



EDIC BOARD MEETING

TUESDAY, February 15, 2022, at 4:30 pm

Remote Zoom Meeting

- **Call to order of the Board. Meeting began at 4:33pm.**
- **Attendance was taken. In attendance: Acting Chair Tom Balf, Tim Wood, Treasurer Ruth Pino, Jerrold Oppenheim, Taylor Hedges, and Mike DiLascio. Also in attendance, Sal DiStefano, City of Gloucester’s Economic and Development Director, and Felicia Webb, Chief Administrator for Cape Ann Transportation Authority.**
- **Open Meeting Law Guidelines were read: 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.**
- **Approval of the January 18, 2022, meeting minutes were approved. A motion to approve the minutes was made and all were in favor.**
- **Search for a New Legal Council: It was suggested by the Board to put together a Request for Information in the search for new legal counsel to the EDIC Board to replace John Cunningham. A number of recommendations were received and the Board’s Subcommittee (Tom Balf, Mike DiLascio, Ruth Pino) recommended moving forward with one candidate. Attorney Adria Pratt, who is currently a real estate attorney with Cape Ann Law, will be moving forward in the interview process and will be meeting with Board at the April meeting. Pratt is a Gloucester resident and has been practicing law since 2017. She is a Suffolk University graduate and previously worked for seven years with Attorney Robert Visnick as a paralegal. Attorney Pratt has expressed a great interest in the role and was a former member of the Gloucester Board of Appeals. The Board looks forward to meeting with Attorney Pratt at its April meeting.**
- **CATA On Demand: Felicia Webb provided the Board with an update on the CATA On Demand Program. Webb reported that the CATA on Demand service continues to be a very successful program with over 1,200 trips made this last January. Since the program started in April 2021,**

over 12,000 trips around Cape Ann have been made. These numbers reflect that there is a need within this community for this type of service. CATA's next fiscal year begins on July 1, 2022, and this program will need to meet the funding goal of \$40,000.00 to continue the service. Even though this has been a very successful pilot program, Mass.gov has decided that they will no longer be funding the Workforce Transportation Grants. Felicia Webb did contact Mass.gov on the reasoning behind taking this program away. CATA does have CARES Act money and state contract assistance to contribute to the On Demand program. Also, Webb was instrumental in putting a request for the Addison Gilbert Community Development Grant. Webb also informed the Board that there will be other opportunities through Mass.gov in June to apply for additional grant funding. The EDIC Board proposed a question about the need to broaden the scope of corporate sponsorship. Obtaining specific data from CATA would be useful in determining what locations are currently being serviced by the program. We need to go back to existing and potential sponsors with this data. Also, some PR needs to be done about the program in order to gain additional sponsorship and program awareness. Good Morning Gloucester expressed interest in assisting with getting the word out to Cape Ann about this service and becoming a potential sponsor. The Board expressed the need to have this specific rider data in order to get out the right messaging. It may be beneficial to get testimonials now from existing corporate sponsorships. Felicia promised to get this data to the Board in advance of the next Board meeting.

- **Industrial Park Status: Blackburn Signage**- The signage project continues and quotes are still coming. Anchor Seal and Happy Valley liked the newer design renditions. Many other companies showed initial interest but now remain silent. We need to present final costs in writing to interested parties to get final commitments. The EDIC's goal would be to finalize the signage package by next month and present this information to those interested companies.
- **Kondelin Road**- The Board expressed interest in evaluating the feasibility of expansion of Cape Ann Industrial Park to access properties owned by the EDIC and the City. Taylor Hedges and Tom Balf to followup with the City and Sen Tarr to explore opportunities for funding to conduct a feasibility analysis.
- **Life Science Initiative**: GMGI has won a silver medal award and a special recognition award from MassEcon in the NE section for their workforce innovation. The awards celebration will be held on April 7th in the Foxborough area. This provides a great success story in raising the visibility of Gloucester and the Cape Ann area where great things are happening in the life sciences and in workforce innovation. Benchmark Strategies, a PR firm that the Community Development Department has hired, will continue promoting these types of economic development stories to encourage other businesses to consider Gloucester as a workplace location.
- **Continued Outreach**- The EDIC will continue to work with GMGI and the City to conduct outreach to property owners, developers, and real estate brokers, in an effort to raise awareness on opportunities in the life sciences and biomanufacturing sectors.
- **The Municipal Harbor Plan Committee**- is finishing up their economic analysis that will be available very soon. It paints a picture of how Gloucester continues to be a vibrant fishing

industry that still brings in a minimum of 50 million dollars in landings. Compared to many other ports Gloucester is still a strong economic engine. Balf would like to see this plan as concrete as possible and have the recommendations be measurable and resourced.

- **Financial Matters:** Invoice from Roselli Clark and Associates, our new auditing firm, has confirmed our yearly audit will be coming up. The total for the audit is \$5,450.00. Roll call vote was taken to approve the invoice for payment. All were in favor. A second invoice needing approval was brought before the Board from Beaver Solutions LLC in the amount of \$350.00. This is per the agreement from 2021 on routine maintenance for the flow device. It was noted that there was an increase of sedimentation in the pond, which puts the pipe at risk of clogging. Beaver Solutions cannot guarantee how long it can function before needing to be replaced. A motion was made to approve the invoice. All were in favor.
- **New Business:** Balf reviewed the Federal Infrastructure Bill. There are billions on the federal side for resiliency, electric vehicle charging stations, funds for upgrading power systems reliability, energy efficiency and conservation block grant money, water/sewer, FEMA Flood monies and funds for ports. At the state level meeting went on with the mayor. DiStefano will provide an update to the group about what transpired from these meetings. DiStefano noted that Benchmark Strategies will be researching some of the opportunities with this bill that would align with some of Gloucester's strategies. A virtual meeting will be held with Benchmark and the City, and Balf expressed an interest in having some of the EDIC board participate.
- **One Stop Program-** Over the summer the City took part in the LLRP- Local Rapid Recovery Plan. Over 125 cities participated in this plan. This was a post-Covid recovery plan. The City worked with a dedicated Consultant that help identified 12 priorities to improve the downtown area. A stakeholder meeting was held to come up with a list of things they would like to see come out of the program. Each city and town were asked to submit an expression of interest and were able to submit up to 5 projects for consideration to be funded. The City of Gloucester submitted 5 projects and asked for financial support on I4C2 and 112 Commercial Street. We also received feedback on Kondelin Road which has a lack of sidewalks and streetlighting. The ask was for repaving, adding sidewalks, and replacing lamps on existing poles. The goal was to see if we could get the funding needed to support those business and to make these areas more pedestrian friendly for employees. Decisions on these projects will be coming soon.
- The Chamber of Commerce recently did a survey. Some of the topics that came out of the survey are that the City should have a downtown management organization to oversee and support the potential growth of downtown moving forward in this post-pandemic era. A traffic and parking study is needed for downtown. Lastly, assistance with promoting vacant store front support potentially with pop-up programs for retailers is needed. The Chamber did another survey about J1 visas and found that finding summer help and affordable housing for these individuals is often difficult to find.
- There have been reports that many vacant buildings downtown are now under negotiation. Many of the vacancies will be potentially filled for active usages. Three major vacancies are

potentially being filled. Residential usages for some of these buildings will create additional foot traffic on Main Street.

- **A motion was made to conclude the meeting. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 5:46pm.**
- **Next meeting for the EDIC will be held on Tuesday, March 15th, 2022.**