

Bi-Town Economic Development Committee
Meeting Minutes
via Zoom
Thursday, April 1, 2021

Members present: Gretchen Havreluk, Vicki Capitani, Eric Durocher, Heidi Taylor, Ethan Schoonmaker, Tracy Bartels, Christy Betit, Christine Howe

Also present: Shannon Wheeler, Scott Tucker

Meeting called to order at 8:00 am

- I. Additions or changes to the agenda: *None*
- II. Approve minutes from the March 1st meeting
 - a. Motion to approve by Eric, seconded by Ethan. All approve.
- III. Deerfield Valley resiliency team
 - a. Met to discuss putting together another local assistance program for equipment and technical assistance. These would be small grants (business covers 25% of project, we cover 75% up to \$4,000) and we would need to go to Selectboards for approval. Application process would be the same for both towns but funding from each town stays in that town. There is still a steady flow of information coming we're sharing with businesses.
- IV. Our Growing Communities – Zoning:
 - a. Dover's rebuilt commission is meeting bimonthly and is pulling together a survey for town meeting day; working towards updating the town plan.
- V. Housing Committee:
 - a. Meeting monthly again, focusing on what our incentives can be. A subcommittee formed to reach out to those potential developers regarding what we think can happen from the housing plan. Looking at considering 501c3 status to help secure more funding. Met with USDA and ACCD on possible funding for private developers if we can meet LMI thresholds. Looking at town owned properties we could use as an incentive to developers as current construction costs are prohibitive.
- VI. Marketing Committee:
 - a. Both towns funded our request so we are focusing on implementing the marketing plan starting with hiring the marketing staff member. Working on that job description with the Chamber. Working on RFP/Qs for branding firm and photography and videography. New website is now in the works and hopes to be up early June.
- VII. Other Business:
 - a. Walgreens: *No new updates, but hearing more positive stories locally*
- VIII. Wilmington updates:
 - a. Scott: still working on contracts for Public Safety building. Working on electric vehicle charger stations and will be bringing that to Selectboard next week.
 - b. Gretchen: formed a committee for North Main St. project to review responses for RFP. Getting an RFP together for Reardon bridge ramp. Still working on East Main St easements, more challenging as many properties are in transfer.
- IX. Dover updates:
 - a. Vicki: possibly going back to hybrid meetings for 4/6 meeting. May is the new March, going to be very busy with town meeting and preparations. Sped up purchase of new dump trucks as steel prices are going up 7%.
 - b. Eric: as of 4/15 the cost of building materials will have increased 35% so another blow to development. Nearing the end of the village designation renewal process after some changes

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to West Dover village boundaries due to program changes. New Dover website is in process and getting mapped over from old site.

X. Mount Snow updates:

- a. Tracy: Adapting to the constantly changing weather, still confident we'll close April 18 with a worse case scenario of skiing only out of Carinthia. All faces but Sunbrook are currently open. Looking to summer, working on rebuilding the mountain ops building in same footprint and location and hoping to break ground April 19. Working on summer ops plans. Golf info should be coming next week and possibly some other offerings.

XI. Hermitage Club updates: *None in attendance*

XII. BDCC Updates:

- a. Christy: ARP funding: working with WRC and Bennington RC to find ways to leverage this new municipal funding. There's no detailed guidance yet on how funds can be spent so we'll be in touch with those municipal leaders and host webinars for info once we have it. Communities need to be patient; this money is flexible. We advocate for mindful development with lasting economic growth over use as a brief stimulus. Funds do not need to be spent until 12/31/24.
- b. SoVT Economy Summit – May 12-14 online, registration is open

XIII. Chamber Update:

- a. Ethan: new website in the works, Events committee is planning golf tournament for Haystack in July 26 or August 2. Wine and Harvest will be September 24-26, getting that info together. Fireworks plans starting; looking at using Mount Snow parking lots for socially distant event over regular location and needed to find a new vendor. Old Home Week may be August 5-8, working with them to promote. Marketing committee moving forward on a Fall/Winter brochure. Membership committee working on member benefits including website discounts.

XIV. Moover Update:

- a. Christine: closing our Mount Snow and Okemo seasonal routes. We're watching Covid restrictions so we can increase capacities and school schedule changes for Brattleboro after April break. Grant writing and budget season, so busy here in the offices.

XV. DV Fiber:

- a. Gretchen: just want to share an update on their work, they are moving forward quickly I feel with all volunteers. There was an RFP sent for vendors and there were some responses they are scoring. We can't share much on the vendor search as it is highly confidential but know they are working hard.

XVI. Next meeting May 6.

XVII. Motion to adjourn by Eric at 8:45 am, seconded by Gretchen.

Respectfully submitted,

Shannon Wheeler
Economic Development, Town of Dover