

Bi-Town Economic Development Committee
Meeting Minutes
via Zoom & Deerfield Valley Rescue
Thursday, December 1, 2022

Members present: Gretchen Havreluk, Heidi Taylor, Bethaney LaClair, Bill Benneyan, Brian Suhadolc, Adam Grinold (8:05)

Members present via Zoom: Vicki Capitani, Christine Howe, Eric Durocher, Tom Fitzgerald

Also present: Jessica Roberts

Also present via Zoom: Shannon Wheeler

Meeting called to order at 8:01 am by Chair Heidi

- I. Additions or changes to the agenda: *None*
- II. Approve minutes of November 3:
 - a. Motion to approve by Eric, seconded by Gretchen. Motion approved.
- III. Housing Committee Update:
 - a. Didn't meet in November, scheduled to meet this month. Short term rental subcommittee had first meeting, meeting again Monday at Deerfield Valley Rescue. Eric attended VT Statewide Housing Conference on the 16th. Today at OSEC is a Southern Vermont Economy Project Housing event. Eric is presenting on our bitown initiatives.
 - b. Discussion on available housing resources, housing website and Facebook page. Discussion on possible additional lodging option in future for something like patrol upstairs at Deerfield Valley Rescue and West Dover Fire Department once bunkroom completed.
- IV. Marketing Committee Update:
 - a. Gretchen: successful in both towns for funding 2023 campaign. Appreciate both Selectboards support. Signed another yearly contract for marketing director, Tim Dolan. Gearing up for year 3 of marketing plan.
 - b. Discussion on Yankee Magazine article on tour of Southern Vermont. Vermont Magazine came through town recently for a story, and Manchester Life has one on Wilmington.
- V. Connectivity update:
 - a. Gretchen: Fidium Fiber hosted the November Chamber mixer. Very focused on Wilmington and Dover. Spoke with them and are aware there is a CUD, think they will leave Readsboro, Halifax, Whitingham, Wardsboro areas to DV Fiber.
 - b. Discussion on cell service dead spots, cellular mapping company that had come to Dover in October requesting citizens report. Eric will followup and report back next month on if they were going to offer a summary to Dover.
- VI. Other Business: *None*
- VII. Wilmington update:
 - a. Tom: Entered into all contracts for Winter, update from solid waste district, making money on cardboard and solar array but losing money on rest. Upped zoning fees for first time since 2007. Trails Committee seeking \$155,000 to finish Hoot Toot & Whistle trail. Social service appropriation requests coming in with some new ones. Budget meetings start 13th, doesn't look like a big increase in taxes at this point. Signed first cannabis retail license for our community for Ratus.
 - b. Gretchen: Officially moved into new office. Held very successful 'We Have a Space For You' walking tour in the rain, 6 new faces to Gretchen attendees, toured several buildings and spoke about others. Hopeful EV charging stations coming to South Main St parking lot.
- VIII. Dover update:

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- a. Vicki: budget meetings started yesterday. Will be a pretty significant increase. Planning commission submitted for a town plan grant. Drilled past 700 feet of new well at the Town Common. Fracking today since that yielded less than 2 gallons per minute. Need at least 2.5 GPM to be a viable source for Library, daycare and Town Hall.
- b. Eric: attended a number of webinars on Adam's recommendations looking for funding for well project. Portions of the project could potentially be covered but not the most expensive parts to date. In order to qualify for funded a new FT position would need to be created at the daycare at \$23 an hour. Will look into finding other funding options for this project. Received some RFPs back on Horace Hill projects. Working on ED budget to present to Selectboard soon. Updating our department programs for the year.

IX. Mount Snow update:

- a. Opened on 20th, good weekend for Thanksgiving. 5 lifts spinning. Load tested new Sundance lift yesterday. Sunbrook lift expected to be done before Christmas. Staffing still looks good.

X. Hermitage Club update:

- a. Opening next weekend as scheduled. Looking for cold weather change next week. Staffing is good, better than last two years.

XI. BDCC update:

- a. Housing event today, attendees from as far away as Rutland. New refugees coming in slowly mostly from African countries. Afghans are joining the community here from other areas in the country.

XII. Chamber update:

- a. Gala coming on December 5th. In process of membership renewals, delayed with our new membership portal. Will host office hour events in Dover and Wilmington to help get businesses set up. Looking for additional board and committee members including new Advisory committee.

XIII. Moover update:

- a. Almost all Winter routes kicked off last weekend, a few smaller ones will start later this month. Fully staffed for seasonal employees. Changes to CDL licensing and training have helped us. Night Moover starts 12/10 until April. Ridership for Thanksgiving weekend was about average, up overall.

XIV. Other Business:

- a. Discussion on what's leading to these staffing changes and challenges, changes in local area, employment pools, changing of long held buildings.

XV. Next meeting January 5.

XVI. Motion to adjourn by Eric at 8:53am, seconded by Gretchen

Respectfully submitted,

Shannon Wheeler
Economic Development, Town of Dover