

To Government Affairs Committee
From John Polanowicz
Date June 25, 2008
Subject Meeting Minutes, April 29, 2008

Present: Nicholas Anastapolous, William Brewin, Emily Greenwood, Joanne O’Leary, Paul Matthews, David Morticelli, John Polanowicz, John Riordan, Doug Rowe, Jeff Schaffer, Jessica Strunkin, Toni Wolf, Susanne Morreale Leeber and speaker Arthur Vigeant,

Excused: Margarita Saez, Jim Manganello, Paul Matthews, Fred Brewitt

Meeting began at 9:20 a.m.

Arthur Vigeant, City Council President, stated that the relationship between the City and the Chamber has been getting better every year. Discussion regarding review of partnership opportunities for the Chamber to support and help the city. Reviewed status of city funds and underscored they are trying to be conservative in spending. Currently \$8 million in stabilization/free cash. Expecting windfall from Boston this year for local aid. It will probably be down the next couple of years where it decreases. \$10 million in Bonds presented to the city of Marlborough to the city council. Discussions regarding using free cash vs. bonds. Approved Bond for \$402,000 for schools and technology. Working to enact capital budget in a timely fashion for the fall school year.

Industrial park had hit 32% vacancy at one point but they are working with the Chamber, 2010 and Arc to get the rate down. Corbin Plaza on Pleasant Street, discussions regarding sales. Christopher Heights ribbon cutting last week.

Discussion regarding 40B as they relate to multi-families and city purchases. Deed restrictions would be applied for 15 year limits. Affordable housing fund already in place. When new census comes out will have to review. Manufactured homes are not included in 40B housing stock.

Discussions regarding sign ordinance and possibility of the ordinance to come back up or be reviewed. Discussion of possible return of grant process for downtown. Discussion regarding enforcement of signage. Discussion regarding seeking out the sign companies for discussion.

Discussion regarding workforce housing and the recent Pioneer Institute forum on middle cities that both Joanne and John Riordan attended. Arthur’s feeling was the population is moving from either multi family or one complex to newer units leaving the multi families empty.

Discussion regarding visiting and contacting existing businesses in the city to keep that connection.

Budget process looking to review and have public hearing June 9th.

Arc of Innovation updates – Paul Matthews and Jessica Strunkin.

Discussion regarding how the City and Chamber and 2010 have worked with the State and the Arc and how we have worked to review the future and plan for it.

Working with RTA and Green infrastructure and open space plan, regional marketing plan. Marlborough been a leader with 43D projects and the consultant felt that best site in the state is 100 Crowley Street across from High School.

Arc is member of State business team and pays attention to everything balancing retention vs. growth.

Handouts included transportation nightmares list 495/290 and they are looking at rebuilding the interchange. Mass Highway District Three has filed with MEPA an ENF for a \$30 million dollar reconstruction of the interchange. Packet includes before and hopeful after. This also comes at the point of two regional transportation groups and Metropolitan planning organizations.

Next handout is a Transportation Bond Bill that has passed. Original \$4.78 billion bill which became \$4.82 billion. The final was \$3.85 billion that passed. House passed part of it to get Fed matching funds. The newsmaker on this bill was the officers vs. flagmen which did not pass.

Also included The Water Infrastructure Finance Commission issue brief Senator Pam Resor has filed. They hope to start moving forward on water issues in the fall after the energy issues are dealt with.

Also included the Corporate Tax Bill update, please review.

Over all bond bills totaling several billion dollars. General government, higher bond bill, environmental broad bill, broadband bond bill. Extending April 30th deadline for the bills. Session ends at the end of July. Focus more on budget process. Other two are housing and life sciences bond bill are in committee. Secretary Bowles is expecting and hoping life sciences bill would be done by Memorial Day.

In theory growth has achieved the first benchmark to roll back towards 5% income tax. This would impact January 2009 of 50 million dollars. State department of revenue issues reports each month. The expectation and revenue project \$20.25 billion dollars, now in March we are above predictions by \$3 million. Up 6% or \$800 million from last year. Downside is there were 3 one time payments of disallowed tax shelters. Only category below benchmark was withholding. Paul monitors this on a monthly basis.

Discussion regarding Governor Patrick bridge program to be filed for infrastructure bridge improvements.

Discussion regarding where he sees House budget going, he feels it will be tighter but the region should do okay. Discussions regarding House members taking Marlborough under their wing until our elections happen.

Discussion regarding health care reform is still out there and will need to deal with revenue issue to fund it. This is currently the largest line item in the budget.

Next Month's meeting: Tuesday, June 24th at 9:15 A.M. at the Chamber offices.

Meeting adjourned 10:30 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Chair, John Polanowicz