

Bi-Town Economic Development Committee
Thursday, May 3, 2018 8:00- 9:00 AM
Wilmington Town Offices

Attendees: Heidi Taylor, Vickie Capitani, Erik Barnes, Tom Fitzgerald, Steve Neratko, Eric Durocher, John Cleanthes, Ryan Holton and Gretchen Havreluk

Meeting called to order: Heidi called the meeting to order at 8:00am

Attendees introduced themselves.

Vickie moved to approve the April 5, 2018 minutes, Gretchen seconded, all in favor.

Election of Officers: Vickie nominated Heidi Taylor as Chair and Erik Barnes as Vice Chair, Gretchen seconded, no other nominations, all in favor.

Gretchen commented, "Short a member from Dover, Committee (includes) two residents from each of the participating towns, Brendan currently working in Boston. One Selectboard member from each town, Chamber, executive director of BDCC, one administrative staff from each town, one from Mount Snow, One from Hermitage, and no more than two residents from each town."

Amazon & Airbnb 1% Local Option Tax collection update: Scott Tucker preparing to write letter to John Gannon. Gretchen noted, "1% is being collected from registered Airbnbs; Amazon collecting. Have to rely on state to tell the town how much (\$) collected on its' behalf." The state provides a minimally detailed report on the 1% tax collections. Erik asked for a copy of the report. Gretchen advised, "The state takes 30% for administration."

Act 250 Update: Gretchen advised, "No change, no processing well. . . minor 250." Described situation in Chimney Hill where property owner wanted to combine two lots to build a single residence. Property owners had to go through Act 250; if they had been building a house on each lot (total two) Act 250 would not have been triggered. "Process did cost property owners significant funds. Gretchen is hoping to have Diane Snelling attend a committee meeting.

Housing, Bi-town committee: Gretchen has not as yet organized committee. Katie Buckley at the State is willing to work with (future) committee. First step is an assessment, then analysis for the Valley. Susan McMahon on the WRC was suggested as a good person to be on this committee. Gretchen will form committee who will then determine how to do housing assessment.

Bi-Town Marketing Plan, Progress/Update: Eric met with Sharon Cunningham, Vermont Community Development Association. Twice a year the BDCA puts on a conference, one will be next Thursday. The subject matter is, "Marketing Your Town/Region".

Dashboard, tool to track results from Digital Marketing Campaign, has had minimal participation. Eric advised, "Dashboard has triggered anger and frustration among some participants being reminded to enter their data; entering data seems to be perceived as daunting and there is a feeling that the information provided wouldn't be secure." Steve advised, "Dover is incorporating Dashboard participation into point system . . ."

Sign façade program very popular in Dover. Vickie advised Dover has granted to fix parking entry for a business. Gretchen advised Wilmington has some very old buildings that have run into lead paint issues and there appears to be less interest in the program in Wilmington.

Gretchen, May 15 an update to the Bi-town Marketing Plan. Wilmington will probably was or additional funding in September. Work on during the winter to increase summer business. Summer business has been improving.

VTrans Signage: Steve has written a letter, for review by committee members, requesting VTrans to place additional Ski Area directional signs along Rte. 9. Issue is GPS systems providing misleading directions on dirt roads. Steve took photos of all existing signs, noted on map for committee to review; three locations were agreed upon as requiring signs. Gretchen advised of Wilmington VTrans meeting held by Secretary of Transportation Joe Flynn earlier in the week. As a result of contact made by Gretchen just need to email requests (not need to send formal letter) in effort to get ski visitors off of the dirt roads.

Updates: Wilmington – Tom moving from Listers to Assessors to do Wilmington re-appraisal. Wilmington will need to hire a specialist; Dover has been of assistance to Wilmington. Re-appraisal will take about three years. Budget, Wilmington has received some delinquent tax dollars, bank has been helpful. There will be a Tax Sale scheduled for June 12st. Gretchen added Steve Zaluzny (Brattleboro) attended the VTrans meeting to provide input on winter road maintenance and current road conditions. Joe Flynn acknowledged condition of the roads and also advised the embankment on Rte. 9 West of downtown is giving way and one lane will be closed. Wilmington announced on Wednesday, the “Make it on Main Street” competition with a \$20,000 grand prize to develop a new brick and mortar business in downtown.

Dover – Two surveys prepared for primary and second home owners to give their input on opening a marijuana dispensary, prior to the Selectboard developing an ordinance. Vickie advised the Selectboard had received an application for a Cannabis Town Festival to be held on July 1, the Sunday of July 4th weekend. Steve advised Dover, in the next few months, will be doing a major update of their website. As part of that process they are reviewing town websites from across the country. On May 22 a meeting will be held to discuss internet connectivity in Dover; to be held at 6:30pm in the Town Offices.

Mount Snow – Erik advised they are plowing mountain work roads to enable the start of mountain biking. “They lost MLK and the last part of Christmas, but March was very good. They are trying to open the golf course for a week from Friday. Season Pass sales up 15%, Concert scheduled for July 7th, Minus Zero Festival had no issues. Erik and Vickie noted the Minus Zero attendees were nice, looked out for one another and were good tippers.

Hermitage – John advised, “Stuff seems to be happening. A small crew is working to maintain facilities, the golf course the greens were uncovered on Tuesday and they are hoping to open the course by Memorial Day. On May 15th, hopefully something coming out that will be an improvement.” Tom thanked John for “Sticking with it and continuing to attend these meetings.” Other members also expressed their appreciation.

Chamber – Eric advised, “Sharon (Cunningham) was done two-three weeks ago. Hannah Greene will be starting on May 21st as Membership Coordinator. There is a digital version of the Member Guide, whose usage is being tracked. The digital version includes links to phone numbers.

Heidi advised the Friends of the Valley are sponsoring a fund raiser for EMS Appreciation on May 27th at the bowling alley at 4pm; there will also be a raffle.

Vickie announced the Deerfield Valley news digital website version is up and running as of today and will be free for some weeks then a "pay wall" will be put in place.

Ryan Holton reported Valley Trail kiosks and signs require maintenance, some have been damaged. Steve advised Dover has started at their end, Ryan will contact the Wilmington Trails Committee.

Adjourned at 9:10AM

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara R. Baum/Rachels