



Borough of Manville
NEW JERSEY

Economic Development Committee
June 13, 2023 Meeting Minutes
6 PM, Manville Public Library

Present:

John Holloway
Diana Sieberg
Matthew Brown
Council Liaison: Joe DeVito
Ex Officio Member: Mayor Richard Onderko
Secretary: Nanette Peterson

Absent:

Sue Asher
Alt: Sharon Lukac
Alt: Caitlin Cunningham

Guests:

Brandon Agan
Gail Skirkanish

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 PM.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the March 14, 2023 meeting were not distributed prior to this meeting. They will be reviewed for correction at the July 11, 2023 meeting.

Announcements

Matt Brown shared with the group that Suzanne Maeder has resigned as Chair due to a conflict with her new job. Matt has been asked to be the Chairperson for the EDC moving forward and he accepted the role.

Municipal updates

Mayor Onderko reported that the Main Street project is on schedule and will hopefully be completed by the end of the year. The goal is to improve pedestrian safety on Main St. The mayor asked committee members to make him aware of issues pertaining to the appearance of Main Street buildings and signage so that codes may be enforced. The property owners need to be held accountable for property maintenance code compliance. The mayor also reiterated that he is not being told when a new business opens in town.

Mayor Onderko once again mentioned the “Main Street New Jersey” program available through the NJDCA. We need to apply for this but will need to partner with the Somerset County Business Partnership to do so.

Councilperson DeVito is working on an ordinance to have Manville designated as a “Film Ready” community. This is a five-step process that would result in Manville being considered as a potential location for film or TV programs. The NJ Motion Picture and Television Committee keeps a database of potential productions locations. Joe continues to work on his documentary about Manville to bring notoriety to the town.

Action Items from previous meeting

The municipal budget was approved and there is no line item for the EDC for this fiscal year. We will have to wait until next year. Mayor Onderko said that we may possibly use funds from the Community Events budget.

Meet and Greet Overview and Recap

Members felt that attendance by local businesses was lacking, even though several had RSVP'd. Joe DeVito offered that an "advertising" video about the EDC and/or an upcoming program might be effective.

Reexamining Ordinance, Mission Statement, and Statement of Goals

Matt created a PowerPoint presentation about the EDC. Ordinance 2020-1255 that established the EDC specified 7 members. The mayor stated that he has appointed himself to one of the positions. Joe DeVito is no longer a member as he is now serving as the Council liaison. Therefore, there is one position currently open,, but appointments must be formally announced at a Council Meeting.

The EDC's statement of goals for 2023 was adopted at the January meeting. The major focus is on marketing for and to our businesses. Time needs to be best spent on things to engage businesses or communicate with businesses. To this end, we are redefining our goals using S.M.A.R.T. parameters (i.e., "The EDC will create a database of existing businesses by September 2023 for the purpose of contacting said businesses about business opportunities."). Communicating with existing and potential business needs to be the cornerstone of engagement.

To effectively communicate with these businesses, we need the to:

- Create a database of existing businesses.
- Receive information on upcoming businesses.
 - This will require building a business process with the Borough Administrator and his staff. We need to understand the process flow at Borough Hall to receive notifications.
- Maintain the database.
- Employ CRM (customer relations management software – like Constant Contact) if budget allows.
- Deliver communications in English and Spanish.

The second goal of the EDC will be to finalize and operationalize the Manville Business Directory on the MyManville app. The app was purchased for emergency management but can be utilized to push notifications to businesses. The mayor will reach out to the app developer to get reach numbers.

General comments or concerns from Committee Members

The group explored the idea of an EDC Facebook page. Currently, Sharon Onderko manages the MyManville page. The mayor cautioned that anything on a Borough Facebook page can be OPRA'd.

The mayor will work on creating a group distribution list for the EDC.

The mayor has a conflict with the 2nd Tuesday meeting schedule. Joe DeVito would like the meeting time pushed back to 6:30 pm. Nan will explore other dates/times on the meeting room calendar.

Adjournment

The mayor moved to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Diana Sieberg and the meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm.

Next meeting confirmation - Tuesday, July 11, 2023