



TOWN OF NORFOLK  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
February 12, 2026  
MINUTES  
Zoom

# Economic Development Commission (EDC)

Meeting Notes – February 12, 2026

**Meeting called to order:** 5:05 p.m. by Chair Brett Robbins

**Attendees:** Brett Robbins (Chair), Elizabeth Borden, Cheryl Heller, Sue Frisch, Thomas McGowan.

Jennifer Almquist, Jon Riedeman, Robert Whipple were unable to attend.

**Guest:** Kathryn Boughton

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## 1. Approval of Prior Minutes

The January EDC meeting minutes were reviewed.

Motion to approve was made and seconded.

**Approved unanimously.**

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## 2. Budget Visibility

The Commission briefly discussed the EDC budget and how it should be shared with members going forward.

**Key points discussed:**

- Members agreed the budget does not need to appear as a formal agenda item each month.
- However, it remains helpful for members to see the most recent budget status.

- Elizabeth Borden will continue to circulate updated budget figures periodically for visibility.

**Consensus:**

- Budget updates will be shared with members but will only appear as a formal agenda item when discussion or decisions are required.
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### 3. Post Office Support Initiative – Event Recap

Brett provided a brief recap of the recent USPS-related event held at the Norfolk Library.

**Key points discussed:**

- Jennifer Almquist organized and coordinated the event and related programming.
- The event included both children’s programming and a public talk featuring USPS Art Director Antonio Alcalá.
- Attendance was strong, with approximately 40 attendees at the library event.
- Feedback from attendees and community members was very positive.

Members expressed appreciation for Jennifer’s leadership and organization of the event.

**Discussion:**

- Members reflected on the importance of clearly communicating the EDC’s role in supporting initiatives such as this.
- Future initiatives should include clearer messaging explaining why the EDC is involved and how the activity supports the Commission’s broader mission.

**Key takeaway:**

- The EDC should continue supporting local institutions while also ensuring the community understands the purpose and impact of these initiatives.
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### 4. Business Survey – Status Update

Cheryl Heller provided an update on the draft business survey designed to gather input from local business owners.

**Key points discussed:**

- A draft survey was circulated to members for testing and feedback.
- Cheryl compiled a working business list using several existing lists and community contacts.

- Some businesses still lack email addresses or contact details.
- The survey will be distributed primarily in digital form using a Google Form in order to simplify response tracking and analysis.

Members discussed ways to maximize participation and ensure the survey reaches as many business owners as possible.

**Distribution strategies discussed:**

- Direct email outreach to known business contacts.
- Posting information about the survey on the town website.
- Promotion through the town newsletter.
- Promotion through the Hub's newsletter and other community channels.

Members emphasized the importance of encouraging participation and actively following up with businesses to increase response rates.

**Action Items:**

- Cheryl to finalize the survey and incorporate any remaining feedback.
  - EDC members to review the business list and add missing businesses or email contacts.
  - Cheryl and Sue to coordinate messaging for the town website and newsletter.
  - Cheryl to contact Laura at The Hub regarding possible promotion in the Hub newsletter.
  - Goal is to distribute the survey within the next two weeks and begin collecting responses before the next EDC meeting.
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## 5. EDC Board Membership & Vacancies

Members discussed current vacancies and overall board composition.

**Key points discussed:**

- There are currently several open seats on the EDC.
- Members noted some uncertainty regarding the official size of the Commission and whether alternates are included in the total.
- The Town website currently lists more members than expected, suggesting the information may need to be clarified or updated.

Members emphasized the importance of recruiting additional volunteers to support EDC initiatives.

**Consensus:**

- Recruiting additional board members should remain a priority.

- Members should begin identifying potential candidates in the community.

**Action Items:**

- Elizabeth Borden to confirm the official size and structure of the EDC (including alternates).
  - Town website membership listing to be reviewed and updated if necessary.
  - Each EDC member is encouraged to identify at least one potential candidate for future board service.
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## 6. Economic Development Research – Winchester EDC

Cheryl shared insights from a conversation with Tom Carter of the Winchester/Winsted Economic Development Commission.

**Key takeaways:**

- Winchester's EDC meets twice per month and regularly meets directly with businesses.
- Their work focuses heavily on understanding business needs and identifying ways to support local economic activity.
- They frequently invite speakers and experts to discuss relevant topics such as tax policy and financing.

While Norfolk has a much smaller business base, members discussed ways to apply similar principles at a smaller scale.

**Ideas discussed:**

- Increasing direct conversations with local business owners.
- Developing a better understanding of the specific challenges faced by Norfolk businesses.
- Using survey results to guide future initiatives and programming.

Members noted that meaningful impact will likely require consistent engagement and volunteer effort between meetings.

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## 7. Local Business Engagement & Promotion

Members discussed ways to increase awareness of Norfolk businesses and strengthen relationships with business owners.

**Ideas discussed:**

- Highlighting one local business per month.
- Featuring business profiles or interviews on the town website.
- Increasing awareness of newer or lesser-known businesses in town.
- Using EDC channels to promote and support local establishments.

Members also discussed the importance of ensuring all businesses feel included in these efforts.

**Potential approach:**

- Develop a rotating "Business Spotlight" feature that profiles businesses and introduces owners to the community.
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## 8. WIN (Weekend in Norfolk) Update

Sue Frisch provided an update on the upcoming Winter Weekend in Norfolk (WIN).

**Key points discussed:**

- EDC funding support has helped cover promotional materials and printed schedules.
- The event schedule has expanded significantly due to strong participation from local organizations.
- Community engagement and collaboration among local groups has increased.

Members expressed appreciation for Sue's leadership and the event's positive impact on community activity and visibility.

**Additional discussion:**

- The town website continues to grow as a resource for information and programming.
- Several commissions are adding educational and informational content to their pages.
- The EDC may consider adding business-related resources to its own website section in the future.

**Action Items:**

- Members to help promote WIN events within the community.
  - Cheryl to explore whether Gary could assist with staffing the Winter Weekend information center if needed.
  - Cheryl and Sue to coordinate offline regarding remaining volunteer needs.
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## 9. Closing & Next Steps

Members reiterated several priorities for the coming months:

- Launching and promoting the business survey.
- Recruiting additional EDC members and volunteers.
- Increasing engagement with local businesses.
- Continuing to support community initiatives that strengthen Norfolk's economic ecosystem.

Members noted that gathering meaningful feedback from businesses will be an important step toward identifying future EDC initiatives.

**Meeting adjourned at approximately 5:55 p.m.**