

**Rockland Economic Development Advisory Committee
Meeting September 24, 2015**

Draft Minutes of Meeting 9-24-15

In attendance:

J Billington, Chair

T Plummer, Member

V Geiger, Member

S Roberts, Member

L Ondra, Member

J Jeffers, Member

G Pinto, Member

G Page, Rockland Main Street Inc

Audra Caler-Bell, Community & Economic Development Director, Rockland

Apologies:

T Peaco, Pen Bay Chamber

1. Motion by T Plummer to accept meeting minutes seconded by J Jeffers – unanimously accepted.
2. REDAC discussed the report by Tilson Technology on access to high speed broadband. The discussion included the following points:
 - Instead of focusing on providing Broadband access to key areas of the City a goal should be to provide all residents in Rockland with access to high speed broadband. This will address the perception that the City only cares about Main Street.
 - There's an opportunity to explain how this infrastructure is important for building the Creative Economy.
 - A message campaign needs to be planned around this project that includes talking points.
 - It is important to explain fundamental points such as:
 - i. Why fastest speed possible is necessary
 - ii. Why incumbent service providers are not the only answer to achieving the desired level of service
 - iii. How this is also a public safety consideration
 - iv. How this level of service will compare to our current offering
 - The City Council and REDAC need to actively commit to supporting this project.
 - Messaging should explain public utilities and draw parallels.
 - Recommendation to City Council to further explore utility model with non-by-passable fee by modeling different scenarios for uptake and levels of service.
3. RMSI provided the results of a survey they had undertaken with downtown business owners regarding what types of additional businesses they would like to see. REDAC agreed this was a good starting point for developing a strategy for attracting businesses.
4. The School District provided an update. Schools of the future plan will be presented next week.
5. Comprehensive Planning – currently working on an ordinance to allow for the keeping of domesticated chickens. Also working on an infill ordinance – this is currently stalled.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30pm, Next REDAC meeting is October 22nd at 4pm