

**Minutes  
Business Advisory Committee**

December 18th, 2013

Newton City Hall Council Chambers - 401 North Main Avenue

The Business Advisory Committee met at 3:00 p.m. on Wednesday December 18th, 2013 at Newton City Hall.

**Members**

**Present:** Jerry Hodge  
Don Essary  
Tom Warlick

**Members**

**Absent:** Nick Martin  
Donny Setzer

Jeremy Petty  
Joe Beaman

**Staff Present:** Rob Powell, Community Development Coordinator

**Others Present:** Josh Cummings, Zara Saine

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**Item 1: Roll Call and Minutes – Interim Chairman Jerry Hodge** opened the meeting at 3:00 pm. A quorum was not obtained. Minutes of the November 20<sup>th</sup> meeting were approved by those present pending future approval at an official meeting.

**Old Business**

**Item 2: Minutes - Rob Powell and Jerry Hodge** provided a status on the wayfinding project. At the December 10<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting, Newton City Council gave approval to submit the wayfinding plan to the NCDOT for their review. The details of the logo and “Newton” name lettering on the wayfinding signs are not yet finalized.

**Item 3: Information Station – Don Essary and Jerry Hodge** provided a review of the information station project. Don says the project should be called “Newton Information Station”. Don says he has individually explained the system to all of the Newton Council members and obtained support, pending the completion of final plans. The most important remaining questions are centered on who will handle the selling of advertisements and the business aspects of the system. Don is confident that the startup money can be raised through sponsorships and that the project will have a positive cash flow. He says that ad space could be sold not only to businesses within Newton, but businesses outside Newton who want exposure to Newton citizens and visitors. Tom Warlick suggested that the City might be willing to handle the ongoing management of the Newton Information Station. Rob Powell said he would request a meeting with the City Manager and Finance Director to see if that was possible. The location of the information station is still undetermined. Josh Cummings advised that the Catawba County Historical Association board usually restricts museum lawn uses to military monuments. Chairman Jerry Hodge suggested that a meeting with CCHA board chairman Shuford Abernethy is needed.

**Item 4: BAC Economic Development Strategic Plan** – Rob Powell suggested that the BAC might want to refer to the BAC Economic Development master plan as a strategic plan in order to minimize confusion with the Streetscape Master Plan. Jerry Hodge stated that the BAC Economic Development Plan needs metrics added for monitoring progress. Rob Powell presented a few pages of the Hayward, California, Economic Development Strategic Plan as an example of an action plan with scheduling and metrics.

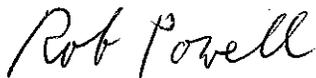
## **New Business**

**Item 5: Annual Business Meeting** – Jerry Hodge opened a discussion on the format of the next Annual Business Owners Meeting to be held in February. It was thought that this business meeting might be a good opportunity to get a feel for the business community's support of the Newton Information Station. The purpose and focus of the meeting was discussed along with ideas for a program or speaker. The suggested focus of the next business meeting is to recognize and celebrate businesses based on the established date of the business, including recognizing the oldest and newest businesses established in Newton. The invitation and RSVP for the annual business meeting should include a question on ideas to foster business development in Newton. Jerry Hodge volunteered to talk to Sherry Butler about using the OPOP for the meeting.

**Item 6: Business and Real Estate Activity Report** – Rob Powell reported on several new small business openings, a ribbon cutting at Big Sig's Military Surplus, and a proposal to build a new speculative industrial shell building in the Statesville Business Park.

**Item 7: Meeting Schedule and Adjournment** - There was a request to move the regular meeting date to some date other than the third Wednesday due to several conflicts. The second Thursday of each month was proposed as the regular meeting date. That would set the next meeting date as January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2014. Rob Powell will email the members to see if this date is acceptable to all. Interim Chairman Hodge adjourned the meeting at 4:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Rob Powell, Recording Secretary