

Wolfeboro Economic Development Committee
Minutes of 9/20/22 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 Lucv Van Cleve, Vice- Chair Barry Elliott, Members Jeremy Roberge, Kathy Fairman, Jen French and Brian Deshaies, BOS (Board of Selectmen) representative. Alternates Mary DeVries and Selectman Linda Murray, BOS alternate.

Staff Present: Planning and Economic Development Director Tavis Austin

Absent: Members: David Maher, Carrie Duran, Liz Baker McClain. Alternate
Dominic??

K. Fairman agreed to take minutes.

8/16/22 Minutes L. Murray moved the minutes be accepted. Jen French seconded and the motion passed unanimously. B. Elliott, K. Fairman, and J. Roberge abstained.

2022 Marketing Budget Chair Van Cleve noted that there is \$5814 still available in this year's marketing budget.

R. Austin and L Murray explained that the money must be spent this year and cannot be encumbered for promotion early next year as had been done in the past.

After discussion the following actions were taken:

K. Fairman moved that up to \$2000 be allocated to promoting winter tourism. Chair Van Cleve seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

M. Devries moved that up to \$1500 be allocated for promoting Business Retention and Development. K Fairman seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

B Elliott moved that \$855 be allocated for printing notepads that would be distributed as part of the EDC's Business Visitation Program. M. DeVries seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Discussion followed about various challenges facing the local businesses including open hours, closures and staffing. It was suggested that it might be helpful if businesses got together to discuss the issues, and that the EDC might be able to facilitate such a meeting.

It was agreed that November might be a good time to present such a meeting as a “Re-Cap” of the season and that a roundtable format similar to one used for the Chamber’s recent quarterly meetings might work well.

The Committee agreed to hold a special meeting on Tuesday, September 27 at 8 am in the Great Hall to move forward with this plan.

Chair Van Cleve requested that members email her talking points for the roundtable sessions prior to the 9/27 meeting.

Town Planner Report

T. Austin provide updates on proposed changes to the Town’s Inclusive Housing policy, recapped the Accessory Dwelling Forum, and Lone Wolfes’ application to keep its outdoor seating and entertainment. Some neighbors have complained about the noise.

BOS Report

Selectman L. Murray reported the following:

The Pickleball Club would like to add ten more courts and build a year-round facility on the athletic field between the Bridge Falls Path and the existing tennis/pickleball courts.

Sidewalk Repairs will begin in several sections of downtown; the Selectmen are looking to increase the sidewalk repair budget next year.

The Selectmen are watching the overall budget closely, especially fuel usage, and are underspending in other areas to compensate for cost increases that were unanticipated when the budget was set.

New cost estimates for the Libby Museum project have been requested and the BOS is continuing work with the Friends of the Libby to transfer the management of the Museum from the Town to the Friends.

The 2021 Audit is complete and was “clean.”

Chamber of Commerce Report

Chamber Director M. DeVries reported the following:

The Taylor Community held a reception at its newly completed Fitness Center. The plan is that it will offer public memberships but are waiting until they see what the usage will be by its residents.

(T. Austin noted the Taylor Community told the Planning Board that the facility would not be open to the public.)

M. DeVries also reported that the Chamber's September Quarterly Meeting was held at the Makers Mill, Bay Street Sponsored by Putnam, and that in keeping with its efforts to promote activities outside July and August, the Chamber will again sponsor its Christmas Event beginning with the Christmas Parade on Saturday, November 26.

Other Business

K. Fairman, owner of the Wolfeboro Trolley Compony requested a few minutes at the EDC's October meeting to report on its new Park 'N Ride Trolley Shuttle service this last summer.

Chair Van Cleve will include it on the agenda.

K Fairman made a motion to adjourn at 9:35 am; B. Elliott seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Fairman

D. Maher asked L. Murray about the process to fill member and alternate vacancies. She explained that the openings must be noticed (advertised) and then applicants are reviewed and appointed by the Board of Selectmen. Existing alternates must reapply to be appointed as members. They can do that through Amy Capone Muccio in the Town Manager's Office.

Approval of Minutes

K. Fairman moved to amend the November 16, 2021 EDC Meeting Minutes to include the following under "Planning Director Update:"

"T. Austin reported on upcoming agenda items for the Wolfeboro Planning Board including Taylor Home expansion plans and discussion about residential density in the CBD (Central Business District) and Pine Hill zones."

And to correct in the last paragraph "Liz McClain" to "Liz Baker McClain."

L. Van Cleeve moved to approve the 11/16/21 EDC Minutes as amended. B. Elliot seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

BOS Updates

L. Murray reported that First Night (an EDC sponsored event) would be going forward in-person. She reviewed the schedule, including Fireworks at 6 pm: \$2500 paid for by the Town of Wolfeboro and \$2500 by donations from local businesses.

Proposed 2022 Warrant Articles are expected to be finalized at the January 5, 2022 BOS meeting including those pertaining to bond issues such as the Commercial Docks and Dockside Parking area.

She suggested the EDC may want to take a position on plans to repair and/or expand sidewalks. A CRF (Capital Reserve Fund) had been established a few years ago for construction of sidewalks on Bay Street. A new CRF has been proposed to fund only repairs to existing sidewalks. "I think we need to find a balance here," she said.

B. Elliott expressed concern with spending town money for outside engineering consultants when the town has someone on staff, Public Works Director Dave Ford, who can do it. He cited the proposed Warrant Article for \$125,000 for engineering at the Pop Warner facility as an example.

L. Murray agreed and explained that last year the BOS proposed hiring a separate PWD to manage the DPW, so Ford could focus on projects like this and others like grant applications. However, the Budget Committee did not support the new position and it failed to pass with the voters

Chair Maher asked what subjects the EDC should address in its upcoming report to the BOS

T. Austin suggested waiting until the Warrant Articles are finalized before commenting on this year's proposals.

T. Austin, L Murray and Selectman B. Deshaies explained that the process starts in the fall when the CIP (Capital Improvements Committee) meets and departments heads begin submitting their budgets.

C. Duran asked if Tavis could provide the EDC with a calendar "sort of Town Civics 101."

Planning Director Updates

T. Austin reported there is planning board discussion about increasing the residential density allowed in the downtown core. He has concerns about the impact on the town sewer system; ie, he said the current proposed warrant articles to upgrade pumping stations only provide for the existing density, not for expansion.

L. Murray said an analysis of the town's water and sewer system is necessary before increasing density.

B. Deshaies added that the public doesn't understand a lot of these things.

M. DeVries suggested that the town's cable TV station, WCTV is good for getting information to the public and that the EDC could use that throughout the year.

Marketing Budget/ Work in Wolfeboro

C. Duran reported on recommendations approved by the Marketing Committee at its December 12, 2021 meeting.

The committee supports a marketing effort to attract workers living within commuting range of Wolfeboro, (up to an hour.) to help ease a shortage of workers brought about in part by a lack of workforce housing.

C.Duran moved that the EDC expend up to \$1000 from the 2021 Budget for winter advertising in **The Laker** to be used to promote winter day trips to Wolfeboro and "Work in Wolfeboro." L. Van Cleeve seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

C. Duran moved that EDC expend up to \$500 from the 2021 Budget for advertising on WASR Radio. M. DeVries seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

D. Maher said he and K. Fairman met with a local digital agency called MoxDog to discuss creating a free "Help-Wanted" on-line listing service that could be used by

Wolfeboro businesses. MoxDog is currently partnering with WEDCO (Wentworth Economic Development Corporation) with a special offer for digital service.

He explained that this would be a pilot program with the goal to help Wolfeboro businesses reach fulltime/part time, year-round/seasonal employees who live within commuting distance, promoting Wolfeboro as a desirable place to work.

There would be no charge to Wolfeboro businesses to advertise, however he suggested the EDC could also offer paid sponsorships to businesses where their business logos would be included on the website as sponsors along with the Town of Wolfeboro. This could help pay for promoting the site.

D. Maher moved that the EDC approve the expenditure of \$3000 with MoxDog for the program with \$1500 coming from EDC 2021 Marketing finds and \$1500 from 2022 Marketing funds. K. Fairman seconded the motion.

T. Austin and L. Murray indicated that the proposal should be reviewed by the Town Attorney to be sure it is an appropriate expenditure of town funds.

D. Maher said he doesn't view it as any different than placing a print ad to promote tourism.

The motion was approved unanimously, pending review by the Town Attorney.

T. Austin pointed out that all signed contracts allocating 2021 funds had to be in his office by the end of the following day, December 21, 2021.

Other Business

K. Fairman suggested that the EDC should compile and conclude its 2021 business survey, however, the Committee has lost its chair and administrative assistant.

B. Elliot made a motion to adjourn at 9:24, L. Van Cleeve seconded, and it passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Fairman, Member