

Bi-Town Economic Development Committee
Meeting Minutes
via Zoom & Deerfield Valley Rescue
Thursday, May 2, 2024

Members present: Gretchen Havreluk, Heidi Taylor, Sarah Fisher

Members present via Zoom: Eric Durocher, Vicki Capitani, Brian Suhadolc, Bethaney LaClair

Also present via Zoom: Shannon Wheeler, Sam Kondracki

A recording of this meeting can be found here: <https://youtu.be/PPC2VtcVcq4>

Meeting called to order at 8:00 am by Chair Eric

I. Public Comments: *Welcome Sarah Fisher*

II. Additions or changes to the agenda: *None*

III. Approve minutes of January 4th meeting:

- a. Motion to approve by Vicki, seconded by Bethaney. Motion approved.

IV. Housing Committee Update:

- a. Eric: Continued discussion on creation and implementation of landlord support group. Continuing working on creation of an ADU incentive program. [Eric showed updated housing website]. Maybe going to boards in future for some funding to get the word out.
- b. Gretchen: Want to clarify we have been looking for seed money but Eric has that built into his budget but I have to go to Wilmington. Eric and I were asked to give an update at a Windham Regional Commission event on Bi-town housing

V. Marketing Committee Update:

- a. Gretchen: worked on taglines, decided to test the market on two different ones: Less Journey, More Destination and Where Vermonting Begins. Creative campaign started in market May 1 [Gretchen showed ads]. Hired a content creator for 10 hours a week. GROW funding: working on mixers for this. Working on getting an influencer to the area. Dover approved signage plan.
- b. Bethaney – clarified that the GROW program has two parts: one with BDCC that is similar to the Stay to Stay programs in past and our own funding for new resident mixers with first coming in June. Campaign ads for this began May 1. The Department of Tourism is using our ads as a test; we were the only grant recipients that put in for targeted social media advertising.

VI. Other Business:

- a. July meeting date: consensus that the following Thursday, 7/11, works.

VII. Wilmington Update:

- a. Sarah: Both school and town budgets passed. Sewer expansion passed, and we're now working through this. Zoning ordinance passed, big thing there is STR. There was a lot of participation.
- b. Gretchen: Those new zoning regulations are in effect now. STR are allowed in all districts, lodging not in residential. Permitting is needed for STR: in the Village district if you're 3 bedrooms or under the zoning administrator can do. If it's above that is has to be done by the DRB. Other districts it is 4 bedrooms.

VIII. Dover Update:

- a. Vicki: Working hard on updated Town Plan, the Board is set to approve it Tuesday. 36 hour well test done, water appears to be sufficient; it's out for PFAS testing now. Assuming it comes back good we'll move quickly getting water line up to the brick building. Almost unanimous votes on all articles but one at Town Meeting. It was packed with standing room only. School budget passed this Tuesday as well.

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- b. Eric: Horace Hill is coming to an end, last tee pad for disc golf was installed. Trail builders are finishing up their work. Signage being designed for inside and out. Anecdotally had a business owner call me that spoke with disc golf crew on the property and was blown away with how it's coming together. RFB out for annual maintenance on property. STR Ordinance draft getting finished. Working on framework for 2nd business plan competition. Incentive programs updated, DOIT opened yesterday. Rebuilt the Discover Dover website.

IX. Hermitage Club Update: *None in attendance*

X. Mount Snow Update:

- a. Brian: wrapped up season a couple of weeks ago, happy with how it went with weather challenges. Golf scheduled to open 5/17. Hoping for better weather this summer. Scenic and mountain biking opening pushed to 6/21 to replace Bluebird haul rope. June 21 or 28 is first block party. Full maintenance mode getting prepped for next season.

XI. BDCC Update: *None in attendance*

- a. Eric: A heads up that their SoVT Economy Summit is 5/21 at Mount Snow. Register if you haven't yet.

XII. Moover Update: *None in attendance*

- a. *Gretchen read update: below average ridership for winter. Started pilot program of night microtransit service in Brattleboro with BDCC grant. Submitted FY25 grant for funding.*

XIII. Chamber Update:

- a. Bethaney: Wrapped up Chili Stroll in beginning of April, great attendance with good weather. Over 300 attendees a little down but expected with the eclipse on that Monday. Working with department of tourism on their summit next week at the Grand Summit, hosting a mixer at Harriman's Wednesday. Golf tournament 6/17 at Mount Anow, Fireworks 7/5, working with Moover and Wilmington PD on traffic flow and parking, rain date of 7/6. Blueberry Festival from July 26-August 4. Parade back again and hoping to make that a little bigger, bringing back comedy night and looking at other ways on how to ramp that entire festival up. Wine and Harvest September 20/21. Hoping for 2500 attendees, last year had 2300. Working on getting more vendors and streamlining our processes. GROW grant: working really hard to meet all those requirements. Ads are going, planning new resident mixers and the stay to stay program. Sending out member newsletter this week. Membership is really strong, a lot of new smaller members coming in.

XIV. Motion to adjourn by Sarah, seconded by Bethaney at 8:44 am.

Next meeting *July 11* (due to 4th Holiday)

Respectfully submitted,

Shannon Wheeler
Economic Development, Town of Dover