

**Town of Woodstock
Economic Development Commission
Special Meeting
November 17, 2016**

DRAFT MINUTES

1. Call to Order: 7:02pm.

Commissioners present: Gail Childs, Joe DiNatale, Barry Milstone, Tom Weschler, Nick Ferro, Charlie Kimbell, Keith Anderson (by phone). Absent: Matt Stover.

Members of the public: George Sadowsky, Macy Lawrence, Laura Powers, Eric (WCTV), Peter Rousmaniere, Pam (Bookstock), Beth Finlayson, Jerry Fredrickson.

2. Citizen Comments: No citizen comments.

3. Approval of Minutes. Tom Weschler moved, Joe DiNatale seconded that we approve the minutes of the meetings of 10/6, 10/12, and 11/10. The motion carried.

4. Report on construction and installation of sign in Taftsville. Gail Childs reported that the sign is finished and will be installed in the next two days (by 11/19).

5. Allocation of Funds:

After considerable discussion including the March 2015 town meeting vote, the guidelines developed by the EDC for the expense of the funds, the number of and type of requests received for funds and the desire to allocate funds where the biggest impact would be felt to accomplish the goals of the EDC, the following motions were made and approved by voice votes:

- a. Establish three distinct grant funding rounds in each calendar year to give the commission the time and ability to adequately review the merits of the requests.
 - b. From the ongoing revenues received from the 1% local options tax, approximately \$220,000 per year, establish the following guidelines for the allocation of funds:
 - i. 32%, or approximately \$70,000, to actively promote Woodstock using a professional public relations firm.
 - ii. 21%, or approximately \$46,000, to fund grant applications (see above).
 - iii. 4%, or approximately \$9,000, to cover administrative costs.
 - iv. 43%, or approximately \$95,000, to fund “big bets”, the large initiatives selected by the EDC that have the greatest potential of achieving its goals.
 - c. Allocate the balance of the unencumbered funds in the Community and Economic Development Fund as of 12/31/2016 to “big bets”.
6. Grant Funding Applications:

- a. Wireless Woodstock: George Sadowsky presented the proposal underneath the umbrella of Sustainable Woodstock. The EDC committee on Telecommunications had reviewed it prior to the meeting and submitted it for

approval. It was moved and seconded to approve the grant request of \$6,000. The motion carried by voice vote.

- b. Bookstock: Peter Rousmaniere presented the proposal underneath the umbrella of Sustainable Woodstock. Several members of the EDC questioned the specific marketing efforts the organization was going to engage in to increase attendance, as it was not detailed in the request. The services of Werner Communications, the PR Firm hired by the EDC, were offered to Bookstock, as a way to promote the event instead of allocating the funds requested.
- c. Woodstock Community Television: Laura Powers and Macy Lawrence presented the request. Members of the commission expressed their support for the organization, but questioned the applicability of the request to purchase equipment.

Charlie informed the commission that WCTV was providing production services (including videography, editing and publishing) for the PR firm's effort to promote the Woodstock Elementary School. It was moved and seconded to approve the amount of \$4,500 to pay Woodstock Community Television for its services in connection with the PR effort. The motion carried by voice vote.

- d. Awnings for Bentleys: This request was included on the agenda because no final decision had been made in the October meeting. It was moved and seconded to approve the \$4,500 request. After discussion, the motion FAILED on a voice vote.

7. Deciding on "Big Bets" ideas.

Members of the EDC volunteered to lead the following subcommittees, to present an initial plan to the EDC at the December 1st meeting:

- a. Commercial Space Ombudsman: Nick Ferro, Gail Childs.
- b. Recreational Spaces/Access: Tom Weschler.
- c. Infrastructure Improvements: Keith Anderson.
- d. Entrepreneurial Strategy: Barry Milstone, Joe DiNatale.
- e. Retention/Conversion: Charlie Kimbell

The members of the EDC recognized that these initiatives would require participation by other members of the community, similar to the structure of the Telecommunications Subcommittee.

8. EDC Membership. Charlie reported that the Selectboard in October approved the slate of EDC members that was presented, creating two vacancies for which there are currently three applicants. Nick Ferro expressed an interest in staying on through June, creating a temporary number of members of 10. The EDC will have to select a new Chairperson to start in January because of Charlie's election to the legislature. The idea of having co-chairs was discussed provided there was additional administrative support (minutes, agendas, etc...) either from the town staff or a newly created position concurrent with the Chamber of Commerce. The structure will be decided at the next meeting of the EDC.

9. Adjournment: Motion to adjourn passed by voice vote at 9:47pm.