



## AGENDA

### Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday – February 28, 2023

7:45a – 9:15a

**Remote Via Zoom**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82312720472?pwd=RklqZDZiSFFIMXRHVmZ4ei9tWEJHQT09>

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Consent Agenda Items
  - Minutes of January 31, 2022 Meeting *(See Attachment 1)*
  - Financial Report as of January 31, 2022 *(See Attachment 2)*
3. Downtown Vision Update *Mary & Dan Piltch*
4. Annual Goals & Budget Planning Process Discussion
  - 2022/2023 Mid-Year Review of Goals & Milestones *(See Attachment 3)*
  - 2023/2024 Draft Goals *(See Attachment 4)*
  - 2023/3024 Projected Budget *(See Attachment 5)*
5. Code of Ethics / Conflict of Interest *(See Attachment 6)*
6. Metrics Review *(See Attachment 7)*
7. New Business
  - Data Team update
  - Qualified Projects for Town Incentives update

#### Upcoming Dates

- FEDC Board meeting on Tuesday, March 28<sup>th</sup>

## DRAFT MINUTES

### FEDC Board of Directors Meeting

January 31, 2023

7:45a – 9:15a

#### Via Zoom

**Attending Board Members:** Mary Davis, Mark Malone, Candice Rinaldi, Nikki Yanok Schneider, Dan Bacon, Tawni Whitney, Sarah Tracey, Stefanie Millitte, Leanne Barschdorf-Nichols, Becky Doten-Lizzotte, Jason Sulham.

**Not Attending.** Chip Gray, Becky Doten-Lizzotte, Jason Sulham, Peter Joseph, James Hendricks

**Others Attending.** Dan Piltch, Brett Richardson

#### Consent Agenda Items

- Minutes of December 31, 2022 were approved unanimously.
- Financial Report as of December 31, 2022 were approved unanimously.

**MEREDA 2023 Forecast Take-aways.** Leanne Barschdorf-Nichols provided a wonderful summary from the recent Maine Real Estate & Economic Development Annual forecast conference in Portland. Leanne recapped presentations delivered at the conference ranging from industrial and retail market trends to multifamily housing and office space.

Mary highlighted the importance of compiling Freeport data in similar format as the statewide and regional data presented at MEREDA.

Leanne celebrated the importance of data for the Freeport community to make good policy decisions.

Stefanie shared her take-aways from a recent presentation by Greg Payne and that the State is actively looking for willing communities to invest in community housing.

**Action Item:** FEDC should take a lead role in compiling and disseminating data to inform Freeport policy decisions. Nikki, Candice, Mary, Mark, and Leanne will participate on the FEDC Data Team.

**Action Item:** Invite leaders from Brunswick and other communities to present their best practices or lessons learned around new housing development.

**Housing Committee Update.** Brett shared a recap of the Town's housing committee. The Committee has met once and is getting organized and will be establishing priorities soon. Brett sits on the Committee and will be a conduit to the FEDC Board.

**Downtown Vision Update.** Mary provided an update on the Downtown Vision. The Task Force will present the first tranche of Vision projects to the Town Council on Feb. 7<sup>th</sup>. Mary highlighted the projects that FEDC is playing an active role on 4 projects: Sewer; Ordinances updates; and Streamline design review; Downtown parking and infill. Mary thanked the Board for participating in committee meetings to share their voices.

**Sewer Subsidy, Grants & Capital Improvement Planning.** Dan Bacon provided an overview of ideas that are emerging from the Sewer Committee. The committee has identified joint capital improvement planning between the Town and Sewer District as an opportunity for the parties to work together, identify efficiencies and lower costs by sequencing infrastructure projects when it makes sense.

Dan also highlighted that the Sewer Committee has discussed the possibility of the Town directly subsidizing connection fees for projects that advance public policy goals. One immediate task is to define a criteria for defining what projects are qualified for Town subsidy.

**Action Item:** FEDC will draft criteria to define projects qualified for subsidy. Dan Bacon and Sarah Tracy agreed to participate.

**Freeport Village Apartments.** The Board discussed the proposed housing project at 22 Main Street and the appropriate role for FEDC to play in the community conversation regarding approvals.

Sarah shared that opponents to the project view the corner of Main and West as a special parcel. Sarah noted that FEDC could participate as a neutral party to provide context for the community about why downtown housing is important without taking a position on the project in question.

Mary agreed that FEDC could add value by being highlighting the benefits of downtown housing, while remaining neutral.

Stef noted that many residents don't speak "developer speak" and often don't feel heard.

Leanne described the current challenge of change in any community and that dense infill can feel jarring. At the same time, the housing crisis is acute. Housing is a basic need and FEDC can help the community navigate change by staying on top of trends and data.

Stef shared that community concerns about design cannot be adequately responded to with housing crisis data.

Mary highlighted that the project is consistent with objective design standards, but the current ordinances allowance for subjective interpretation of design standards create confusion and will turn off developers to Freeport.

Dan Bacon noted that more high profile projects will be coming before the community and that FEDC needs to take a balanced position that urbanizing the downtown will be clunky at times, but it is what Freeport needs. FEDC should stay high level on the messaging, but prepare to be a consistent and balanced voice.

**Action item.** Brett to draft an FEDC statement by February 7<sup>th</sup> for Board comment.

**Attachment 2: Financial Report as of January 31, 2023**

**Freeport Economic Development Corporation  
Profit and Loss  
July 2022 - January 2023**

	Budgeted	Activity YTD	% of Budget
Income			
Town Appropriation	140,000	57,500.00	41%
Payroll Company Error Reimbursement		2,202.00	
Total Income		\$59,702.00	
Gross Profit		\$59,702.00	
Expenses			
Advertising/Marketing	500	323.55	65%
Professional Services	1,200	1,130.00	94%
Total Advertising/Marketing	1,700	\$ 1,453.55	86%
Business Support Expense	700	4,210.00	601%
Business Meals & Entertainment	200	0.00	0%
Client/Public Meetings	1,000	78.07	8%
Conferences/Trade Show/Training	1,500	579.00	39%
Dues/Membership	1,200	125.00	10%
Insurance	2,000	1,059.00	53%
IT Services	1,100	175.00	16%
Mileage/Parking	500	5.00	1%
Payroll Expenses			
Fica/Medicare/Insurance	32,354	11,054.97	34%
Gross Wages Ex. Director	90,000	39,022.89	43%
Retirement Contribution 403b	9,000	5,600.00	62%
Total Payroll Expenses	\$131,354.00	\$55,677.86	42%
Payroll Processing Fees	800	437.65	55%
Web Site Revisions/Maintenance	1,094	450.00	41%
Total Expenses	\$143,148.00	\$64,250.13	45%
Net Operating Income	(3,148)	-\$ 4,548.13	

*Includes CRM 1 time set up \$4k*

Wednesday, Feb 22, 2023 08:31:45 AM GMT-8 - Accrual Basis

## MID YEAR REVIEW

February 2023

### 2022/2023 Freeport Economic Development Goals

Freeport is building momentum with new businesses migrating to available commercial real estate, downtown multi-family housing under development, and community organizations championing projects to build momentum to drive implementation of the Downtown Vision plan. FEDC's work over the last few years created fertile ground for a productive first half of the FY22-23 and FEDC Board members and staff have collaborated with partners and Town policy makers to help drive these positive trends.

#### Recent Highlights:

- 107 Downtown housing units are in the development pipeline
- 6 new businesses have absorbed 34,000 square feet of commercial space.
- Key commercial properties and portfolios purchased by new entrepreneurial owners
- Positive coverage in the local media highlighting Freeport's resurgence via the Downtown Vision
- FEDC participation on Downtown Vision Steering Committee to help guide priorities
- Phase I projects to reduce barriers to development
- Reduced parking requirement for Downtown multi-family projects to facilitate infill
- New website at [www.choosefreeport.com](http://www.choosefreeport.com) with local demographics & available real estate
- \$113,000 in grant funding secured to support Town priorities

#### **Continue Focus on Downtown Freeport**

##### **1. Implementation of Freeport Downtown Visioning Project**

-Working with council, Chamber, Visit Freeport, Town Boards, ACAF and others volunteer groups to achieve year 1 goals

(Year 1, 2 and long term goals to be defined in Council/FEDC Meeting May 2022)

-Successfully achieve community participation/involvement

(Measured by community feedback)

**FEDC is playing an active role in implementing the Downtown Vision Plan. FEDC President Mary Davis has participated in the Downtown Vision Task Force Steering Committee for the last several months. More recently, FEDC Executive Director Brett Richardson has joined the Steering Committee.**

The Task Force has elevated 13 Phase I Projects for Council approval and funding. Each of the 13 projects is being led by different community organizations, committees, and Boards. The Council endorsed the projects during the February 7th Council meeting. Of the 14 projects, FEDC is playing a hands-on role with four projects:

- 1) Zoning Ordinance Updates; 2) Streamline permitting processes; 3) Review Downtown Parking; and 4) Sewer Connection Fees;

## 2. Diversifying the Economy/Filling Vacancies

-Downtown Vacancy goal to be 3.0% or less

New businesses in Freeport include *The Bake Shop*, *Freeport Oyster Bar*, *Goodfire Brewing*, *Maine Street Bee*, *Sketchers*, and *Sea Love*. These businesses advance the Downtown Vision goal of attracting more local, regional, and experiential businesses.

Vacancy rates in the Downtown declined from approximately 12.4 percent in Q1~2021 to 8.1 percent in Q1~2022. This represents the absorption of approximately 34,000 sf of commercial space into active use. FEDC's metrics show an increase in the Downtown Vacancy rate from Q2~2022 through today, not because of an increase in vacancy, but because staff research identified a commercial building with vacancies not previously accounted for (140 Main).

-Facilitate development of downtown residential; one project in process 2022

FEDC has actively supported two downtown multi-family projects representing 107 units during Project Review Board review. One project, Freeport Station Apartment, is fully permitted, while the second project, Freeport Village Apartments, seeks final approval in the coming months after being tabled by PRB in February 2022 to allow the development team to respond to minor PRB member data requests.

-Identify 3-5 Realistic Targets for development opportunity, court, support and bring to completion

Additional downtown residential projects are under conceptual development and FEDC will actively support the respective development teams moving forward.

-Define metrics package needed to encourage "right kind" development

FEDC has a team working to define development projects "qualified" for Town subsidy. This work stems from the Council appointed *Sewer Connection and Capacity Committee's* recommendation that the Town subsidize connection fees for qualified projects. The drafting team will share qualification recommendations with relevant Town Boards, committees and

**stakeholders to generate consensus for qualifications to define the “right kind” of development.**

-Leverage Client Relationship Management software to continue regular contact with commercial brokers, land owners with vacancy list and encourage occupancy (All with regular monthly contact)

**Underway and ongoing.**

### **3. Barriers to Development**

-Support Sewer District in next steps of change/funding. Facilitate well understood impact fees to be completed by end 2022.

**Freeport Sewer Districts’ connection fees are understood and FEDC has helped drive collaboration between the District and the Town to reduce impact fees as a barrier to appropriate development. FEDC staff is a working member of the Town Council-appointed Sewer Committee.**

-Support Planning board in identification of process improvements; achieve significant improvement in 2022

**FEDC played an active role to support the PB’s and Town Council’s reduction in the minimum parking requirement for multifamily projects in the Downtown. FEDC successfully advocated for a lower minimum standard than originally contemplated by the PB, effectively lowering costs and land use per multifamily unit. The standard is now .75 shared parking spaces per unit, or 1 private parking space per unit.**

**FEDC President Mary Davis has been working with Town Planning staff on process mapping for the PRB’s project review process with a goal to streamline reviews and eliminate redundant steps in the process. This work will continue under the banner of the Downtown Vision Plan implementation.**

#### **-Experiential/Tourism/Events and Coordinated Marketing**

-Facilitate Street Gang to support collaborative events/calendar (Twice Monthly)

**Mary Davis continues to facilitate the Street Gang. Meetings are productive and lead to collaboration and information sharing on upcoming events and opportunities to leverage resources.**



- Explore collaborative structures, such as four-point Main Street approach, to leverage partnerships with Chamber, Visit Freeport, ACAF, and other organizations to deepen impact and build capacity

**The Downtown Vision Task Force offers a collaborative structure and FEDC has explored the Main Street program as an opportunity to leverage partnerships.**

## **Look Beyond Downtown**

- 1. Champion Analysis of Fiscal impacts and resource demands to service growth to inform Planning, Council, and Town priorities**

**Limited progress.**

- 2. Bring WIFI expansion to Freeport**

**Limited progress to date, though three opportunities are under discussion featuring private sector partners.**

- 3. Support grant fundraising efforts in collaboration with partner organizations**

**FEDC has assisted the Town to secure \$113,000 in grant funding to support development of a public space in front of Town Hall and to facilitate transit-oriented development analysis to map out the relationship between Downtown parking supply and infill development called for in the Vision.**

**FEDC collaborated with the Sewer District to pursue earmarks in FY2022. FEDC will continue to help coordinate grant fundraising efforts to support the District's capitalization for much-needed upgrades.**

- 4. Route 1 South, Route 1 North: Kick off business group; Identify opportunities.**

**Limited Progress during the first half of the year.**

- 5. TIF review of current, review of overall TIF plan, update**

**FEDC has explored TIF District opportunities to fund Downtown Vision projects. TIF policy updates will come before the FEDC Board in the coming months relative to recommendations from the Town's Sewer Connection and Capacity Committee and ongoing Downtown Vision implementation.**

- 6. Encourage Board involvement in subcommittees to drive action.**

**FEDC creates ad hoc work groups to address specific opportunities and challenges.**

**During the January FEDC Board meeting, two subcommittees were formed: 1) Data team; and 2) Qualified projects team.**

## Upcoming opportunities to participate on topical work groups include:

- **Comprehensive Plan Update**
- **Project Review Board Vacancies (March 2023)**

## 7. Ongoing Annual Goals

### **Respond and track progress on development opportunities.**

- Respond to inquiries regarding development in Freeport.
- Act as informational and support, activism to support development.
- Track all activity, report monthly to board on metrics.
- Retain contact database for periodic communication.

### **Setting Direction**

- Manage annual strategic planning in first quarter of year.

### **Underway.**

- Set annual goals, bring to board for approval in first quarter of year.

### **Underway.**

- Work with town, council and constituencies to communicate goals, influencing as needed to achieve goals, ongoing.

### **Ongoing.**

- Track progress to goals quarterly and report to board.

### **Board Management. Underway and Ongoing.**

- Set calendar annually. Manage monthly agenda, visitors and meeting each month.
- Deliver board materials to board 5 working days prior to each meeting.
- Report appropriate metrics and achievement to goals quarterly.
- Inform board and president of appropriate information and involve in appropriate decisions as needed/
- Manage fiscal budget to goals; report monthly.

### **Public Communication**

- Continue Improving perception of FEDC; Monthly council update; FEDC website, every other month community newsletter.**
- On ongoing basis, communicate with the public, business entities and constituencies to support the ongoing mission of FEDC.
- When possible, leverage press to broadly communicate mission.
- Reach out to developers and real estate professionals quarterly to understand current state of market, Freeport challenges and opportunities.

## 2023/2024 Freeport Economic Development Corporation Goals

FEDC's mission 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. Implement the Freeport Downtown Vision Plan

**Execute Phase I projects as directed by Town Council.** Collaborate with Council, the Downtown Vision Task Force, and residents to advance community goals.

**Be the economic development voice on Steering Committee.** Help drive Vision implementation.

**Be the Town's source for relevant economic data.** Leveraging work of FEDC Data Team, collect and share relevant market data and trends with partners and Town policy makers to help guide implementation priorities and resource allocation.

**Help facilitate transformative projects at DTV catalyst sites.** Champion capital improvement planning that integrates potential/anticipated private investment with Town investment to leverage resources (for example, L.L. Bean Flagship at Bow Street).

### 2. Diversify the Economy & Fill Vacancies

**Downtown Vacancy goal to be 3.0% or less.**

- Generate leads and support new businesses through relevant Town approvals.
- Stay in touch with property managers to facilitate matchmaking. Maintain regular contact with commercial owners, brokers, and managers to make introductions and understand opportunities and barriers.

**Facilitate development of downtown residential projects.**

- One project breaks ground in 2023
- One more project receives approvals
- One more project in development

**Advance a public/private partnership opportunity at a catalyst site.** Convene stakeholders, and initiate planning and fundraising for a transformative project that leverages integrated public and private investment.

**Identify financial incentives, policies, and programs to support public policy priorities.**

Appropriate building retrofits, upgrades, and conversions as prioritized in Comp Plan and Downtown Vision.

### 3. Remove Barriers to Development

**Implement recommendations from the Town Council appointed Sewer Connection and Capacity Committee.** Collaborate with the District and partners to seek funding to finance system upgrades and identify resources to support appropriate projects.

**Execute Downtown Vision policy projects to reduce barriers.** Update ordinances, streamline review processes, and identify parking strategies to enable infill development.

### 4. Support Experiential/Tourism/Events and Coordinated Marketing

**Facilitate Street Gang.** Support collaboration, information sharing, and strategic planning across organizations to attract visitors and maximize impact.

### 5. Advance Strategic Planning.

**Establish Board subcommittees to track priorities and brainstorm recommendations.**

- FEDC Data Team. Champion data-driven analyses to help the Town prioritize goals and initiatives, such as fiscal impact and market analyses.
- Policy Team. Support economic development-focused capital improvement planning and identify financial incentives to support appropriate growth, including Town TIF program updates.
- Route 1 South Team. Convene business and property owners to understand goals and opportunities.

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# 5-Year Projected Budget

## Freeport Economic Development Corp.

DRAFT - NOT YET APPROVED

Estimated Annual Cost of Living Adjustment Percentage

3%

		FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028
<b>REVENUE</b>						
	Interest	\$ 10	\$ 11	\$ 11	\$ 11	\$ 12
	From Reserve		-	-	-	-
	TIF Administration	-	-	-	-	-
	Town Appropriation	143,000	147,290	151,709	156,260	160,948
	<b>TOTAL REVENUE:</b>	<b>\$ 143,000</b>	<b>\$ 147,301</b>	<b>\$ 151,720</b>	<b>\$ 156,271</b>	<b>\$ 160,959</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>						
<b>General Services</b>	Business Meals/Entertainment	\$ 206	\$ 212	\$ 219	\$ 225	\$ 232
	Conferences/Training	1,545	1,591	1,639	1,688	1,739
	Dues/Memberships	1,236	1,273	1,311	1,351	1,391
	Equipment/Furniture	103	106	109	113	116
	Insurance	2,060	2,122	2,185	2,251	2,319
	Client/Public Meetings	1,030	1,061	1,093	1,126	1,159
	Milage/Parking	515	530	546	563	580
	Misc.: Other	103	106	109	113	116
	Office Supplies	52	53	55	56	58
	Postage	52	53	55	56	58
	Professional Services	1,236	1,273	1,311	1,351	1,391
	Telephone	515	530	546	563	580
	Payroll Management Services	824	849	874	900	927
	IT Services	1,583	1,630	1,679	1,730	1,782
			-	-	-	-
<b>Marketing</b>	Website Maintenance	618	637	656	675	696
	Website Hosting	509	524	540	556	573
	Advertising	515	530	546	563	580
			-	-	-	-
<b>Personnel</b>	Gross Wages - Exec Dir.	92,700	95,481	98,345	101,296	104,335
	Health Insurance Stipend	5,000	5,150	5,305	5,464	5,628
	Payroll taxes / FICA / Medicare	23,000	23,690	24,401	25,133	25,887
	Retirement Contribution 403b	9,270	9,548	9,835	10,130	10,433
	Unemployment Compensation	309	318	328	338	348
	<b>TOTAL EXPENSES:</b>	<b>142,980</b>	<b>147,269</b>	<b># 151,687</b>	<b>156,238</b>	<b>160,925</b>
				-	-	-
	<b>NET REVENUE/EXPENDITURES:</b>	<b>\$ 20</b>	<b>\$ 31</b>	<b>\$ 32</b>	<b>\$ 33</b>	<b>\$ 34</b>

## Freeport Economic Development Corporation

### Code of Ethics (as of July 18, 2006)

The code of ethics shall be reviewed at the annual meeting of the FEDC Board of Directors and with each entering Board Member.

Each Director shall review and acknowledge understanding of the following:

Service as a Director of the FEDC is a public trust.

As a member of the Freeport Economic Development Corporation, I will:

- Represent the interests of all people (e.g. business owners, managers and property owners) served by this organization across the Town of Freeport;
- Embrace the Conflict of Interest policy as adopted by the FEDC Board;
- Not use the organization or my service on this Board for my own personal advantage or for the individual advantage of my friends, family, or supporters;
- Keep confidential information in the strictest of confidence;
- Ensure that working relationships among directors, staff, and volunteers are based on equity and mutual respect;
- Approach all Board issues with an open mind, prepared to make the best decision for FEDC and Freeport's business community;
- Do nothing to violate the trust of those who appointed me to the Board, the Town Council of Freeport, or of those we serve;
- Focus my efforts on the mission of the organization and not on my personal goals;
- Never exercise authority as a Board Member except when acting in a meeting with the full Board or as I am personally delegated by the Board;
- Never use my FEDC affiliation in connection with the promotion of partisan politics, religious matters or positions on any issue not in conformity with the policies of the FEDC.
- Never accept any gift, favor or thing of value from any person or business involved in business dealings with the Town of Freeport or FEDC.
- Never use or permit to be used Town owned property for private purposes.

In the event that the Board Member's obligation to operate in the best interests of the FEDC conflicts with the interests of any entity in which he/she has financial interest or with which he/she is affiliated, the individual shall disclose such conflict to the FEDC as soon as he/she becomes aware of it and shall refrain from voting in connection with the matter and participating in any decision making on the matter in compliance with the FEDC's Conflict of Interest policy.

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Board member signature and date

## **Freeport Economic Development Corporation** **Conflict of Interest Policy** (as of July 18, 2006)

It is the policy of the Freeport Economic Development Corporation ("FEDC") that Board Members be independent, impartial, and responsible to the business community; that a Board position not be used for personal gain; and that the public have confidence in the integrity of Board Members. To that end the FEDC Board of Directors "has adopted" Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics policies.

A conflict of interest arises when a Director involved in making an FEDC Board-level decision is in a position to benefit directly from that decision.

Members of the FEDC Board of Directors shall act in the interest of the FEDC and the fulfillment of its mission and not in the interest of any individual Member or particular constituency.

A Board Member shall not use the authority, title, or prestige of his or her position to solicit or otherwise obtain a private, social, or political benefit, which in any manner would be inconsistent with the general public interest.

No Board Member shall participate in his or her official capacity in any proceeding in which any of the following have a direct and substantial financial interest: immediate family, domestic partners, business partners, prospective employers, current employers, organizations to which Member belongs, or professional associations during the preceding year.

No Board Member shall participate in any political activity or lobbying effort which would be in conflict or incompatible with the performance of his/her official functions and duties for the FEDC.

Directors shall be alert to avoid any action which could possibly be interpreted as a use of FEDC Board membership to further their own interests. A Board Member should avoid the *appearance* of conflict of interest by disclosure or by abstention.

Visible conflicts, or the appearance of conflicts, are generally straightforward because they are well known. More difficult is a situation in which the conflict is known only to the Board Member. In that case the board Member should err on the side of disclosure.

Where the Board Member believes he or she has a potential conflict of interest or if there is any doubt as to whether a Board Member has a conflict of interest in any matter, the conflict or potential conflict should be raised to the FEDC Board who shall determine the qualification of the challenged Member. There are two options that available to the Board: (1) it is determined by the Board that no real conflict exists, and the Board member can be involved in the discussions and vote on the subject or (2) the Board determines that the Member is in conflict and must leave the room during the discussion and cannot vote on the subject.

*[NOTE: There may be state law covering town boards and commissions. This document as well as the Code of Ethics should be reviewed by the appropriate legal offices.]*



### Vacancy Rates in Freeport: By Quarter

