

**Bi-Town Economic Development Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**via Zoom & Deerfield Valley Rescue**  
**Thursday, March 3, 2022**

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Members present: Gretchen Havreluk, Heidi Taylor, Bill Benneyan, Tom Fitzgerald

Others present: Meg Staloff

Members present via Zoom: Vicki Capitani, Eric Durocher, Bethaney LaClair, Mat Conroy, Adam Grinold

Also present via Zoom: Shannon Wheeler

**Meeting called to order at 8:02 am by Chair Heidi**

- I. Additions or changes to the agenda: *None*
- II. Approve minutes from February 3:
  - a. Motion to approve by Eric, seconded by Vicki. Motion approved.
- III. Housing Committee Update:
  - a. Eric: Still discussing forming a possible housing trust – how it could be funded and how it could alleviate housing issues. Nicki Steel joined last meeting to discuss Roundhouse Group and their experience. Attempted an employer survey on issues affecting them but didn't have much response. Pushing shared housing classes again, created a poster to share and get people talking about shared housing.
- IV. Marketing Committee Update:
  - a. Gretchen: Joint Selectboard meeting last month with much discussion, we were funded for this year. Moving forward with that funding and the recent state grant received for campaign this summer.
  - b. Eric: keeping an eye out for additional grant funding to make these dollars go as far as possible. Having Tim on staff will be a great help to monitor and interpret metrics and make changes to live campaign.
- V. DV Fiber Update:
  - a. Gretchen: Finance committee working on interim financing options as anticipate buildout beginning prior to grant funding coming in. Committees are working on charters. Hub site visits are still happening.
- VI. Other Business:
  - a. Eric: Walgreens: where did we leave that? *Gretchen had created a Google Doc to lodge complaints that could be forwarded to our legislators. Eric will update with recent complaints.*
- VII. Wilmington update:
  - a. Tom: Held Town Meeting; all items passed. All those that ran were reelected. Reorganizational meeting on March 15<sup>th</sup>.
  - b. Gretchen: Meeting with many new restaurant owners. Met with a couple from Denver relocating here with a tech business and ideas on future brick and mortar businesses. Downtown Designation four year review later today.
- VIII. Dover update:
  - a. Vicki: set Town Meeting date for May 17 at Carinthia Base Lodge. Board approved budget which is up 4.9%. Transfer station fees going up, long discussion about some illegal camping in town. I think there's a real opportunity to explore having a year round campground in the valley.
  - b. Eric: 1% payment recently received was up 63% over 2020 and almost 10% over 2019, trending in the right direction there. Trails and Rec received positive jurisdictional opinions on Horace Hill and Dover Town Forest projects so moving forward on those. Some RFPs for Horace Hill projects will be started. Still working through Trails and Rec process documents, these set the structure

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for new projects in Town. Ordered trail counters of our own to begin collecting year round data as we begin to expand these projects and properties, would typically borrow from Windham Regional Commission. Those will be installed as soon as weather permits. Working on some new business incentive programming and some changes to the events sponsorship program. Having some conversations with new businesses looking to coming to the valley; hoping those come to fruition.

**IX. Mount Snow update:**

- a. Mat: Jack Jump World championships back this Sunday. Music back on Main St on Cuzzins Deck, ReggaeFest back at end of the month with Pond Skim and Duct Tape Derby. Winter Brewers Fest returns first weekend of April. Hoping season runs to April 24 weather permitting using Carinthia Base Lodge and Nitro lift. New lift permitting has been received and will be starting construction at beginning of April. Hoping for May 14<sup>th</sup> opening at the Golf Course. Tracy will be here through season and to help transition new GM.

**X. Hermitage Club update:**

- a. Bill: Membership growing weekly, at 330 currently. Weather has been tough but how it fell worked out for us. Scheduled to close at the end of the month barring any large late season snowfalls. Summer plans are only working on infrastructure for Winter.

**XI. BDCC update:**

- a. Adam: SeVEDS participated in 14 Town Meetings so far and have been approved in each. Last year we were in 18 municipal budgets representing 86% of the population. If all approved this year it will be 87%. Some towns are experiencing BDCC work for the first time. Financial acumen program starting. We learned reviewing state funding applications that there was a severe lack of financial acumen, not understanding things like balance sheets or cashflows. CNPP hub and spoke that the SBA is putting out across the country. The VT SVDC that is the hub; the RDCs of VT are two of those spokes. VermontEconomicDevelopment.com has information about the program – same as REVDA program we did last fall matching business owner applicants with service provider applicants and paying them directly. Funding will go fast, around \$3,000 each. Currently 19 refugee individuals working. Long clearing process from arrival to employment. Various levels of English, some former military men are helping translate for others and helping by being employed in that group. Alex Beck is running the welcoming communities and workplace programs. Businesses have to be willing to translate training documents; next wave of refugees will probably speak a different language so we're fighting for funding from VT Department of Labor and State to help businesses pay for that. About 75 refugees here today.

**XII. Chamber update:**

- a. Bethaney: Chili Stroll on April 1, ticket sales have been consistent. 6 Breweries and 12 restaurants. Purchased new CRM software, great feature is we'll be able to have a job board on our website. 4<sup>th</sup> of July Celebration planned for July 2<sup>nd</sup> and both towns have approved funding requests. Fireworks up to a \$10,000 minimum. Closing in on search for Office Manager and hope to have them working in next week or two. Refillable water bottle station will be installed in a couple of weeks from the Green Up Vermont grant received.

**XIII. Moover update: *None in attendance***

**XIV. Wilmington Works:**

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- a. Meg - Working hard on Downtown Designation review for today. Trying to fill in gaps in Town with Summer Events. Beaver Street art project should be completed soon. Winterplace events have been great and are wrapping up.

**XV.**Next meeting April 7.

**XVI.** Motion to adjourn by Eric at 8:46am, seconded by Bill

Respectfully submitted,

Shannon Wheeler  
Economic Development, Town of Dover