



## A New Day's Dawning

If you have opened the Chamber's website, you will see a beautiful photo of a sunrise over Saco Bay. Our message, A New Day is Dawning in the Biddeford+Saco Region is intended to call attention to the economic growth and the positive changes we are witnessing within our communities.

New businesses, new residents, thousands of visitors and new investment is the foundation of an economic period, the likes of which we have not seen since the area was chosen to be the location of industrial age mills.

With growth and prosperity come challenges. An increase in traffic, the need for housing, expansion of our public transportation and our need for workers top the list. These challenges are good issues for communities to deal with collaboratively.

The Chamber recognizes that the business community can and should be a major partner in the creation of positive messaging that will be the cornerstone of our solutions.

### Save The Date

On April 3, The Chamber will host a professional development and workforce conference at Biddeford High School and Regional Center of Technology. This event is replacing our annual fall expo.

The conference will include B2B connections, a job fair, a speaker series addressing five relevant topics related to workforce and community, as well as a trade show where area businesses can highlight their wares and interact with attendees.

The Maine Department of Labor and York County Career Center will partner with us on hosting the job fair element. Final details are being decided and we will send out more information very soon.

### It's Political Season

One of the benefits to membership is that we create access to political candidates. Sometimes it is as simple as a walking tour to visit local businesses.

We have also hosted Candidate Nights where we provide a forum for questions and views on critical local subjects. We provide opportunities for the Governor of our State to come witness the expansion and growth of our communities.

On February 9, we will kick off the 2018 Governor's Race by facilitating a Business Roundtable with Shawn Moody, Republican candidate, local business owner and Chamber member. The event will take place at the Hampton Inn – Saco from 8 till 9:30 am. If you are interested in attending, please RSVP - [pj@biddefordsacochamber.org](mailto:pj@biddefordsacochamber.org) - so we can schedule appropriate seating and space.

### 5th Annual WinterFest

Don't forget this weekend is the 5th Annual Winterfest in Biddeford. The Chamber joins several other organizations and individuals to pull this event together. Where else will you find a monstrous sliding hill right beside City Hall? Friday night is designated for adult sledding. A ticket gets you a sled and one beer at the Dirigo Brewing Co. after party. Please check out [Winterfest.org](http://Winterfest.org) on the web and follow the event schedule on Facebook at Biddeford Winterfest. We hope to see you this weekend.

### Cannabis Confusion

I would like to encourage the legislative committee working on creating logical and enforceable rules to keep up the good work and take the time needed to put together a logical and comprehensive piece of legislation that can be passed.

By the time this newsletter reaches you, we won't

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know whether the legislators met Thursday's deadline to approve clarifying legislation. If that failed to happen, the proposed legislation that approved by citizen initiative will go into effect. By all reports and by my own read, that legislation was hastily and poorly written and does not protect employers and many others, including minors.

There is a discussion that the legislature could approve an extension of the moratorium till May 1. I believe that this makes good sense and will provide a bit more time to solidify good rules.

The Maine State Chamber reports that a collaboration of organizations have come together and hired legal representation from Peter Lowe of Brann & Isaacson Law firm in Lewiston to create a toll-free phone line and a website especially designed for employers to call or ask questions on line, at no cost, regarding marijuana issues as it relates to their business.

The Biddeford+Saco Chamber will continue to follow this issue and provide input at the State Chamber board of directors, as well as be a resource to local legislators such as Senator Susan Deschambault who serves on the marijuana committee.

The Biddeford+Saco Chamber will keep employers informed as the marijuana Help Line and website get launched. This is a serious issue that demands our attention.

*Frank*

