

Bi-Town Economic Development Committee
Thursday April 2, 2015 8:00-9:00 am
Wilmington Town Offices

Attendance: Ken Black, Ryan Holton, Heidi Taylor, Sharon Cunningham, Mike chase, Carolyn Mays, Diane Chapman, Adam Grinold, Meg Streeter, Randy Terk, Mike Chase, Pat Weishbrich,

Diane Chapman was introduced as the new Wilmington Selectboard Member.

Heidi motioned to approve minutes from last meeting Sharon Seconded. Approved.

Improving Search Results for Valley: Adam, Sharon, Gretchen and Mike met twice as a committee for this topic. Mike Chase presented a Digital Marketing Campaign, Search Engine Optimization and reporting (tracking results from campaign). See attached. Discussion: Ken feels that it should be funded equally. Randy commented that based solely on ski tickets sales; more tickets are sold in Dover than in Wilmington. He does not care about the disparity in shared cost. Measuring results are important. Randy would like to see local businesses buy into the marketing campaign by a percentage of their revenue. Ken inquired about how non-chamber members would be included. Mike indicated that no, one particular business would be highlighted in the campaign it would be marketing the area and people would be drawn to the chamber website where chamber members would be highlighted and non-chamber members would have a listing by business category with town located in. Randy and Diane would like to see a dollar amount that could be presented to the boards. Randy moved that we support the marketing campaign as presented. Heidi seconded. Approved. Randy suggest that we report financially monthly on results. Everyone else feels that quarterly reporting is the best.

The committee will meet again to finalize the proposal to present to the select boards.

Increased Bandwidth: Ken suggested that we indicate where we need/want fiber and get a quote from Duncan Cable. Ken estimated the cost for smaller 24 count fiber cable to be \$2 per foot: however the cost is greater, as Duncan Cable would need to upgrade their infrastructure. Randy suggested a model where homeowners bring the fiber to their home and as other homeowners sign on they reimburse those homeowners that paid for the original setup. Mike suggested the Towns could purchase the fiber to be installed and lease to businesses and/or homeowners. This way the purchaser can choose the fiber company they want. This is a common model; not necessarily for a municipality, but for other entities owning the fiber. They are looking for a return on

investment and the towns would not be doing that. Ken will look into this more for the next meeting.

Customer Service Training- Gretchen has nothing to report.

Updates:

Wilmington – Gretchen reported the Village Roost is opening on Friday, Working on an RFP for design/engineering for West Main St sidewalk.

Dover- Ken reported another grant program has been implemented to entice companies to film internet based commercials in Dover. Sidewalk project going slowly due to VTrans, hopefully construction will start in late summer early fall. The Ridge trail proposal is to get a parcel of land to gain access on Bears Crossing by creating a new trail. Heidi asked how the summer closure of Handle Road will be handled for hikers and bikers to access the parking lot. Randy assumed that different parts of the road will be closed depending on where they are working and would be provided daily updates. The Chamber should be on the daily update list so they can inform our visitors.

Mount Snow – Mike reported April 12th closing and will be open on weekends after that until the snow is gone.

Hermitage Club- Carolyn reported Last Saturday Hall & Oates performed 800 people in attendance, working on outdoor summer concerts, many weddings are booked, today is the community ski day, and April 12th is closing date.

Chamber- Sharon reported Windows in the Valley promotion still need some sponsors, working on the new website which will be launched in a couple weeks.

Randy motioned to adjourn.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gretchen M. Havreluk

Digital Marketing

Goal: To establish a fund to market the SVDV to create and sustain a multi year advertising effort with the goal of driving visitation to the Valley

Strategies:

- a. Create a series of compelling digital ads to market the Valley in summer and fall
- b. Minor refresh of creative every year, major refresh of creative every two years
- c. Establish a standard tracking pixel (cookie) to be used on Valley websites to allow the Chamber to target ads more effectively
- d. Create an opportunity for businesses to run ads for their specific business as part of the larger ad buy allowing them to participate in advertising that typically has cost prohibitive minimums for small businesses
- e. Track and report on effectiveness of ads (see Reporting)

Funding: Ask for 10% of 1% option tax from towns in the SVDV with a minimum two year commitment. Optionally seek additional funding from individual businesses wishing to promote their business through the chamber/bi-town ad buy

SEO

Goal: To ensure visitvermont.com consistently ranks in the top list of results for a given list of keywords searched from our target markets

Strategies:

- a. Use a service, like semalt.com, to track our position and recommend solutions to fix rating issues
- b. Audit the website code for SEO best practices
- c. Create a series of blogs/posts on visitvermont.com to generate content that contains keywords that we want to be ranked for
- d. Investigate other blogs and sites that write about topics that are relevant to the keywords we are trying to rank for and pay them if necessary to write article(s) on SVDV

Funding: A portion of the fund established above would be used for SEO

Reporting

Goal: To establish a series of metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of our marketing campaigns for both the chamber, the towns, and our members

Strategies:

- a. Digital ad metrics
 - i. CTR: Click through rate
 - ii. CPM: cost per thousand

- iii. CPA: cost per acquisition (sales or guest information)
- iv. Total Impressions
- v. Attention: time on site
- b. Digital campaign tracking
 - i. Establish best practices for campaign tracking through links see: <https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/1033867>
 - ii. Proper setup of google analytics with goal tracking
 - iii. Establishment of common tracking pixel across Valley websites
- c. Lodging
 - i. Develop solutions to to determine occupancy anonymously on a weekly basis ie (surveys, web based reporting solutions)
- d. Retail
 - i. Develop standard weekly surveys for business to indicate their performance YOY
- e. Rooms & Meals
 - i. Evaluate and report quarterly R&M tax results as compared to our comp set YOY

Management

- a. Decision Making

All Marketing decisions for bi-town marketing funds would be made by a committee composed of representatives from Dover, Wilmington and the Chamber of Commerce. All expenditures of the fund authorized by this committee would operate within the guidelines of the overall Chamber marketing plan, but would not be subject to approval by the Chamber board of directors.
- b. Financials

Funds would be held by the Southern Vermont Deerfield Valley Chamber of Commerce, and dispersed at the discretion of the newly created Bi-town Marketing Committee.
- c. Reporting

Committee would report to Bi-town on a quarterly basis progress of marketing campaign. Town representatives may report back to town as often as required by town selectboard.