

Woodstock Economic Development Commission

3/3/2016 Meeting
Town Hall, Woodstock, Vermont

DRAFT MINUTES

- 1) Call to order: The meeting was called to order at 7:04pm. Commissioners in attendance were Tom Weschler, Gail Childs, Nick Ferro, Joe DiNatale, Keith Anderson and Charlie Kimbell. Participating by teleconference were Matt Stover and Barry Milstone. Absent: James Zillian.
Public Attendance: Bob Wagner, Dave Brown, Beth Finlayson.
- 2) Citizen Comments
Dave Brown informed the board about the contest just launched by EC Fiber to prioritize the towns that EC Fiber will build out a fiber optic network with the proceeds of the municipal bond financing for which they have received a commitment. Many of the commissioners posed questions to Dave about the particulars of the contest.
- 3) Review Minutes of 2/4/2016 meeting. Bob Wagner was identified as the Bob mentioned in the minutes. Tom Weschler moved and Keith Anderson seconded that the minutes be approved as amended. The motion carried on a voice vote.
- 4) Updates on Existing Initiatives
 - a) RFI for Telecommunications Services.
 - i) Village Conduits: Joe and Charlie informed the board about the meeting called by Phil Swanson, Town Manager, to discuss the condition of the conduits. Two reps from Eustice Cable addressed an audience that included representatives from EC Fiber, Fairpoint and Comcast as well as the entire Selectboard. The point was to discuss the condition of the conduits and the possibility of running fiber through some empty conduits. The conclusion of the meeting was to do a comprehensive review of the conduits that would give the town an accurate picture of the condition of the existing conduits. Some takeaways:
 - (1) There are three sets of conduits running through the central business district, reserved for Fairpoint, Comcast and Green Mountain Power, separately.
 - (2) Many of the buildings in the central business district are serviced from poles located behind the main blocks of retail stores.
 - (3) Fairpoint voiced their control over their conduits and likely would not share with EC Fiber or the town.
 - (4) The condition of the conduits varies considerably, with water and mud in many of them.
 - (5) Services to individual houses and buildings from the main conduit is the responsibility of the property owner.
 - ii) Follow up meetings with TELCOs.
 - (1) Meeting with EC Fiber scheduled with the RFI Evaluation Committee (Tom Weschler, Joe DiNatale, Charlie Kimbell and Mica Seely (outside rep)) scheduled for Monday, March

7th. Meeting with Fairpoint is being scheduled, most likely March 10th. Comcast has not responded to a meeting request, nor has VTel.

b) RFP for PR Firm.

i) Keith Anderson share with the commission that he has sent the RFP to 12 firms. 5 have expressed real interest via email and telephone and would like to present their response in person. Keith is looking to schedule times when the commission can meet after March 15th when the RFPs are due.

c) Parking Study – Presentation to Village Trustees March 7th.

i) Viewing the powerpoint prepared for the meeting by Barry Milstone and Matt Stover and attached to these minutes in a separate document, the details of the recommendations were discussed and debated. Nick Ferro presented an alternative view in which the village could eliminate the meters and create employee-designated parking areas. It was moved that the report be presented to the Village Trustees on Tuesday March 8th. An amendment was offered by Tom Weschler and seconded by Matt Stover to include language that would encourage the trustees to “explore additional parking options to accommodate employees.” The amendment passed by voice vote. The motion also passed by voice vote.

d) Lead Conversion – Matt Stover said that there is nothing new to report on this topic.

5) Grant Applications

Charlie Kimbell admitted to failing to publicize the next funding round. Applications were to be submitted to the EDC in February, for review in March and presentation to the SelectBoard in April. The consensus of the board was it is necessary to invite applications now for review in April. Kimbell committed to publicizing the funding round.

6) Other Business

Beth Finlayson reported that the Chamber had incorporated the EDC’s advice in rebranding Maple Madness and showed the newly designed collateral. The Chamber has increased its advertising reach for the event in April using New England Public Radio, among others. The Commission requested that she come back to the commission after the event and report on its success, the number of visitors attracted, etc...

Chamber Liaison. Joe DiNatale attended the Chamber of Commerce board meeting in February and will continue to serve as the liaison with the EDC.

7) Motion to adjourn at 8:40pm. Approved by voice vote.