

Essex Economic Development Commission (EDC)
Regular Meeting Minutes
April 2nd, 2025 8:00AM
81 Main St., Essex Junction, and Zoom
Approved Minutes Submitted by Clerk Keith Dunbar, April 18, 2025

Attendees

Commission Members:

Present: Igor Polenov, Chair; Ken Signorello, Vice Chair; Keith Dunbar, Clerk

Remote: N/A

Absent: Nick Fukuda

Staff: Jean O'Sullivan

Public: Irene Wrenner

Partners: Sam Anderson, GBIC

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 11:11 AM by the Vice Chair Ken Signorello.

2. Agenda Additions/Changes

The following additions were made to the agenda:

- Report on TPMA meeting
- Discussion on survey distribution strategy

A motion was made and seconded to approve the agenda as amended.

Dunbar motioned to approve the agenda, seconded by **Signorello**. **Motion passed 3-0.**

3. Public to Be Heard

Public attendee **Sam Andersen** provided a report:

- Overview of **Manufacturing Day** activities and state-level engagement
- Update on **project scoring** for state funding opportunities (deadline: April 18)
- Concern about potential legislation introducing complex **property tax classifications**
- Impact of **tariffs and federal funding cuts** on the local tech and agricultural sectors

Sam also asked about any updates on the **Amazon distribution center project**, to which it was confirmed that the State is aware of the proposal.

4. Approval of Minutes

Minutes from March 20, 2025 were presented for approval.

A motion to approve was made and seconded.

Signorello motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by **Polenov**. **Motion passed 3-0.**

5. Business Items

a. Correspondence to Planning Commission – Correctional Facility

- Chair shared a revised letter for submission.
- Changes were minor (grammatical and name corrections); no substantive content edits.

- Discussion ensued regarding whether the letter included enough hard data.
- It was clarified that the Planning Commission had not formally submitted a written request.
- Motion to approve and forward the letter to the Planning Commission was made and seconded.

Dunbar motioned to approve and forward the letter, seconded by **Signorello**. **Motion passed 3-0.**

Action: O'Sullivan to send letter to the Planning Commission.

6. TPMA Updates

a. TPMA Meeting Report

- Overview of timelines and survey distribution presented by Keith and Gene.
- Survey launched March 27; closes April 24.
- Aimed at both residents and those working in Essex.
- Key components: Community input, stakeholder meetings, and regional context.
- Suggestions for more visibility and survey promotion:
 - Posting at polls on voting day
 - Posting in retail locations
 - Direct outreach to employers and use of HR departments
- Commission discussed limited reference to agriculture in the survey and desired better future representation.

b. Survey Distribution Discussion

- Physical copies distributed at library and town office.
 - QR code signage placed in visible public locations.
 - Outreach ongoing through schools, employers, and social media.
 - Request for consistent messaging and mention of **\$40,000 investment** in the consultant to encourage participation.
 - Suggestion to leave copies at town meeting spaces and lobby areas.
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7. Next Meeting

- Tentatively scheduled to be held at **Sandy Pines Kennel on Old Stage Road**.
 - If unavailable, the backup location will be **Glavel**.
 - Next meeting will be extended (2 hours) to accommodate a full presentation from TPMA.
 - Commission opted to begin at **11:00 AM** to allow more discussion time with TPMA.
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8. Adjournment

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting.

Dunbar motioned to adjourn, seconded by **Signorello**. **Motion passed 3-0.**

Meeting adjourned at 11:55 AM.

Meeting recording available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DXGntLHKLqA&t=278s>