



Town of West Boylston  
140 Worcester Street  
West Boylston, MA 01583

Economic Development Task Force  
Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: 9-19-2023

Attendees: Mr. Frieden, Ms. Miles, Mr. Lopriore, Mr. Morrissey

Meeting was opened at 6:02 p.m. by Vice Chair Frieden.

Mr. Lopriore motioned to approve the meeting minutes from 8-31-2023 meeting. Ms. Miles seconded. All approved.

As the first meeting all the members for 23-24 were able to attend, members introduced themselves to each other and how they came to be on the committee (appointment or as representative of another board they serve on).

Mr. Frieden asked if everyone was getting [edtf@westboylston-ma.gov](mailto:edtf@westboylston-ma.gov) emails. Ms. Miles sent a test for members to check.

Mr. Frieden discussed the mission of the Task Force. The mission was read from the website, and also from the Business and Economic Development part of the website, which was shorter. Ms. Miles stated that the official program we administer is the Gateway Sign program. Mr. Frieden mentioned we could request to modify it.

Ms. Miles motioned that Mr. Frieden be elected Chair, Mr. Morrissey elected Vice Chair, Ms. Miles elected Clerk, and Mr. Lopriore elected Treasurer. Mr. Lopriore seconded. All voted to approve.

Ms. Miles did not have the changes to the Gateway sign policy for this meeting.

Members discussed how the Gateway sign program went this last time. Ms. Miles stated that it was an improvement to have a lot of new businesses apply for the 8 spots. The original sign holders were notified ahead of time that the drawing was coming up, as well as advertising on

Facebook and the web to attract other applicants. Mr. Lopriore asked whether there were other spots available for a gateway sign. Mr. Morrissey wondered if we ought to forgo the lottery and simply charge market rate, as well as provide traffic statistics for the worth of this advertising opportunity. Ms. Miles added that the money from this program goes into the EDTF budget as its only revenue to do additional programming. Mr. Frieden mentioned that the process was also confusing because things were being dropped off at the Town Administrator's office and they could not answer questions necessarily. Ms. Miles suggested that we have a meeting in advance of the next drawing and invite the Town Administrator to discuss timing and responsibilities. Ms. Miles said that the difference between the island program and the gateway sign program is that the island program allows a business to win an island and keep it until they tell the town they don't want it or stop taking care of it, whereas the gateway signs are up for lottery every year. Mr. Morrissey suggested that maybe this is a survey we could send out to the Facebook group for West Boylston businesses and ask what would be better. Mr. Morrissey also suggested we have a "coffee klatch" to try to ask these kinds of questions. Ms. Miles liked that idea because it might be less of a cost than the organized breakfast previously suggested. Mr. Lopriore suggested setting up a table at the Fall Festival.

Mr. Frieden moved to the website changes. Ms. Miles suggested that someone on the Task Force be appointed to work with the Town Administrator to make changes. Mr. Morrissey suggested that we speak to the owner of LK Home & Gift and ask about her experience to figure out how we could improve our website and services. Mr. Frieden will remove the regular meeting schedule posted on the website.

Mr. Lopriore asked if we know about empty areas in the business district if someone were to reach out to us. Ms. Miles said the short answer is no, we don't officially know. Mr. Lopriore asked if Mr. Frieden got to reach out to the Marlborough Economic Development Task Force to find out how they are doing things. Ms. Miles mentioned she heard that the task force in Sterling reached out to Emma's restaurant to relocate in an empty spot in town, and they may have reached out to others as well.

Ms. Miles discussed prioritizing efforts, and that being at the fall fest and trying to engage businesses would be a great first start. Ms. Miles showed the flyer she made with a QR code to get businesses to enter contact information into the business database, and this would be a great place to do it. Mr. Lopriore mentioned he could be available for some of it, and Ms. Miles can as well. Mr. Frieden wondered about incentives to get businesses to enter their contact information. Mr. Lopriore suggested what if we say the 50<sup>th</sup> person gets something. Ms. Miles said we should also buy some candy for the give-away. Mr. Morrissey also suggested we could put a slip in the tax bill or something of that nature to collect more contact information.

Members will send availability for Fall Fest coverage. Ms. Miles will email the Town Administrator tomorrow to find out if there is a table we could sit at or be part of.

Ms. Miles brought up getting another member for the board, and the task force could possibly do that along with getting folks to send information for the business database.

Ms. Miles made a motion to allow herself and Mr. Lopriore to organize the fall festival table, if it is available and make any fliers, etc. to work at the table. Mr. Lopriore seconded. All voted to approve.

Future agenda items ideas:

- Gateway sign policy edits
- Recruiting the fifth member of EDTF

The next meeting was set for Tuesday, Oct. 17, 2023, 5:30 PM as a hybrid meeting.

Mr. Morrissey motioned to adjourn. Mr. Lopriore seconded. All voted in favor.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:20 pm.