

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Preliminary Meeting Minutes

Recorded by Janice Pack

March 29, 2018

Members Present: Kat Carpenter, Norm Nickerson, Andre Wood**Public Present:** Ray Cilley**Meeting Opened:** The meeting was called to order at 6:50 PM

Ray Cilley joined us to speak about the Bennington Rail Road. Peter Leachman has the lease to operate and has had issues with Pan Am Railways, the parent company; they are trying to stop Peter from operating the train to Milford. He currently hauls gravel from Lyndeborough to Milford. Peter is looking at passenger cars to hopefully bring them back on line, too. Ray thought we might want to reach out to the Economic Development Committees in Wilton, Lyndeborough, Bennington and Milford and offer our support. **Action Item: Janice will get contact info, and Andre will reach out to them.** Bringing the tourist trolley back could be a benefit to the Towns.

Kat mentioned the Rural Business Development Grant application which Aaron Patt had encouraged the EDAC to work on. We need to pick a subject, or focus, and then get going on this. Kat asked if anyone had written grants before; no one present had. Kat read what Aaron had written which mentions building upon the identity of the town as a recreational entity. Andre reiterated that we could use the grant money to do a survey to find out where we fit in.

Ray asked if EDAC had a budget and proceeded to speak about the video that the Coffee and Conversation Group is putting together. They have just chosen a guy in Keene to do it, and the cost will be about \$4,500. He was wondering if EDAC could participate financially. It is projected to go live in December so it will take the viewer through all four seasons. **Action Item: Kat will get a copy of the Current Budget from Catherine.**

The Minutes of February 28, 2018 were reviewed by the Committee. A motion to accept the Minutes as written was made by Kat. All were in favor except Andre who abstained (2-0-1); motion passed.

Election of Officers: There are only 3 members currently; we need to do an outreach for additional members. Norm will speak to Jack Moran and see if he might be interested in being an Alternate. Kat said she is open to changing the way the meetings are run, perhaps rotational chairing. Norm was okay with the idea of a 3-month stint for chairing, and so was Andre. We will wait to appoint a Vice Chair until we have additional members.

The Charter: Copies of the Charter were distributed, and Kat read aloud the Purpose statement. The Committee discussed several changes which could be incorporated.

Andre wanted to include a note in the Charter that we could put a vote of no confidence out there. If you see a problem, fix the problem. Kat suggested we research the legalities of that. **Action Item: Kat will do a draft revision of the Charter and forward it to all present.**

In discussing priorities, working on the grant was the first priority, and networking was second. It is hopeful that we can do a Koffee Klatch the end of May or early June. Kat asked for the permission of the Committee to go to the Select Board and ask if it will be okay for the EDAC to use student volunteers. Andre suggested that we also reach out to the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts.

The Committee discussed what time would be best for the first Koffee Klatch and Norm suggested 10:00 a.m. While Monday was thought to be a bad day to have one, Wednesday was a good choice.

The purpose is to get existing businesses together and networking.

- To introduce one to another.
- To recognize that we have at home businesses, telecommuters and storefront.
- To find out what the businesses need from one other and from EDAC; how can we help them?

Norm mentioned that the next Coffee and Conversation meeting will be held next Wednesday, April 4th at the Barbara C. Harris Center, and he would let the group know that the EDAC is looking for additional members.

The Committee reviewed the Action Items on their list to better understand what was expected of the Committee, and what was currently being working on and what needed to be done.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 3rd at 5:00 PM. We will meet with Aaron to work on the Grant. Following that we will meet on Tuesday, April 10th at 5:00 PM. As Andre and Norm both work until 5:00 they will arrive a little late.

Andre moved to adjourn the meeting; Norm seconded and all were in favor (3-0-0).

The meeting adjourned at 8:36 PM.