

**Meeting Minutes for Joint Meeting of Boards and Commissions
December 11, 2006, 7:30 pm, Durham Town Hall**

The meeting was called to order at 7:31 pm. Attendance was taken and each person was introduced.

Jim McLaughlin introduced Maryjane Malavasi, the town's Finance Officer. M. Malavasi presented the budget plan for Year 2007-2008. She presented her method of using an Excel template budgeting tool and explained that an Excel template had been prepared for each department/board/commission. The template is designed to perform automatic calculations, allow separate inputs for operating vs capital expenses, and provide separate compartments for objectives/goals planning and 5-year capital planning. M. Malavasi announced that the Board of Finance and her office request 'zero-based budgeting' and that each budget request should be supported by a need. Details for requests should be provided on the Excel template. Maryjane explained that only expenses for capital purchases will be carried over, so people should plan accordingly. Budgets are due to M. Malavasi on January 5th. M. Malavasi answered questions regarding the new process.

Richard Hanley, Chairman of the Economic Development Commission (EDC), presented the proposal to conduct a assessment of economic development using the services of Connecticut Economic Resource Center (CERC). CERC would identify opportunities and challenges in Durham, build an understanding of what works for the town and what doesn't work, work with boards, commissions, and residents to obtain information on vision and limitations, and facilitate communication as an impartial participant. The cost of a Phase 1 study is \$11,000.

Duncan Milne, Chairman of the Historic District Commission (HDC), stated that he attended a previous presentation by CERC as an invited guest by EDC and had a favorable opinion of the CERC.

Wendy Manemeit, Town Treasurer, asked about the number of years that the plan would cover. Diana McCain, member of EDC, noted that the result of the Phase 1 study would be in the form of a strategy as opposed to road map. R. Hanley noted that there would be 4 moderator-led public hearings, and that the length of the plan would be dictated by the objectives of the town.

Bob Melvin asked how the study would be integrated into the Plan of Conservation and Development. R. Hanley stated that CERC would work with the town's boards and

commissions so that consensus would be built and integration would be a natural outcome.

Laura Francis, Town Clerk, stated that people need to be educated about which businesses bring revenue into a town and the resulting ramifications and benefits.

Roger Kleeman asked if other agencies had been asked to bid on the study. R. Hanley answered that CERC is a non-profit organization and they have been recommended by other towns, such as Salem, which is roughly the same size as Durham. CERC has visited Durham 3 times so far.

Frank DeFelice asked what \$11,000 really provides the town. R. Hanley stated that the result of the Phase 1 study would dictate the size and scope of a Phase 2 study.

R. Hanley asked that the Phase 1 portion be started as soon as possible to take advantage of the spring, which is a productive time of the year.

Jim McLaughlin asked if other people would like to provide an update on the activities of their board/commission. L. Francis introduced her role as Freedom of Information liaison and maintaining information on the town's website. She commented on the fundraising activities to support a technology proposal for audio and visual equipment for Town Hall. L. Francis suggested that the Board of Selectmen set up a committee to investigate ways to bring money in for technology purposes.

Duncan Milne stated that he would like to work with all boards and commissions. George Eames, Chair of Planning and Zoning, said he would like to work with HDC.

Maryann Boord thanked all for their attendance and their volunteerism.

Elaine Melvin informed the group that many sites in town were being explored as a potential site for a senior citizen center.

J. McLaughlin also thanked the group for their hard work and added that a committee had been formed to research programs for senior tax abatements. He stated that our elders make our community balanced and we don't want to lose them.

Maryann Boord informed the group that a committee had been formed to explore options for joining a full-time regional health district.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00.

Respectfully Submitted, Renee Primus Edwards