

**FREEPORT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
TUESDAY, October 27, 2015, 7:30 AM to 9:30 AM  
Freeport Community Services  
MINUTES**

*The mission of the Freeport Economic Development Corporation is to partner with the community to promote sustainable economic growth that strengthens and diversifies the economic base and enhances the quality of life and unique character of Freeport.*

**1. The meeting convened at 7:35**

**In attendance:** Jim Cassida, Wendy Caisse, Candice Rinaldi, Chip Gray, Adam Nappi, Betsy Ruff, Peter Troast, Ed Bradley, Kristina Egan

**Absent:** David Latulippe, Zane Shatzer, Andy Kull, Mark Malone, Mary Davis, Peter Joseph

**Guests:** Dave Herring

**2. Introductory comments**

Jim introduced David Herring, Executive Director of Wolfe's Neck Farm, and said that he would prefer to have David's presentation at the outset of the meeting, to be respectful of David's time. The board agreed.

**3. Consent Agenda Items:**

**1. Approval of MINUTES of September 29, 2015 meeting**

Betsy moved and Adam seconded approval of the minutes. The vote was unanimous of all those present and voting.

**2. Acceptance of FINANCIAL STATEMENT for the period ending September 30, 2015**

Wendy moved and Chip seconded acceptance of the financial statement. The vote was unanimous of all those present and voting.

**4. Economic Development Report (Written Report)**

Keith presented the board with a written report. He added that he had received a thank you letter from The Foundation for Maine's Community Colleges for the board members individual contributions to the Leon Gorman Scholarship fund. He mentioned that he also received a check in the amount of \$23,000+, which is the amount from the closed Fidelity account. The board encouraged Keith and Candice to work together on setting up the new account. The board said they we should have access to the funds, as they may be needed. And, second, we should have a plan for it. Jim C. suggested that a conversation about the various options for uses of this money should be set for a future agenda. Adam asked Keith for an update about 31 Main Street (the former Reebok). Jim C. asked about the status of our conversations with the sewer district. Keith said that the board of trustees was undergoing a lot of change with the pending election. Jim encouraged Keith to reach out to Lee after the election to get their timeframe for new leadership selection, and also to set up a new meeting. Kristina suggested that now would be a good time to reach out to the candidates to make them aware of the issues. Keith said he would compose a letter and put it out to the candidates.

**5. Presentation from David Herring, Exec. Dir., Wolfe's Neck Farm**

David H. thanked the board for the opportunity, and said he wanted to speak about where the farm was heading. He spoke about the farm's focus on sustainable agriculture, as well as farm training and education. He felt that the farm could become a "piston" in the larger economic engine of Freeport. All programs offered by the farm have seen outstanding growth, including farm-to-table events, camping and courses have maxed out their reservations, and the festivals are booked and also sell-out. He reminded the board that the farm recently received \$1.7 million grant from Stonyfield Farms, which would be used for infrastructure improvements and for organic milk production. He detailed some of the farm's infrastructure challenges, and said that maintenance has been deferred for many years. The farm had begun a \$10 million capital fundraising effort, which would help support the Mallett barn and Pope house renovations, as well as the construction of a new administration/office center. They have already raised 1/3 of the funds towards this effort. Ed praised David's work and his contributions to the farm's success, and pointed out that having the farm in town differentiated Freeport from other retail centers. Jim asked if there were gaps that FEDC and the community could help fill? Ed suggested that there is still much fundraising to be done. Chip asked about the farm's focus – would it be solely organic dairy

production? David H. said that they intended to continue raising poultry, vegetables and some other things, but the highest level program they will offer is an intensive 2 year program in organic dairy farming. He mentioned that they were cooperating with MOFGA and the Maine Farmland Trust. Betsy commented that local residents do not know what is going on at the farm, so there is a lot of work to do to get town-side support. David agreed, and hoped that FEDC could help. Betsy asked what the farm had heard from folks who they had hired from away. David said that many are concerned about affordable housing in Freeport. Jim C. asked about the Stone House. David said that USM has not sufficiently maintained the building. The farm will own it, but its future is undetermined, because the farm is not a good fit for owning/operating it. Adam asked about their timeline. David said they hoped to conclude fundraising by the end of 2017, but reinvestment has already begun. Jim pointed out that people love to buy local, but can't buy any more WNF products. David said that they have considered having a product in the stores, but are cautious because their brand is not about a product on a shelf, it's about the farm, itself. Ed added that the goal isn't to produce a product, it's to produce farmers. Adam asked about feedback from the neighborhood. Ed said that there is tremendous support, and that most of the fundraising so far has come from the farm's neighbors. David added that they've been seeing more and more neighbors come back to the farm. Wendy asked about the farm's dairy herd. David said that they would be going from 25 head to 60 head by June, 2016. He said that he wants people to know that the farm is taking the right approach, so as to remediate any run-off issues that might impact the clam flats. The board thanked David for his time, and asked he and Keith stay in contact, if there's anything that FEDC can do to help.

6. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:00.