Fryeburg
- Explore ways to encourage better attendance at local hearings and Town Meeting

Town Officials: *Selectmen* - Paul Naughton, Rick Eastman, Jeff Cox; *Town Manager* – Sharon Jackson; *Code Enforcement Officer* – Katie Haley

FBA Economic Development Committee: Mike Corthell, David Cullinan, Holly, Foster, Dick Krasker, Ted Raymond, Jennifer Regan, George Weston, Donna Woodward

Area Economic Development Partners: *Director of MWV Chamber of Commerce* – Janice Crawford; *Executive Director of MWV Economic Council* – Jac Cuddy, *Bridgton Director of Planning, Economic & Community Development* – Anne Krieg; *Director of MWV Housing Coalition* – Theresa Kennett; Rob Newton, *Hunting Dearborn*; Donnie Thibodeau, *Green Thumb Farms and the Eastern Slope Airport Authority*; Pat Maillett, *Harmac*

Area Education Leaders: Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents: Jay Robinson, *MSAD 72*; Al Smith and Deborah Howard, *MSAD 61*; Dr. Carl Nelson and Kevin Richard, *NH SAU 9*; Head of School and Assistant Head: Erin Mayo and Joe Manning, *Fryeburg Academy*; Technical/Vocational Center Directors: Rosie Schacht & Madelyn Litz, Assistant, *MSAD 61*;

Richard Biche, *NH SAU 9*; Mark Strange, *Fryeburg Academy*, **Additional Education Leaders:** Steve McFarland & Phoebe Monteith, *MSAD 61/ 72 Adult Education*; SAU 9 Neal Moylin, Joe Lentini SAU 13; Ray O'Brien

February 26, 2015 – Mia meets with the Fryeburg Town Manager and FBA leaders to review action items from December 1, 2014 meeting.

- Snowmobile registration reciprocity:
 - Support from Maine and Vermont for reciprocal snowmobile registrations is not strong, while New Hampshire is very supportive.
 - LD 561 allows reciprocity of snowmobiles and all-terrain vehicle registrations with a state that borders this State. This bill is sponsored by Representative Matt Peterson of Rumford and Co-sponsored by Senator John Patrick of Rumford, Representatives Beck of Waterville, Gilbert of Jay, Head of Bethel, McCabe of Skowhegan and Pickett of Dixfield. The bill was referred to the Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.
 - Consider increasing the number of weekends from one to two each year when snowmobiles that are registered in any of the three states can be used at no extra charge in all three states.
- Accurately locating businesses that are on Main Street on Google Maps
 - This issue has been successfully addressed.
- Explore extending the sewer line from North Conway to Fryeburg
 - North Conway has excess capacity, making this option a real opportunity and more cost effective than creating a local sewage treatment plan and sewer line.
- Local land use and zoning issues
 - There is a public hearing on March 10 to receive comments on proposed revisions to the Fryeburg Land Use Ordinance. The revisions will be included on the town warrant and voted on at Town Meeting.
- Forming an economic development committee for the Town of Fryeburg
 - This initiative is on hold.

Revised 3-3-2015