

Wolfeboro Economic Development Committee
Minutes of 01/17/23 Monthly Meeting
Great Hall, Wolfeboro Town Hall

1. Call to Order

Chairman Lucy Van Cleve called the meeting to order at 8:05 am.

Present: Chairman Lucy Van Cleve, Vice- Chair Barry Elliott, Members Kathy Fairman, and Brian Deshaies, BOS (Board of Selectmen) representative. Alternates Mary DeVries and Selectman Linda Murray, BOS alternate.

Staff Present: Planning and Development Director Tavis Austin

Absent: Members: David Maher, Liz Baker McClain, Jeremy Roberge, Carrie Duran and Jen French

Also Present: Gretchen Gandini, applicant for EDC alternate

Minutes: M. DeVries moved to approve the Minutes for 12/20/22. L. Van Cleve seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting began with a brief discussion of the loss of Hunter's Shop 'n Save, which had been destroyed by fire the previous night.

L. Van Cleve invited L. Murray to give her report on Last Night as L. Murray was going to have to leave the meeting early.

L. Murray noted that the annual Last Night Wolfeboro (a family event) held on January 31, is organized by the Economic Development Committee's (EDC) Special Events Committee, established in 2017 in response to the EDC's 2014 Business Retention and Expansion survey, where local businesses cited "more special events" as desirable for the local economy.

In addition to Murray, the Last Night Wolfeboro Committee includes volunteers Brenda Jorett and Maria Found, Town of Wolfeboro Recreation Director Christine Collins and her Program Director Molly Hatch.

L. Murray reported that:

- Committee members raised \$4979 in donations; \$2500 of which matched \$2500 paid by the Town of Wolfeboro for the Last Night Fireworks (Total \$5000.) The remaining funds covered the cost of entertainment, supplies and publicity.
- Over 1200 people attended day-time events at the Great Room/Wolfeboro Town Hall, Wolfeboro Railroad Station, Community Center and Brewster Academy's

Outdoor Skating Rink and Estabrook Hall. Fireworks at 6 pm over Wolfeboro Bay concluded the event.

- A week-long Scavenger Hunt was organized by the Boy Scouts and included local businesses which donated gift cards awarded to the Scavenger Hunt winner in a drawing of those who participated. It was very popular.
- Several non-profits participated including the Girls Scouts, Boy Scouts, GALA, Brewster Academy, and Wolfeboro Fire Department.
- The event is growing and needs more volunteers and more/larger venues.

EDC feedback was very positive: the event attracts young families and seniors; works well as a daytime event which supports local businesses. Suggestions included better signage/map (venue flags?) and longer fireworks.

L. Van Cleve asked Murray to send her the Last Night event schedule.

Discussion turned to consideration of additional Special Events as suggested at the Season Recap held in November.

B. Deshaies is working with the Mount Washington boat people on the August Laser Light/Dance event at Dockside.

K. Fairman said she is working with a group of North Main Street businesses to have an outdoor event in the La Boca Parking lot on Friday, September 8, the first Friday after Labor Day.

L. Van Cleve said she is working with Josh Cleland at Marker 21 on a Fire and Ice Festival to be held in February 2024.

K. Fairman suggested that the EDC could facilitate additional events by recruiting volunteers from businesses who participated in the Season Recap to serve on event committees.

It was agreed that it would be desirable for one EDC member to serve on each event committee.

Board of Selectmens' Report

Selectmen L. Murray and B. Deshaies reviewed some Warrant Articles which will go before the voters at the March Election and Town Meeting regarding:

- Addressing run-off into Winnepesaukee resulting in e-coli and cyanobacteria
- Restoration of the Libby Museum (Approved by BOS, Failed in Budget Committee)
- New Public Safety Building (Police and Fire Department)

- Middle School Resource Officer (SRO) for the Wolfeboro Police Department. (L. Murray and B. Deshaies shared differing opinions on this article which was approved by the BOS 4-1)

Chamber of Commerce Update

M. DeVries reported that Wolfeboro Warrant Articles will also be a topic at the Chamber of Commerce's Quarterly Meeting on March 2. Town Officials will be invited to provide information and answer questions at that time.

She also noted that the Chamber will go before the BOS on Wednesday, January 18 to request permission to again build a snowmobile trail from the Railroad Station to Cate Park connecting the Bridge Falls Path/Cotton Valley Trail with Lake Winnepesaukee, should weather conditions make it possible; this was done successfully in 2019.

She spoke to the social aspects of the loss of Hunter's; a place where community members visited as they shopped. She understood from Hunter's Manager Perry Shaw that the owner plans to rebuild the store.

Concerns were expressed about the loss of up to 70 jobs and the impact on food availability and distribution to townspeople, especially to those who do not drive or own cars.

Gretchen Gandini of Taylor Community said her business would like to know what it can do to help employees.

M. DeVries said she believed more information would be forthcoming.

L. Van Cleve asked T. Austin "What can the EDC do to address the housing shortage?"

T. Austin said the EDC could be a conduit between the town and businesses when questions or issues arise. IE Ask a company which is trying to rehabilitate or build housing: "What hurdles are you encountering?" Perhaps direct them to the proper town official.

L. DeVries said she thinks specifics about this should be included in the EDC's response to those who attended the November Recap.

Town Planner Report

T. Austin reported that the NH Department of Transportation will hold a public form on February 16 in the Great Hall on the ten-year-plan to rebuild Rte 28 (South Main Street) from Pleasant Valley Road to Pickering Corner, the town's gateway.

Discussion may include a roundabout at Pickering Corner and possible solutions to congestion at the McManus Road intersection at the Kingswood complex as well as sidewalks and green spaces along the road.

EDC Letter to Season Recap Participants

L. Van Cleve said she was working on the letter and would have something for review at the next EDC meeting.

G. Gandini suggested that a flow chart showing the steps of starting a business or navigating the building permit process might be helpful in answering questions.

K. Fairman noted that updating the “Doing Business in Wolfeboro” pamphlet that the Wolfeboro Chamber created several years ago could include this. She said it had been suggested that this might be a school project at the Technology Center and could be directed to J. French.

K. Fairman moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:40 am. B. Elliott seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

The next EDC Meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, February 21, 2023 at 8 am, Great Hall, Wolfeboro Town Hall.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy Fairman