

## **Brunswick Economic Development Corporation**



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### **Summary of Meeting Held July 30, 2009**

The Annual Meeting of the Brunswick Economic Development Corporation (BEDC) was held on Thursday, July 30, 2009 between approximately 7:00 pm and 8:30 pm. The meeting was held in the Town of Brunswick's municipal meeting room in the former Times Record Building at 6 Industry Road. The Annual Meeting was structured as a public forum on economic and community development. The entire meeting was open to the public and televised on TV3, the local cable channel.

Directors present: Debbie Atwood, Cathy Barter, Anna Breinich, Gary Brown, Rol Fessenden, Michael Jones, Joanne King, Ed Knox, Judith Long, David Markovchick, Thomas Rumpf, Steve Weems

Town staff present: Brian Dancause

BEDC Vice President Steve Weems chaired the meeting. He noted the main purpose of the meeting, besides fulfilling the BEDC's obligation to hold its Annual Meeting in July, was to have a public conversation about economic and community development in Brunswick and what Brunswick people and businesses think is most important. He introduced all the BEDC Board members and Brunswick Town Councilors present.

Mr. Weems noted that the BEDC is a public benefit corporation organized by the Town of Brunswick in 2003. It is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation with a public purpose. It is separate from but works in cooperation with the Town of Brunswick. Presently there are seventeen (17) members of the BEDC Board of Directors, including two (2) Town Councilors, four (4) Town staff, and eleven (11) private members. All members have a vote. The primary purposes of the BEDC are to:

(1) *"foster, encourage, assist, support and promote the development, location, establishment, settlement, resettlement, or expansion of industrial, manufacturing, commercial, service, fishing, agricultural, recreational and other business, educational or cultural enterprises within the Town of Brunswick, Maine,"* and

(2) *“expand and diversify the economic and tax base of Brunswick, creating and retaining the best jobs possible for Brunswick and area residents, with an emphasis on (i) high, value-added [tax base] enterprises, and (ii) projects with high ratios of benefits to costs [public and private], all in a manner consistent with Brunswick’s policies as established by the Brunswick Town Council and Brunswick’s history, cultural values, economic needs, and natural resources.”*

Cathy Barter, Chair of the Nominating Committee, introduced the Committee’s proposed slate of officer for the coming year. The following BEDC officers were then elected by unanimous vote of the Directors present:

President: Steve Weems

Vice President: Rol Fessenden

Treasurer: Cathy Barter

Secretary: David Markovchick

David Markovchick, Brunswick’s Director of Community & Economic Development, then made a presentation titled “Fostering Economic Development: A Bridge to the Business Community” and led an initial discussion about the need for and benefits of community and economic development.

The public forum portion of the meeting then ensued. A wide variety of topics were addressed, with commentary and insights provided by both members of the public and BEDC Directors. Topics addressed included but were not limited to:

- Redevelopment plans for Brunswick Naval Air Station (BNAS).
- The tax revenue implications of different types of development, at BNAS and at off-base areas of Brunswick.
- The need for suitable land for business park development, both on BNAS and at off-base locations in the Midcoast region.
- The implications of housing development (including the 700+ units of BNAS housing) for economic development in the region.
- The need for regional cooperation on a variety of fronts, including marketing, hospitality training, and securing passenger rail service.
- The increasing impact of the so-called “creative economy” in Brunswick.
- The status, problems and opportunities related to “gateways” into Brunswick.
- The potential and need for developing a strong “brand recognition” for Brunswick, potentially as the centerpiece community for the Midcoast region.

At the conclusion of the evening discussion, Mr. Weems noted there would be additional opportunities for public input throughout the year, and the meeting was adjourned.

End.