

Essex Economic Development Commission (EDC)
Business Outreach Meeting Minutes
October 16, 2025, 8:00AM
Meeting Held at Prolytix, 57 River Road, Unit 1021 Essex VT 05452
Minutes Submitted by Clerk Keith Dunbar, October 20, 2025

Attendees

Commission Members:

Present: Ken Signorello, Vice Chair; Keith Dunbar, Clerk; Irene Wrenner; Anne Miller

Remote:

Absent: Igor Polenov

Staff: Jean O'Sullivan

Staff:

Public: Ryan Dorfman
Richard Pouliot

Partners: N/A

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:09 AM by Vice Chair Signorello.

2. Agenda Additions/Changes

- No additional agenda items or changes were proposed
- Motion to approve the agenda:
Signorello motioned to approve the agenda, seconded by **Dunbar**.
Vote passed unanimously 4-0.

3. Public to be Heard

- No members of the public were present either in person or online. No public comment was offered.

4. Business Items

Presentation by Prolytix – Ryan Dorfman and Richard Pouliot

Business Overview:

Haematologic Technologies Inc dba Prolytix (goprolytix.com) — Company Overview & Discussion

Overview & history

- Operational for ~40 years; originated in 1987 from UVM (then “Haematologic Technologies”).
- Grew from ~600 sq ft to ~23,000 sq ft; current headcount ~37 (previous peak ~52).

- Product lines include research reagents (proteins; sold via 13 global distributors) and custom blood collection tubes (niche, non-commodity runs).
- Private-equity owned since 2019 (Edgewater Capital). Company may pursue an acquisition and operate dual locations while maintaining the Essex facility.

Regulatory scope & services

- Registered/inspected by FDA and MHRA; experience with GLP, GCP, CLIA, and GMP work.
- Provides release & stability testing for large-molecule (biologic) drug products; issues Certificates of Analysis supporting clinical use.
- Specialist CRO focused on complex coagulation/biochemistry problems (not high-volume commodity testing).
- Expanding bioanalysis offerings; sees strategic need to add cell-based assays (by growth or acquisition).

Facilities & operations

- Upstairs lab purpose-built for GMP; separate areas for CLIA/GLP to meet regulatory requirements; duplicate critical equipment for redundancy.
- Manufacturing downstairs includes plasma fractionation (protein purification).
- Active R&D group develops/tech-transfers assays and serves as problem-solving “gun-for-hire.”

Workforce & community

- Engagement with Essex High School/CTE and area colleges (internships, career days, STEM outreach).
- Investments in workplace culture (events, collaborative café, staff programs).
- Direct local spend where possible (lodging, dining) for visiting clients.

Constraints & risks discussed

- Market headwinds: post-COVID contraction/layoffs across pharma; staffing reduced but stable operations continue.
- Federal research funding uncertainty impacting academia/startups; downstream effects on Prolytix demand.
- Tariff volatility complicates international reagent sales (e.g., China).
- University collaboration friction: slow NDAs/MTAs/core facility pricing at UVM; opportunity to modernize processes.
- Vendor service logistics: higher service-contract costs and slower on-site servicing; limited cargo capacity into BTV for dry-ice shipments.
- Facility/infrastructure: aging building; historical roof/HVAC leaks (addressed).

Local issues & opportunities

- Address/sales-tax: Use “Essex” (not “Essex Junction”) on purchase/delivery addresses and include ZIP+4 “2240” to avoid unnecessary 1% municipal add-on where systems key off municipality.
- Safety: isolated incidents (break-ins/parking-lot activity); landlord has cameras.
- Housing & talent: cost/availability hinder early-career hires; discussion of zoning/allowable uses and potential housing near employment centers.

Potential policy/advocacy next steps

- Joint informational session with House Commerce/Senate Economic Development on industry–academia process speed, workforce/housing, and logistics.
- Coordinate EDC, Chamber (Keith), interested commissioners (incl. Irene), and Prolytix to curate company voices for testimony.
- Renew active participation in Vermont Bioscience Alliance to build vendor presence and shared problem-solving.

Facility growth

- Concept plan to convert upstairs office area back into laboratory space (electrical/data drops; open-bench concept) to support CLIA growth.
- Earlier (pre-sale) concept considered a new facility near Saxon Hill; current approach favors expansion via acquisition with Essex operations retained.

5. Reading File

- Proposed temporary sign ordinance — received.
- Proposed EDC Mission Statement — received.

No action taken; items held for future discussion.

Next Meeting – 11/5/2025

- Next meeting scheduled for 11/5/2025 at the Essex Town Offices

6. Adjournment

- Motion: **Dunbar** motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:16am, seconded by **Wrenner**.
Vote: Passed unanimously 4-0.