



## **EDIC Meeting Minutes**

**Tuesday, March 9, 2021 at 4:30 pm**

### **Zoom Meeting**

- **Call to Order of the Board**
- **Meeting began at 4:32 pm.**
- **Open Meeting Law:** This meeting is recorded by video and audio in accordance with state Open Meeting Law. Consistent with the Governor's orders suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law and banning gatherings of more than 10 people, this meeting will be conducted by remote participation. If you are calling in on a phone you can press Star 9 (\*9) to request to speak. If you are watching on a computer or device there is a "raise hand" button that you can tap or press to request to speak. Please use either of these options during oral communications to be recognized to speak.
- **In attendance:** Acting Chair Bill Bramhall, Treasurer Ruth Pino, Taylor Hedges, Tom Balf, Tim Wood, Mike DiLascio, and Jerrold Oppenheim. Also, in attendance, Felicia Webb, Chief Administrator for Cape Ann Transportation Authority, Attorney John Cunningham, and Director of Economic Development for the City of Gloucester, Sal DiStefano.
- **Approval of the meeting minutes from the February 9, 2021 meeting.** A motion was made to approve the minutes. All were in favor.
- **Business Park Status:** T. Hedges is continuing discussions with the business parks concerning signage. Businesses are busy but are not at full capacity yet. We will continue discussions with our contacts in the office parks and anticipate a surge in engineering related business over the next 6 months as people are getting vaccinated. The semi-conductor market is down by 30% in capacity and it will take a while to recover.
- **Signage:** T. Hedges continues to work on the quoting process. It looks like the signage project is at the \$60,000 mark. It may be necessary for the EDIC to contribute a portion to the project. Has the Board thought about reaching out to trade schools to see if they could produce the signs? Our goal for this project is to have this completed in 10 months. Other questions were focused on the pricing structure of how this will be presented to companies that would like to participate. A proposal will be developed in the next 60 days targeting fifteen companies. It is

estimated that twenty-five different signs will be produced. Attorney Cunningham has agreed to look into if the EDIC is required to put out an RFP for the project and what the thresholds are. DiStefano will connect with Hedges and go over any new occupants in the industrial park that may be interested in participating in on this project. Hedges will put together a proposal with two different price levels. T. Balf will assist with the proposal process.

- **CATA on Demand-** CATA started working with VIA on the details of the project and have developed an App to use to book a ride. The App has the capabilities of “Log Me In” and “Sign Me Up.” GL design is working on the bus graphics and App design. CATA On-Demand is focused on the workforce population that uses the commuter rail to travel into Gloucester. CATA is looking for new companies that may be interested in participating. Initially, the EDIC agreed to be a local match contributing \$5,000. A year and a half ago, Applied Materials also agreed to be a local match to the project, but an amount was never discussed or put in writing. CATA still is looking for another \$10,000 to meet the local match for this calendar year. A total of \$15,000 above the EDIC’s match will be needed to fill that part of the grant application. The project launch date is Tuesday, April 20<sup>th</sup>. CATA is also working towards the marketing and messaging piece of the project. Carl Gustin has agreed to use his literary skills to craft an article about this as another re-opening story about Gloucester. The EDIC needs to reach out to the original folks who made a commitment early on and target any new businesses in the park that would want to participate. By securing donors, their employees would ride for free or at a reduced rate. CATA will work on the structuring of how to present this to donors and will also need to develop a plan for funding moving forward. The EDIC will need to reach out again to our list of contacts and start making calls to secure sponsorships. In October of 2019, the application was in and CATA was awarded the grant. In February 2020, everything was put on hold due to the pandemic. The EDIC will need the most current summary of the project to work with so the Board can send this out to potential donors.
- **Beaver Solutions-** Mike Callahan of Beaver Solutions will be meeting with Acting-Chair Bramhall and Hedges to discuss what the plan will be moving forward and what the EDIC will have to plan for in the future.
- **MassEcon-** MassEcon did respond back to Tom Balf about what their offering would be to the EDIC and to find out if there was any interest in participating in the Regional Spotlight Series. This series promotes different regions of the commonwealth. Panelists then get some time to promote their area and what makes a great business location. They are planning on doing one for the Northeast and would love to have Gloucester EDIC represented on the Panel. They are planning to have it either on March 30<sup>th</sup> or April 6<sup>th</sup>. Balf proposed the question if the EDIC would like to participate and who might be the best presentative from the Board. Balf suggested that Sal DiStefano may be the best choice to represent the EDIC in lieu of not having an Executive Director. DiStefano would have a better sense overall of what is going on in the business community and Balf brings a lot of insight with the Blue Economy, bio-manufacturing, and the GMGI. DiStefano thinks this is a great opportunity and happy to assist. Balf and DiStefano will coordinate the presentation content and they will decide who the presenter will be. DiStefano also informed the Board of a new business currently moving

to Gloucester at 11 Parker Street. An Italian-based food manufacturer loved the location of Gloucester and its proximity to Boston. The Board agreed that DiStefano would be a key contributor in this presentation and that he has a much better sense overall of what is going on in the City.

- T. Hedges presented the idea to the Board of having Zoom meetings for the tenants and owners of the industrial parks. This would be a good way to present material to all three industrial parks and present opportunities. DiStefano also brought up another idea of providing financial leadership presentations to the industrial parks from Mass Development. The EDIC could partner with Mass Development and put together a series of training programs like funding for an expansion, upgrading equipment, how to write a business plan, developing a marketing plan, tax incentives, workforce development and employee training programs. This would be an opportunity to showcase what is available for financing resources and know it is a resource that is available. The EDIC could also speak about the signage project and attract sponsorship for the CATA/Last Mile pilot program. Programs would be targeted towards the industrial parks. The EDIC can turn this into a series of Zoom events and target different topics of interest. Based on feedback, we can open this up further and cover more topics. Perhaps for the initial presentation we see how it goes and what topics would be of some interest. A survey can be presented at the end of the meeting asking for feedback on other topics of interest. Energy efficiency could also fit into this and be a part of the discussion. The first meeting is scheduled for April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 10:00 am and will be virtual. DiStefano will provide bullet points and an outline of the meeting to send along with the Zoom invitations.
- North Shore Blue Economy Phase One Report- T. Balf did provide the Board with an update. The document has been updated and will be released this spring and there will be an accompanying Zoom call and some sort of release party.
- Harbor Plan Committee- T. Balf provided the Board with an update that an RFP for the consulting team went out. There was a pre-bid meeting that was held last week. Responses are due back on March the 16<sup>th</sup>. The RFP committee, comprised of three members, will review all the submissions in the selection process.
- R. Pino provided an update on the Cape Ann Community Foundation and the Cape Ann license plates are still available. The foundation is launching its third auction on March 31, 2021. Also, the Gloucester 400 lost an entire year of planning and fundraising. However, one-inch bronze medals commemorating Gloucester's 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary are currently on sale at the Brass Monkey on Main St. All the medallion proceeds go back to the Gloucester 400 Foundation.
- The EDIC's next meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 13<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 pm.
- Meeting adjourned at 5:45 pm.

