

Bi-Town Economic Development Committee
Meeting Minutes
via Zoom & Deerfield Valley Rescue
Thursday, January 4, 2024

Members present: Gretchen Havreluk, Heidi Taylor, Bill Benneyan (8:04)

Members present via Zoom: Eric Durocher, Brian Suhadolc, Vicki Capitani, Tom Fitzgerald, Christine Howe, Bethaney LaClair

Also present via Zoom: Shannon Wheeler, John Redd, Sam Kondracki

A recording of this meeting can be found here: <https://youtu.be/dlMtGZULHY>

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

- I. Public Comments: *None*
- II. Additions or changes to the agenda: *None*
- III. Approve minutes of November 2nd meeting:
 - a. Motion to approve by Bethaney, seconded by Brian. Motion approved.
- IV. Housing Committee Update:
 - a. Eric: Did not meet in December, working on finding a new set meeting day to increase participation. With Gretchen, held several meetings with parties interested in possible housing development project in Wilmington. Keeping an eye on available funding for this. Biggest goal for moment is focusing on landlord support group.
 - b. Gretchen: Want to recognize that the property we're talking about with these private developers has a lot of challenges. Would need a lot of money, they need a plan with an engineer and what estimated costs are. It's a ways off.
- V. Marketing Committee Update:
 - a. Gretchen: focusing on three pieces right now: RFP for new creative for this year, successful in getting partial funding through GROW grant, and signage for towns.
- VI. Economic Data Reporting:
 - a. Eric: Notifications of November 1% payments: Dover received \$133,782.66 up considerably over 2022.
 - b. Gretchen: Wilmington up 12% from last year same payment in meals & rooms and 43% in sales and use. Received a total payment of \$205,227.27.
- VII. Other Business:
 - a. Walgreens – Eric will touch base with Gretchen on this again.
- VIII. Wilmington Update:
 - a. Tom: Still working on budgets, have an increase, eagerly awaiting school tax info. Working on spending ARPA funds for sewer expansion. Working on Lake Raponda dam, reappraisal again.
 - b. Gretchen: working on easements for East Main St. sidewalk project with state, wanted to get out to bid this month and doesn't look good. Very slow in approving, I sent in November. Can't proceed until they are all in place and then there is another review. Sewer and water received an updated budget with an increase in one year of one million dollars, a lot of challenges there. VOREC Grant application submitted for Hoot Toot Whistle, should hear in February.
- IX. Dover Update:
 - a. Vicki: hopefully finalizing budgets today, ours is also up in the 7-8% range. New Police Chief Mike Arbogast took over in mid December. Held a retirement party for 3 long time employees. Good news on the well at Town Common, it showed no contamination on 4-hour test, RFP out for 36-hour test.

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- b. Eric: Due to warmer weather, Horace Hill projects kept working until last week. Able to get a lot done with boardwalk left to complete and an access trail and climbing trail buttoned up. ED budget presented to Selectboard, Town Report info due soon. Annual review of our programs, potential recreation projects. STR we've completed some meetings with registration organizations, compiling info to present to Selectboards. Our business plan competition winner was not able to secure the 10 foot ceiling location, will look to run program again.

X. Hermitage Club Update:

- a. Interesting start to the season, good opening on 12/9. Held a local craft fair for members. At 400 members now which is our comfortable carry number. Continued interest especially from younger families. Monday, February 5th is our 2nd Annual Community Ski Day.

XI. Mount Snow Update:

- a. Battling weather, big rain before Christmas but were able to rebuild entire mountain. Interest was there for skiing, torchlight and fireworks 12/31, great participation from guests. Fully staffed, long road ahead for the season but optimistic on the forecast.

XII. BDCC Update: *None in attendance*

XIII. Moover Update:

- a. Made it through another holiday week, both locations fully staffed. New Drop Zone is running smoothly at Mount Snow. Looking forward to snow and the upcoming MLK and Presidents week holidays.

XIV. Chamber Update:

- a. Legislative Coffee chat on Monday, 1/8 at 8am at the Village Roost. Held Gala and annual awards in early December with over 100 attendees at Farm Road Estate. Prepping for 2024 events, working on GROW grant in partnership with BiTown Marketing. Tim and I will be in Rutland on 1/11 for the launch meeting with all recipients. Member mixer at end of month.

XV. Motion to adjourn by Heidi, seconded by Bill at 8:35 am

Next meeting *February 29* (due to Town Meeting week).

Respectfully submitted,

Shannon Wheeler
Economic Development, Town of Dover