

Bi-Town Economic Development Committee
Thursday February 5, 2015
Wilmington Town Offices

Attendance: Ryan Holton, Ken Black, Sharon Cunningham, Heidi Taylor, Jim Burke, Carlo Pilgrim, Meg Streeter, Pat Weisbrich, Gretchen Havreluk, Randy Terk, Scott Murphy and guest Mike Chase from Mount Snow

Heidi made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 8,2015 meeting and seconded by Ken. Passed

Improving Search Results for Valley

Mike Chase, Director of Marketing Technology at Mount Snow presented information on search engine optimization. There are three main components to obtain the top of the search engines which are: Technology (by internet consultant), Content and Links. The way to be on the top of the search engine is to purchase ads. Google is the primary search engine that is used by 90% of internet users; Bing is the next widely used search engine. Mount Snow uses Semalt to rank their website comparatively to other similar companies. Conductor is a company that ad agencies and web developers use to show where you should be on the search engine. Websites that rank high in quality are more trusted; therefore are higher on the search engine. You can purchase Google Ad Words to also help move to the top. Mike suggested obtaining marketing funds (possibly 1% Option tax funds) to promote the area through one website; instead of competing with each other.

Sharon shared that the calendar on the Chamber website is used for all events in the valley and are listed for free regardless of membership.

Increased Bandwidth

Ken emailed VTel and other providers; however did not hear back from them. Mike commented that Fiber has unlimited bandwidth the key is how to economically hook it up. Gretchen suggested that we pool some funding to hire a consultant to help us move this project forward. She also commented that we are trying to work two fold with residents; as well as recruiting technology businesses to our community. Randy and Ken will reconnect with Cliff Duncan to meet with him about potential build out of the fiber. Gretchen will check with the SeVEDS group for potential consultants and their cost. Mike also may have some suggestions for consultants.

Joint Marketing Pool and **Workforce Development** were not discussed due to absences of key representatives.

Updates:

Wilmington– Waiting to hear on a CDBG-DR grant for the development of a sidewalk on West Main St., Gretchen working on two grants, Vermont House held their grand opening, working with an attorney on sure-packing the Valley Trail, and working on developing trail maps for all of Wilmington's trails.

Dover-Continuing sidewalk project-all easements and right of way plans have been approved and construction should begin this summer. Beautification for the town common is another project currently being worked on. Ken suggested that we pay for someone to take minutes. A suggestion was made to look for a volunteer; possibly a retiree, in both towns. We will revisit this at the next meeting.

Chamber- Working on website and Kiosk. The website should be completed by April 1st. Sharon attended the New York Travel show, Fiddleheads and Blueberry festival planning and Chinese television show will be coming this weekend to do some research for a potential show on the valley.

Mount Snow- None available

Hermitage Club- None available

SeVEDS- None Available

No other business presented.

Next meeting will be on March 5,2015.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gretchen M. Havreduk