

Economic Development Committee Minutes 09/19/2016

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Preliminary Meeting Minutes

Recorded by Janice Pack

September 19, 2016

Members Present: Paul Renaud, Jack Moran, Norm Nickerson, Andre Wood

Meeting Opened: 7:07 PM

Minutes: PRenaud motioned to accept the Minutes from July 18th; this was seconded by JMoran, and all were in favor.

New Business:

SWRPC did a study on the CrowdFunding platform. Greenfield is being left out of these projects. Every town in the region can have 2 planners go to the meetings, but Greenfield hasn't been participating. PRenaud said that the Town doesn't have anyone on a regional basis to attend. NNickerson said "So we have to find somebody to attend these meetings?" and PRenaud said "Yes, we can send 2 people". JMoran asked when the meetings are scheduled. PRenaud wasn't sure, but he thought there were about 4 a year, and included a dinner. People from the Monadnock Development Corporation also attend. AWood said he is tempted to step up for that. If they don't have to be the same 2 people each time, perhaps we could trade off and between the 4 members, hopefully 2 would be able to attend each meeting. The Monadnock Buy Local program may be worth looking into. That, and getting Town representation, could be beneficial to the Town. All members were interested, and liked the idea of being able to swap off and allow the members who are available to attend do so. PRenaud will find out more information.

JMoran asked what PRenaud's opinion of their mission was. PRenaud felt it was helping rural communities. – including the agricultural community. JMoran agreed; his opinion was that they are hoping to recruit local businesses as well, not just individuals.

Food and Beverage Industry operating cost study – JMoran said all of the data presented posed pretty significant positives. The biggest negative was being off the major distribution routes. The Food Safety and Modernization Act is encouraging a lot of companies to look for new places, as older existing ones are not in compliance. Water may be a benefit, as we have good quality water, but how much water could we allow to be taken before it harms the community? PRenaud wondered what we have in this town for springs, and AWood said if we were going to bring someone in here, where would we put them? Which brings us back to the topic of reviewing some of the zoning ordinances for economic development related amendments. Talk turned to the GAR Building in Peterborough which is being turned into a microbrewery – another F & B Business, just not in our town.

AWood said perhaps we should reach out to the local businesses in town and at least get them all talking to each other.

NNickerson agreed that it was a grassroots move, and AWood said we should at least pull them together, get them talking, and start thinking about increasing the economic activity. NNickerson said yes – that's what we're talking about: Recognition.

Moving to the broadband update: Scott Brooks has not returned PRenaud's call. PRenaud did get an email from Carol Miller, saying that in her travels around the state, she heard a rumor that TDS was coming into our town. She was asking PRenaud if it was true, and we can't confirm or deny right now without speaking to SBrooks.

Discussion turned to the Budget: Clerical wages were budgeted at \$500. So far we've spent \$346.16.

Budget Line Item 1 would be the Website. Line Item 2 would be the Networking/Referral Group Get-together

NNickerson felt we should put something in as a "placeholder" for our Website costs, and JMoran felt we should we should ask for \$5000 for design, and a monthly fee of about \$25/month (\$300/year) for hosting. NNickerson suggested that we budget \$1500 for the website.

The committee felt we might want to spearhead a group to try and help the Select Board identify what the Town needs in a website, what needs to be on it, the content, and where we want it to go. PRenaud mentioned that in most towns, the Chairs are able to update or modify their own pages rather than needing to go through someone else to get that done. JMoran said that he would agree that there should be area for public comment, as well as for appropriate town bodies to interact on the website. JMoran said if you're going to do it properly, you'd need to tack another zero on the appropriated figure (\$15,000 versus \$1,500). PRenaud said this would be something we'd need to go to the Select Board to see if we could investigate. NNickerson does not recall a conversation about the website budget at the Budget committee meetings.

AWood said that the thing about the website is that we want to have a presence that will drive new businesses to the town and to do that, we need to have input in our site. Having the capability to change content should actually be able to save the Town money, as opposed to having to ask someone else to change/add content (at a cost each time).

Next month we will talk more about our plan to organize the local businesses, and start a directory – maybe on the website, that could be updated quarterly. A key way to attract new businesses to our town is to show them the established businesses already

here. When we talk about selling our town, we are also selling ourselves, as tradespeople in the town. This is something that should be pursued heavily.

Next meeting will be October 17th

AWood moved to adjourn, PRenaud seconded. All were in favor.

8:39 PM Meeting Adjourned