

**MINUTES**  
**TOWN OF SAN ANSELMO**  
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Zoom Meeting**  
**September 8, 2020, 8:45 a.m.**

**Committee Members Present:** Chair Jessica Rising, Rebecca Bugas, Rich Burns, Benedetto Cico, Jaime Ginsberg, Kim Pipkin, Kelley Warner.

**Committee Member Absent:** Brian Stewart.

**Others Present:** Town Council Member Colbert, Town Manager Donery, Director of Community Services Mauk, Planning Director Semonian, Associate Planner Sarah Price.

**Call to Order:** Chair Rising called the meeting to order at 8:51 a.m.

**Welcome New Member:** Rebecca Bugas, owner of The Hub restaurant at Red Hill Shopping Center, was welcomed to the committee.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes:** M/s Warner/Cico to approve the August 11, 2020, meeting minutes, carried unanimously.

**Open Time for Public Expression:** None.

**Strategic Planning Session – Continued:**

The EDC continued the Strategic Planning Session from the August 11, 2020 meeting, where they left off at “7. Events and Business Development”.

***Events and Business Development*** – Events have been put on hold due to COVID 19. Donery indicated that EDC would not create events but could have support and EDC branding on events. Evening street closures are continuing, and staff is not recommending moving forward with the one way street trial this year. EDC agreed to remove Events from the Plan for the upcoming year.

***Financing - Identify and implement mechanisms to assure a sustainable source of revenues for area improvement.***

**Business Improvement District (BID).** The EDC heard about the different structures for BIDs and what they are used for. The EDC wanted more information on how much management is required, how much funds could be raised, and what they would be spent on. The EDC agreed to make this just a research item with Ginsberg and Semonian working on the item with assistance from Richard Berkson. It was suggested to consider Novato and San Rafael BIDs. The EDC can gauge interest in BIDs with the landlord survey.

**Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT).** Berkson indicated that past efforts were opposed by

the single hotel owner and residents. A tax may be difficult to support in the current economic climate. After discussion regarding who it would apply to and the vote necessary, the EDC agreed to remove this from the action plan.

**Establish mechanism to accept contributions online.** The EDC agreed to remove this since there are some nonprofit organizations set up to receive contributions for special projects.

**Consider transfer fee on property.** The EDC agreed to remove this item, which may not even be possible for the Town to implement.

**COVID 19 Response and Recovery Task Force.** Rising reviewed the actions of the COVID 19 Task Force (Members Rising, Warner, Wright, and staff). The EDC will remove the COVID 19 Task Force as a continuing item in the EDC Plan, but the COVID 19 programs will continue as regular items in the Plan. Rising was thanked for her leadership on the project. The task force can be reinstated in the future if necessary.

**Contact List** - The EDC discussed a database system, which Donery indicated has not been funded by the Town Council. The Committee agreed to expand the contact list for San Anselmo Businesses and determine how best to make this happen.

**Survey** - Rising suggested continuing the needs assessment survey or a regular survey. The majority were in favor of keeping this in the Plan for now because we may want to do another survey. The EDC discussed formats for surveys, including those conducted by Ginsberg. Warner suggested using the same format for communications, such as Survey Monkey by email, and publishing the results of surveys. The EDC would like to explore the best way to survey businesses and communicate.

**Newsletter communication** – The EDC agreed to continue the newsletter. Colbert commented that all stakeholders should be included in outreach. The EDC serves the entire business community, including downtown merchants. Comments from residents are also important and may not align with the businesses.

**Open for Business Sign Program** - Burns and Warner were thanked for their efforts. The posters have become a best practice that others have wanted to follow. The signs are cost effective as they are designed by Burns with assistance from Warner, printed at Town Hall, and distributed by Warner, Rising and other volunteers. They have a VOTE series coming out soon and custom posters are being made. It was suggested to have a welcome package for new business with custom signs. EDC will continue sign program on Action Plan.

**New Business Onboarding Program** - Bugas suggested having a mentor for a new business to inform them of all the programs, emails, and assistance currently available. Bugas will come up with proposal for program for future agenda. A mentoring and onboarding program, including a welcome packet and web site, for new business will be added to the Action Plan with Bugas as the lead. Pipkin will assist.

**Business Resource Center** – The EDC supported Rising’s suggestion to increase the online presence of the EDC through an optimum business resource center on the Town web site with photos and contact information. Rising will lead this project.

**Marin Small Business Development Center** – EDC was in favor of Rising maintaining partnership with Marin Small Business Development Center for the upcoming year.

**Advocacy on behalf of the businesses** – Wright and Rising drafted letter from EDC chair to Marin County Public Health Officer that used information received in the survey. Colbert indicated a County steering committee is working on an Economic Development grant and he can advocate for Town projects at the County level. The EDC will include an item in the Plan for Advocacy and Colbert can lead the item.

**Communications Plan** - Rising recommended a comprehensive communications plan for the EDC and businesses, including use of social media sites like Instagram, and a blog. Concerns were expressed about the sustainability of any communication efforts in the future. The EDC voted in favor of Rising leading this project to develop a comprehensive communications plan.

**Plan Update** - Richard, Rising and Elise will prepare draft EDC Plan to review at October meeting.

**Adjourn** Rising adjourned the meeting at 10:40 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for October 13, 2020 at 8:45 a.m.