



**TOWN OF WILTON
SELECTMENS MEETING
APPROVED MINUTES**

DATE: October 19, 2015
TIME: 6:30 PM
PLACE: Wilton Town Hall Courtroom

PRESENT: Chairman Rick Swanson, Kermit Williams, Bill Condra, Tracey Ewing, Sean Ewing, Pamela Atwood, Sorrell Downing, Harry Dailey, Carol Roberts, John Shepardson, Tom Schultz, Alexis Pittman, Karen Simmons, Charles McGettigan, Jeff Kandt, Camille Pattison, Tracy Hutchins, Jeff Stone, Lynn Stone, Jessie Salisbury, Mickey Pieterse, Alison Meltzer, Paul Levesque, Donna Talarico, Doug Nelson, PatricStuart Arnett, Mary Guild, Ashely Saari, Bart Hunter, Dawn Tuomala.

Chairman Swanson opened the meeting at 6:30 PM.

Ms. Tuomala asked the Board of Selectmen if the Wilton Lyndeborough Women's Club could set up a "giving tree" again this holiday season at the Town Hall. The Selectmen approved this request.

Mr. Dailey will present the findings form the Wage and Salary Sub Committee to the library trustees. The Selectmen thanked Mr. Daily for spreading the word and look forward to hearing the comments.

The Board of Selectmen took care of administrative paperwork.

7:00 PM Stuart Arnett from The Arnett Development Group, Concord, NH

Mr. Arnett asked the audience to introduce themselves. He then introduced himself: Prior to the reestablishment of ADG in 2006 (the firm as originally founded in 1987), Stuart served two four-year terms as the Director of Economic Development for the State of New Hampshire, the state's lead person for economic development policy, business advocacy and client services. He served under three Governors.

Mr. Arnett presented HOW he works Economy Development:

- Science – there are rules
- Art – it is innovative and creative
- Jazz – there is a need to listen to others and improvise

Mr. Arnett presented WHY he works in Economy Development:

- The Economy is Flat
- Increased Pace of Change
- The more vibrant the economy the more vibrant the quality of life in that community.

There is Regional Cooperation – jobs, people, resources, roads, bank credit, and regional services

There is Regional Competition – shopping, dining, and tourism/visitors

Mr. Arnett then presented his 10 Core Competencies

1. Organization and leadership for growth of the economic development entity.
2. Retention and expansion of existing employers (advocacy and problem solving)
 - a. What does zoning allow?
 - b. What is credit climate in the area?
3. Cultivation of new, entrepreneurial ideas and people.
4. Recruitment of expanding companies to your community.
 - a. “Lets get a big company to move here” – This is long terms and low return especially in a small community.
5. Branding your community, differentiating from the competition, and marketing that brand.
 - a. This has to be authentic and attainable
6. Supplying development financing - grants, loans, credit enhancements, equity - where and when needed.
 - a. Be careful of “free money”
7. Real estate development - developing and managing land, buildings, downtowns, brownfields, etc.
 - a. Key targets: Wilton might be the downtown area? But need to know what is going on in community/backyard
8. Workforce development - the retention and development of the existing labor force, and the building of the smart skills needed for tomorrow.
 - a. The fastest growing demographic for starting a new business is +65 Years old.

9. Providing key industry sector services - for manufacturing, biosciences, tourism and conferencing, creative and cultural, health care, and retail. What industry clusters drive your local economy, and what uniquely do they need?
10. Technology and innovation development - broadband and wireless tools, technology transfer from R&D facilities, creative economy opportunities, among others. Technology, innovation and productivity produce competitiveness and profitability.

Mr. Arnett then asked which of these are of interest to Wilton.

- Does Wilton have an Economic Development Committee? There is the Main Street Association and in the past there has a Wilton Business Association.
- Does Wilton have a “branding?” When many think of Wilton they think of the Wilton Town hall Theatre. Some remember the scenic Railroad. Some think of the Waldorf schools. Many people work from home in Wilton – Wilton has good broadband/fiber.

The Stages of Economic Development:

1. Do No Harm. Remove unnecessary impediments to planning and zoning.
2. Encourage and Advocate. Make it hard to say no and easy to say yes. Find out why people are leaving. Be proactive in making business feel welcome and encourage them. There needs to be recognition and appreciation. Business give referrals and work with the schools to build skills needed in the community.
3. The Community needs a shared vision. Everyone needs a sense of heading in the same direction. There must be a community consensus. Do not begin traveling along the path to economic development until you know where you are going.
4. Leave or Do it Yourself. These are business parks and direct investments.

Explore TIF and RSA 79-e programs for the community.

Retention of existing business should be 60% of enterprise
Expansion of existing business should be 20% of enterprise
Attraction of new business should be 20% of enterprise

The bad news for Wilton is

- High vacancy rate
- Low traffic on Main Street
- Poor signage

The good news for Wilton is

- Located in a strong region of the state

Ms. Meltzer asked why Londonderry is doing so well with economy development. Mr. Arnett cited several reasons:

- TIF district
- Access road build
- Facilitated planning process
- Airport
- Proximity to MA
- Good Water

Ms. Pattison from NRPC asked if a town adopts a TIF program does this touch land regulation. Mr. Arnett stated it does not. A TIF program would need to be brought to Town Meeting.

Mr. Schultz asked Mr. Arnett what the ideal model for local economy development would be. Mr. Arnett stated

The community should form an Economic Development Committee – these people should communicate well.

- There must be strong leadership.
- There must be a community consensus.
- There must be action steps.

The members of the public shared some concerns:

- One resident has been trying to work with the schools to set up a road race and has hit many roadblocks. Feels like the community is unsupportive and finds getting answers difficult.
- Ms. Talarico stated that the community needs to ask the hard questions of, “Why are businesses leaving?”
- Mr. Nelson stated the community members need to support local businesses more.
- Mr. Hunter stated the downtown used to have a social role in the community. This has been lost.
- Mr. Hunter stated there has been conflict between various “groups” in town and it is time for those groups to unify and work together.
- Mr. Dailey stated that each member of the community needs to feel like they own a piece of the town and work together to restore that sense of community.
- Mr. Pittman asked if the town could have a place where prospective or current business people could get answers in a timely manner, preferably a human.

Mr. Swanson directed to Mr. Arnett to submit to the residents present a success story: Mr. Arnett shared several from Manchester, Claremont, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Keene, and Londonderry.

Ms. Tracy Hutchins – President of the Souhegan Valley Chamber of Commerce stated she has worked with Milford on a similar quest for economy revitalization and it began out of a meeting like this. A leadership committee was created and then unification between the town departments began. The committee created policies and procedures with the goal “businesses are the customers” and everyone was unified on that goal. They then worked on creating a usable website. Milford worked with Andre Garron and the UNH Cooperative Extension team too. Ms. Hutchins advised to adopt a more regional approach and work with neighboring communities.

Mr. Pittman asked if the town of Wilton could do a survey with four simple questions that could be sent to residents to get a sense of how to set the goal for economy development. Ms. Pattison from NRPC will have someone in her office work out a survey monkey online poll.

It was stated that communication in the town is fragmented. Could there be a Facebook page for the town? Email blasts to residents? Email addresses were collected from attendees.

Ms. Meltzer and her team from the Main Street Association applied for a grant in September and have made it to the semi final round of review. The decision will be made in one month. If awarded, the grant staff would facilitate a charrette type meeting to develop consensus on a vision for the downtown and help identify action steps to get there.

Mr. Williams proposed and Economic Development Committee in Wilton should include people from:

- The Planning Board
- The Main Street Association
- The Conservation Commission
- TIF Committee
- Water and Sewer Commission
- Local Businesspeople

Events need to be created to draw people to Wilton. Summerfest? Art and Film Festival? Farm to Table dinners? Use of the Mill Buildings for one day seminars?

Mr. Arnett stated, “Don’t focus on how to get there until you focus on why you are going there.” – Again, don’t start out on the road until you know where you are going and why.

Action Items:

- Create, Publish and Collect Data from a Survey (Survey Monkey)
- Economic Development Formative Committee (Volunteers) to form a leadership group – but be sure to not make it a lifetime commitment.
- Talk to Businesses in Wilton
- Talk to UNH Cooperative Extension Services – Andre Garron

Mr. Arnett thanked the attendees and the Selectmen for having him present. He departed at 9:00 PM.

Residents departed at 9:00 PM.

Mr. Condra, Mr. Swanson, Mr. Williams, Mr. Shepardson, Ms. Meltzer, Ms. Atwood and Ms. Downing remained.

Mr. Shepardson, Building Inspector

Mr. Shepardson stated he had concerns about the insulation projects being completed on time and within budget. The knob and tube wiring is difficult to navigate through and Mr. Shepardson proposed using a plastic rake to pull back the insulation to gain access to the knob and tube wiring. He will work discuss 10/20/15 with electrician. Mr. Sheparsdon stated the \$24,000 rebate from Eversource may expire by the time the work can feasibly be done. It is a big job that requires demolition and reconstruction that was not accounted for. The town will need to seek funding options for demolition and reconstruction. Mr. Williams will discuss the terms of the rebate with Eversource. Mr. Shepardson to speak with Ms. Dillon about the redevelopment of this space where the former cell was and current building inspector and other’s offices reside. A plan will need to be obtained to finish the work.

The crawl space too is small to gain access easily too to the front walls. Mr. Shepardson will seek out possible contractors who are equipped to tackle these jobs.

Ms. Meltzer departed.

The rebate on the lights ha been received.

Mr. Jasper will come 10/20/15 to troubleshoot the thermostats.

An evaluation of the feasibility of the wood pellet heat will begin this week. Mr. Williams asked if this should wait until there is funding for the project and it was agreed that the design should be completed as planned.

Action Items:

- Contact Eversource about terms of rebate
- Shop around for contractor to access basement
- Not ready to insulate outside walls (demolition and reconstruction)
- Can ceiling insulation be completed? Need to deal with knob and tube.

Next meeting October 26, 2015 to follow up on action items.

Mr. Shepardson departed at 9:56 PM

Ms. Atwood

Ms. Atwood asked the Selectmen to assist and approve updates to Master Plan Town Facilities Chapter as requested by Ms. Pattison from NRPC. These were updated and Ms. Atwood will submit to NRPC.

The next meeting of the Town of Wilton Board of Selectmen will be Wednesday September 22, 2015 at 7:00 PM in the Selectmen's Office.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Condra and SECONDED by Mr. Williams to adjourn the meeting at 10:03 PM

Voting: 3 ayes. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sorrell Downing