



**Town of Concord
Economic Vitality Committee Meeting Minutes
March 29, 2023**

- Present:** Jennifer Schunemann, Chair, Cato Anderson, Steve Verrill,
Dawn Rennert, Jennifer McGonigle and Jan Turnquist
- Staff:** Beth Williams, Tourism Manager and Marcia Rasmussen, Director of
Planning and Land Management
- Others:** Mary Hartman, Select Board, Don Kupka and Joseph Palumbo

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 P.M.

MINUTES
February 15, 2023

On a **MOTION** made by Ms. Turnquist and seconded by Mr. Anderson it was **VOTED** to **APPROVE** the minutes of the meeting of February 15, 2023.

Mr. Anderson - Aye
Ms. Schunemann - Aye
Ms. Williams - Aye
Ms. McGonigle - Aye
Ms. Rennert - Aye
Ms. Turnquist - Aye

TOWN UPDATES

Ms. Schunemann announced that Mimi Graney, Economic Vitality Manager, began work on April 3, 2023. She is very happy to have Mimi join us and will invite her to our next meeting on April 19, 2023. She would like that meeting to be in-person and will arrange for that.

Ms. Williams stated that she and others have put together a presentation regarding what the Town needed from the state in order to successfully accomplish everything needed for REV 250. She along with representatives from Lexington and Lincoln presented this information to the State Legislatures in order to request funds necessary to fund REV 250. The estimated budget needed to fund this year-long celebration is \$2,000,000. We will also need extra funds to support the trolley for the next three years. She stated that the presentation went well and the State Legislatures are listening to ours and others needs.

Ms. Williams stated that the Visitor's Center is back to being open 7 days a week. Tourism is busy as the warm weather approaches and international travel has resumed. She has completed work on a new Visitor's Center Map which has been translated into 6 different languages and is available to all. The Bike Share program is resuming and we are partnering with Acton to provide 20 bicycle's along the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail.

Patriot's Day Activities are being planned including the Meriam's Corner Exercises, a live encampment at the Concord Museum and the Dawn Salute. There will also be an event honoring Ellen Garrison to kick off REV 250. The National Parks do not officially open until May but will be open on Patriot's Day and April 19, 2023. All the information on activities around Patriot's Day can be found in **Discover Concord** which is available at various locations around town including the Visitor's Center. Ms. Williams stated that there were approximately 5,000 visitors attending last year's Patriot's Day events but it is dependent on the weather how many we will have this year. The hotels are already filled to capacity.

REV250

Ms. Hartman stated that there may be an article, introduced at the Town Meeting, to find some seed money to fund REV 250. She will update us further on this issue.

Ms. Schunemann showed the Committee a Power Point Presentation that was developed to outline what was needed from the Town regarding REV 250. The presentation outlined the various committees that have been formed for REV 250, including the Events, Arts, Memorial, History/Education and Community Outreach committees. The town will greatly benefit from the many tourists that are expected to come to Concord including with the lodging and meals tax. In 2019 the Town received \$1.29M from the lodging and meals tax as 6% of the lodging tax goes to the town and .75% of the meals tax goes to the town.

For 2024 it is estimated that there could be 1.25M visitors to Concord and in 2026 there could be 1.5M visitors. Sales revenue from tourism continues to increase with the following projections for sales revenue for the next few years:

2023 - \$4,500,000
2024 - \$5,625,000
2025 - \$6,300,000
2026 - \$6,625,000

It is proposed that the following needs to occur to get us ready for REV 250:

2023 – Establish Programs that will be available
2024 – Test the Programs and see if they are viable
2025 - The Celebration begins
2026 – Concord continues growing

Ms. Schunemann will email the Power Point Presentation to the Committee Members.

CELLULAR SERVICE

Ms. Hartman reported that conversations between Trinitarian Congregational Church and Verizon have resumed and are close to agreeing to the terms for placing a cellular tower at the church. The town is also looking at other areas in town to accommodate AT&T and T-Mobile.

HANSCOM EXPANSION

Ms. Rasmussen stated that the expansion to Hanscom Air Force Base is a large project including 27 new hangars and 194 new parking spaces. There are many issues facing this expansion including the increased use of water and the Environmental Impact to the Town. Town Staff prepared a report and presented it to the Select Board outlining the concerns around this expansion. The State is preparing an Environmental Impact Study to outline how the environment, including Noise Pollution, Air Quality, Traffic and the impact to native species of animals and plants will be affected. This is an on-going process for the next few years.

This expansion is driven by private corporations as there is a high demand for hangar space. The is privately generated, including by our sports teams, and is being sold as a positive impact on commerce in the towns. The negative impact is on our resources.

Ms. Turnquist stated that this expansion will obliterate the efforts we have put in place to combat climate change.

Ms. Rassmussen stated that the National Park is very concerned about this expansion and have expressed their concern. We are still in the information gathering stage and more information will come forward as it becomes available.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Palumbo, a member of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee wished to inform the committee about the celebration taking place on April 14 to honor Ellen Garrison. He also stated that he loved the maps being offered in 6 languages and thanked Ms. Williams for developing those.

Mr. Kupka, a member of the Finance Committee, suggested the committee show Ms. Schunemann's slide presentation, concerning REV 250 to the Finance Committee, at a future meeting.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday April 19, 2023 at 8:30 A.M.

ADJOURNMENT

On a **MOTION** made by Ms. Turnquist and seconded by Mr. Anderson it was **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** to **ADJOURN** the meeting.

Mr. Anderson - Aye
Ms. Schunemann - Aye
Ms. McGonigle - Aye
Ms. Williams - Aye
Ms. Rennert - Aye
Mr. Verrill - Aye
Ms. Turnquist - Ay

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Carolyn H. Dee
Sr. Administrative Assistant