

Town of Washington  
Economic Development Committee  
February 15, 2022- **Minutes**

Minutes are subject to approval of the Economic Development Committee

Members Present: Jim Brinton, Dan Sherr, Fran Keilty, Robyn Gray, Kristen Atlas (late), Trisha McMahon

Public: Jay Hubelbank, Leslie Anderson, Joan Lodsins, Chris Charles, Margaret Ferguson

Michelle Gorra- Economic and Community Development Coordinator

1. Call to order- 3:05
2. Report on activities of Economic and Community Development Coordinator-
  - 7 letters sent to new homeowners in January
  - Newsletter deadline is now for the Spring 2022 issue. Shaping up nicely
  - Jay Hubelbank is looking into bringing WiFi to the New Preston commercial area. He will keep us posted.
  - The Community Center fundraising committee has been meeting.
  - The architects are working on the estimate for the Child Care program. Hoping to have it completed by March for inclusion in the Town Capital Plan.
  - There was a Washington Resiliency workshop last week. 15 people including Michelle, Wayne, Jim and Jay. Some of the priorities that came out of the meeting line up with what the EDC is working on, including town communications, the Community Center and affordable housing.
  - The CT Dept of Revenue will be administering the Federal infrastructure money the state received and small towns are encouraged to apply. We are hoping the Titus sidewalk and parking project will be eligible.
  - The sidewalk project for New Preston is on the schedule for the spring. The contractor was able to get the curbing that held up the project in the fall.
  - Working with Julie King to update the housing presentation NOW did in 2019 to reflect the impact of COVID. Hoping to be ready in March.
  - SandorMax will present the metrics for explore and all social media in April.
  - Flemming's Hidden Valley Restaurant should be opening in March. It will be lunch and dinner. Several regional health departments are merging and we will now be part of the Housatonic Valley Health Department. We have a new sanitarian.
3. Old Business
  - a. Review, discuss and vote on WEDC plan and budget for 2022-23.

There was much discussion regarding the priorities of the nine objectives outlined in the 2022-23 plan. Fran pointed out that some of the objectives have someone else in the lead. Trisha suggested we prioritize by primary responsibility. Robyn suggested we prioritize by items we feel we "must have" versus "would be nice" or "if possible".

Jay suggested we use a format similar to Tim Cole's review of the POCD that indicates which commission has primary and/or secondary responsibility. Michelle will take these comments and suggestions and come back to the committee next month with an attempt to incorporate these ideas.

A motion to approve the budget component of the plan was made by Kristen and seconded by Dan. All voted in favor.

- b. Guide book update- Fran reported that contact has been made with all of the suggested businesses that might be interested in printing guide books with their logo on the back. Several have committed and we are waiting to hear from a few more. It looks like our goal of 2,500 copies will be met. The edits are wrapping up and layout should start in the next week or two. The committee discussed the opening welcome letter in the guide book and it was decided that it should be from the WBA and the Town of Washington without names so as not to date the book.
  - c. Welcome Center- Michelle reported that the Buildings and Property committee would like to make sure we are honoring our veterans in the Legion Hall improvements. Julia Nable and Stephen Bartkus, designers of the current exhibit at the Gunn Museum (Washington Connecticut- An American Story), will assist. The Buildings and Property Committee will put together estimates for cleaning, painting and repairing. The EDC will work on a proposal for signage inside and out. We will also research a water bottle filler. Jim looked into the septic and it has capacity for use of the public restrooms.
- 4. Motion: To approve the WEDC minutes of January 18, 2022, by Dan Sherr seconded by Kristen Atlas. All voted in favor.
  - 5. Report of WBA & Selectmen – nothing to add.
  - 6. Visitors- no comments
  - 7. Adjourn 4:30

Respectfully Submitted

Michelle Gorra

<https://youtu.be/k1RZzlh4YOs>

Link to recording of meeting