Hillsborough EDC Meeting Minutes for September 28, 2017 Approved November 2, 2017

**Present:** Jane Williams, Jack Wells, Laura Buono, Susanne White, Jon Daley, Douglas Hatfield, Robyn Payson, Dana Brien, Robert Hassett, Charlie Denton

**Meeting called to order at 9:02 am by Jane Williams**

**Minutes from 8/24/2017 Meeting –** Copies not available, will review at October meeting

**Central Business District Revitalization**

Robyn Payson reported that she, Charlie Denton, and Susanne White met with George Maynard (Villager Newspaper) last week to review the designated revitalization area. The large, yellow area on map is the full area, but the smaller blue section will be the focus at first. She also noted that there is a new business and apartments going into the old Sweet Expressions location. Parking remains an issue that will continue to be addressed.

A discussion regarding the possibility of a property maintenance code for the downtown area followed. Charlie Denton inquired as to what progress might be able to be made this year. Robyn Payson noted that she’s aware of other towns that have started by adopting a minimal code for commercial properties into their zoning, but that figuring out which properties would be grandfathered would be key. Laura Buono expressed that town residents have expressed concern regarding the condition of the downtown area, but that IF a property maintenance code is adopted, we would need to be prepared for opposition. Doug Hatfield noted that this type of initiative would take a huge amount of preparation and education to help minimize opposition. Discussion followed regarding buildings in the revitalization area owned by absentee landlords, buildings that are currently in disrepair, etc. and it was again noted that figuring out which properties would be subject to any future property maintenance code would be key.

**Parking Update**

Robyn Payson reported that a first step for new parking regulations would be to enforce no overnight parking in the Page Street Lot. Conversations followed regarding the pros and cons; whether the town could work with landlords to help identify parking for certain buildings, whether the town could possibly lease spots to landlords, whether it’s the responsibility of the town to help find spots for privately owned buildings or whether it should be the responsibility of the building owners to secure overnight parking for their tenants. There was also discussion regarding the potential development opportunities for businesses if those spots are freed up.

**Town Administrator’s Update**

Laura Buono reported that

* property reevaluations were done – valuations went up 1.5%.
* She has started the budget process w/ department heads.
* Helping to fund Bridge Street Project and put money away for infrastructure
* Good Fund Balance – continuing to work on the numbers to provide services to the community that are expected without affecting the tax rate.
* There’s a new service director – Project Genesis is closed for a few weeks to be restructured to offer some new opportunities for the area’s youth.

**Planning Department Update**

Robyn Payson reported that:

* **Zoning Amendments –** trying to find simple amendments
* **79E –** Area has been designated – Bara Dental is the first application. Jane Williams will host a round table for local realtors so that Robyn Payson can explain 79E to them.
* **BRE –** Faculty review is 10/5 at the Fire Station at 2:00
* **CIP –** 1st meeting is on 10/3 at 1:00

**Superintendent of Schools Report**

Robert Hassett reported that:

* Great start to the school year
* New Chromebook initiative has been well received; connectivity issues are being addressed
* Homecoming was a huge success
* Middle School Assistant Principal started using Storify
* Patty Parenteau volunteered to be in charge of the Strategic Plan
* Board authorized a study on the elementary school playground and the committee was in favor of a new playground.
* Decrease in state funding and increase in expenses pose budget challenges

Jane Williams made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:30, Laura Buone seconded the motion.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amanda Blevens, Secretary