



Rebecca Coletta, President | Mary Waldron, Executive Director

(508) 583-1833

70 School Street, Brockton, MA 02301

www.oldcolonyplanning.org

Old Colony Economic Development Commission (EDC)

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Wednesday, June 4, 2025, 12 Noon

Hybrid Meeting – Members attending In Person & via Zoom

Attendance (Members):

John Jamoulis (Chair) – President, Cape Cod Café/Campello Business Association
Alysha Siciliano Perry (Vice-Chair) – Owner, Alluring Concepts
Tony DeFrias – Town Planner, Town of Hanson
Paul Vilela – Business Representative, North Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters
Mary Ellen DeFrias – Administrator, Greater Attleboro & Taunton Regional Transit Authority
Jeff Charnel – VP & Commercial Loan Officer, North Easton Savings Bank
Laura Buckley – MassHire South Shore Workforce Board
Susan Murray – Executive Director, SEED Corporation
Pamela McCarthy – Economic Development Director, Town of Stoughton
Stefanie Eaton – Associate Director of Facilities, Bridgewater State University
John Fay – Senior Economic Development Planner, City of Brockton
Nicole Salvo – Assistant Town Planner, Town of Bridgewater
Cynthia Pendergast – Brockton Program Director, Neighborworks Housing Solutions
Joe Mech – Procurement Manager, Brockton Area Transit
Shane O'Brien – Town Planner, Town of Bridgewater
Rick Jordan – Town Planner, Town of Avon
Charlie Seelig – Town Administrator, Town of East Bridgewater

OCPC Staff Present:

Don Sullivan, Director, Economic Resiliency and Housing Equity
Nick Giaquinto, Senior Economic Development Planner
Paul Umamo, Senior Grant & Fiscal Compliance Officer
Shawn Bailey – Senior Transportation Planner

MEETING MINUTES

1. Call to Order – Welcome / Intro

Under this Item, Chairman Jamoulis called the meeting to order - both he and Nick Giaquinto provided an explanation for not meeting over the summer months and indicated that the next meeting is tentatively scheduled for October, though a special meeting may be called sooner if needed to expedite the approval of the new five-year plan for the EDA. Following this – introductions by attendees took place by going around the room to each individual member.

2. Acceptance of April 2nd, 2025 Meeting Minutes



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Chairman Jamoulis entertained motion to approve April 2nd, 2025 meeting minutes. A motion was made and properly seconded – Approved by Voice Vote of the full Commission.

3. Federal Update: Funding & Grants, Paul Umano (OCPC Senior Grants Specialist)

Paul delivered an update on the federal funding outlook, noting that while there is now more clarity, the overall environment is marked by major changes to programs and grants. On the positive side, the Department of Transportation (DOT) has seen uncertainty "level off," with encouraging developments concerning the reauthorization of the Surface Highways Act. Similarly, the Economic Development Administration (EDA) is sharing positive news regarding its grant programs, specifically those that support the OCPC's work. Most critically for the EDC, the EDA Partnership Planning Grant is confirmed to continue, and the matching requirement has been significantly reduced, now requiring only a 60% match (down from 100%). OCPC is expecting an invitation to reapply for this three-year grant term soon.

4. Ongoing & Proposed EDA Projects + Other Economic Development Projects

Chairman Jamoulis turned the meeting over to Nick Giaquinto to update the Commission on ongoing projects with EDA and other programs OCPC has recently taken on:

- Avon Sewer Project (D&E): Application is still pending final EDA approval. Staff successfully resolved remaining administrative issues with co-applicants and is now waiting for an official decision.
- Regional Wastewater Study (New): OCPC is officially pursuing funding for a new Regional Wastewater Study to address the lack of infrastructure limiting regional economic growth and expansion. The goal is to develop a plan to expand municipal sewer service across all 17 OCPC communities, assessing current/future needs and exploring expansion options. Application recently submitted.
- Regional Water Study: This EDA-funded project has been officially completed. The full report and deliverables are available on the OCPC website.
- East Bridgewater Sewer Project: Construction bids are complete following the resolution of legal hurdles. Progress is ongoing, with construction currently scheduled to begin mid-June.
- EDA Annual Partnership Planning Grant: The grant is confirmed to continue for the EDC. OCPC is expecting an invitation to reapply for a three-year term shortly. The required local match has been reduced from 100% to 60%, placing the OCPC in a better financial position.
- Easton Sewer Project (D&E): An Inter-Municipal Agreement (IMA) for sewer service has been signed between Easton and Brockton. OCPC is now working with the Easton Planning Office to prepare an EDA application for Design and Engineering (D&E), with submittal anticipated for early-July.



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- Mass Tech Hub (Rt. 24 Corridor): A decision on the application to the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative for a "Tech Hub" designation (focusing on advanced manufacturing) is imminent (expected by month-end). This designation is anticipated to open significant doors for future funding and economic growth.
- Community One Stop Projects: OCPC is collaborating with several communities on state One Stop applications: Whitman (Master Plan/Housing Production Plan), Pembroke (Center Protection District/Town Center revitalization), and exploratory work with the Wampanoag Tribe.
- Whitman Downtown Strategy: OCPC will use legislative earmark money secured by Whitman from 2022 post-pandemic recovery funds to develop a targeted Downtown Improvement Strategy focused on the central business district.
- EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant: The project is approximately halfway complete. Assessment activities are underway on 7 sites, and the committee has slated at least 3 sites for re-use/redevelopment planning. Staff will soon transition from Phase 2 testing to determining final re-use strategies based on contamination findings.

5. Overview: EDA Commercial/Industrial Site Inventory Project

The project overview detailed the purpose and scope of the EDA Commercial/Industrial Site Inventory Project, which is nearing completion. The primary goal is to analyze industrially zoned areas across the Old Colony region, identifying hot spots for potential economic growth and opportunity. Staff gathered extensive data using GIS, MassMapper, and Assessor databases to meticulously assess each site's potential for expansion, new development, redevelopment, and utility infrastructure. Crucially, the team leveraged existing data on built square footage, acreage, jobs, and companies, along with ULI standard multipliers, to develop forward-looking projections that highlight where significant future growth is most likely to occur within each community. This resource, built on the OCPC website, will serve as a go-to tool for municipalities, developers, and companies seeking to understand the region's commercial assets from a detailed geographic perspective, incorporating aerial imagery, town-wide maps, and drone footage. Staff gave a special acknowledgment to Megan and Andrew for their work in developing the online platform.

6. CEDS Progress Report: Goals & Objectives Section

Staff announced the completion of the "Goals & Objectives" section, the latest draft piece of the new five-year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) document. This section establishes the foundational Vision Statement for the strategy and identifies six primary goals that the region will strive to achieve over the next five years. These goals—which cover areas like supporting small businesses, enhancing workforce readiness, diversifying the economy, planning critical infrastructure, improving quality of life, and strengthening economic resilience—directly correlate with findings from the region's SWOT Analysis. Each goal is supported by specific objectives outlining strategies, which are further detailed in a "Strategic Framework"



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designed to provide community-specific implementation guidance. While the draft section is considered nearly final, members are encouraged to review the material and provide feedback before the team moves on to the next critical step: finalizing the accompanying project lists.

7. Member Updates & Discussion: Recent Municipal Fiscal Challenges

The meeting concluded with an informal discussion centered on the increasing prevalence of Prop 2 1/2 tax overrides being sought by OCPC communities. The consensus highlighted that the primary drivers of these growing budget deficits across the region are significant pension liabilities and rapidly rising healthcare costs. An example from the Town of Stoughton illustrated that local challenges are compounded by a major decline in student enrollment (often linked to the construction of over-55 housing), which simultaneously reduces state per-student funding while fixed costs for school staff and overhead remain constant. Addressing the community response, it was noted that the override success rate is low, with Hanover being the only town out of six or seven in the district recently succeeding. Finally, Shane O'Brien confirmed that the Town of Bridgewater has a large override scheduled for mid-June to secure necessary funding for schools, roads, police, and fire.

8. Meeting Adjourn

Chairman Jamoulis entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:04pm, supported by a vote of the full Commission.

**Submitted by Nick Giaquinto, OCPC