



## EDIC Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at 5:00pm

CATA Conference Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor

3 Pond Road

- Call to order of the Board. Meeting started at 5:03pm.
- In attendance: Chair B. Bramhall, Treasurer R. Pino, T. Hedges, C. Gustin, T. Balf, J. Oppenheim. Absent: M. DiLascio. Also, in attendance J. Cunningham, Attorney for the EDIC, and Sal DiStefano, Gloucester's Economic Development Director.
- Meeting minutes from the October, 17<sup>th</sup>, 2018 meeting were approved. All were in favor.
- Chair Bramhall opened the meeting with an update on the UMASS contract which is still in the works. The Board is still waiting to hear back from Professor Raciti.
- Bramhall brought up the issue that the Board still needs to fill the Vice-Chair position. By law we are required to. We need to check if the City appoints a Vice-Chair or if the Board does. Group would like to elect M. DiLascio as ViceChair.
- T. Balf addressed the Board with the question of "How do we wish to proceed to clarify our mission as part of our effort and how we interact with the City?"
- T. Hedges added that working with Sal is going to be the most important thing.
- S. DiStefano told the Board that he sees this group as ambassadors to the business community with outreach and marketing. When available properties come up Sal would like to bounce ideas off of this group and having Community Development, Economic Development and the Mayor's Office all closely working together.
- C. Gustin asked how much latitude do we have in regards to the traditional covenant that has been put in to place. The EDIC needs a broader role. The Bureau of Labor stats came out with a report that the high tech industry is evolving. In 15 to 20 years, high tech services will be larger than manufacturing. High tech services falls into a lot of the businesses we have in Gloucester like consulting and architectural firms. The economy is changing and evolving here. New England Labor Council looked at advanced manufacturing in New England and there are lots of opportunities. From the Massachusetts page, they created a snap shot of manufacturing in Massachusetts and the area with the highest percentage of advanced high tech jobs is in Essex and Franklin Counties. We should be able to attract more of these types of jobs in this area. We need to put together a draft discussion document that would tie into what the City is doing. What needs to be addressed is the following:
  - Changing and evolving economy

- The infrastructure and community needs like housing, energy costs, and education
- Attention and attraction issues. Is there a way to look at competitive pressures and talking to building owners?
- Incentives influence attention and attraction
- Issues on manufacturing rates on electricity
- Skill sets/ Education levels
- Interests of the Administration
- We have the UMASS effort which will provide us with substantial input. We should start having conversations with property owners like Applied and McNiff. We need to define the role of the EDIC that goes beyond the traditional- the industrial base. Gustin stated that he would like to take a preliminary shot at putting together the EDIC's mission and then present it to the group.
- Bramhall stated that this was an excellent idea. This was the focus of what the Mayor and Jim Destino wanted to get the EDIC involved with all of Gloucester and not just with available land. We need to develop our focus.
- R. Pino stated that the GMGI is now on the waterfront and that will attract other companies like it.
- S. DiStefano added that the key factor that allowed that to happen was the GMGI's research component. This will encourage others to make the same commitment. We need to look at what's in the park now and what businesses are in there now. There could be a business in there working at half capacity and someone looking to buy 30,000 square feet. The EDIC can be the integral part of the mix. The business mix is key.
- C. Gustin added that the education piece is also key. We have Essex Tech partnering with Gloucester Schools. We have Endicott here and now GMGI Institute. We need to link these together.
- T. Balf stated that we are all sales people for the City and that he is most interested in figuring out the plan. Do we focus on the industrial part or on clusters? Biotech or advanced manufacturing? What authority and power will the EDIC have and where can we add value on the economic development in the next 3-5 years?
- T. Hedges commented that Tom specializes in the waterfront. Ruth specializes in real estate. We all bring a different level of expertise from each of our different backgrounds.
- C. Gustin stated that we should be looking at the blue economy as well. We see the trends and what industries we can attract. What are the drawbacks of going to Cambridge?
- R. Pino added the EDIC is now taking more interest in what companies are current in our industrial parks.
- S. DeStefano stated that he did get the business owners and managers together in both industrial parks and invited them to a gathering. There was not a central list available of all of the contacts that occupy our industrial parks. We had to piece the list together and DiStefano said that he had to knock on doors to get the information. We need to find a way to get these contacts together and build on that. We need to be able to contact these business owners on a regular basis.

- T. Balf informed the Board that the Chamber has an entrepreneurship group that meets. Tom went to the last meeting and the focus was on the blue economy. There is a blue economy initiative coming out of the Chamber of Commerce in the one to two years.
- R. Pino added that we as a group should be involved.
- C. Gustin stated that it makes sense that we meet with the Ken Riehl, the Chamber President, and invite him to our next meeting. Pino will extend the invitation and contact Mr. Riehl.
- T. Balf made a point that there is value in working on this strawman and draft our EDIC mission and that we should start working on our white paper/discussion draft right away.
- J. Cunningham stated to the Board that you need to pick what is the most important project and focus on that and a few smaller projects. Start by working on a project by project basis. What are the 1 or 2 projects that you need to focus on and can effectively do?
- C. Gustin informed the group that he will take a stab at putting together a framework. One thing that is clear is that we need to set up informal representative groups of owners and tenants that occupy space in the 2 industrial parks. We need to set up a couple of meetings where we can whiteboard some of the current issues in these 2 parks.
- T. Balf emphasizes that ultimately the best way to get us to the project is the value of putting together the framework.
- R. Pino stated that Gloucester is competing with so much because it is at the end of the line. We need to have the big picture in mind all of the time.
- C. Gustin gave the Board an example of Portsmouth, New Hampshire which is the same size as Gloucester and is currently attracting high tech. They have nice restaurants, large commercial base, shops downtown, a parking garage, and tremendous value in job creation and business building.
- B. Bramhall added that New Hampshire has land and industrial space.
- R. Pino stated that the City hired a planning consultant and she studied the City's zoning ordinance. This was done with grant money. The City then put together a zoning sub-committee. Pino said that the planning consultant is going to make the difference.
- T. Hedges added that it was good to have a paid outside observer. It is not easy to get things done in this City.
- S. DiStefano raised a good point that the key component is the commuter line. He plans on attending an upcoming meeting at the state level to address this. DiStefano gave an example of companies like Necco and Garlick Farms who have the jobs but people can not get there. Transportation is important. Gorton's has openings as well and can not fill them. It is hard for local companies to hire.
- C. Gustin said that Gorton's has expressed concern for some time with the reverse commute. The commute leaving Gloucester and the traffic backed up on 128 with the volume coming from the Cummings Center.
- R. Pino asked DiStefano about the upcoming Seafood Show in March and if the EDIC can be involved. This is the second largest seafood show in the world.
- C. Gustin asked if it would be beneficial to have EDIC brochures at the show. "Gloucester welcomes industries related to Seafood".

- It was decided that C. Gustin would start on the draft of the EDIC mission and would present it at the next meeting.
- Next meeting will be on Thursday, December 20<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm.
- Meeting was called to adjourn at 6:10pm.