

TOWN OF WASHINGTON

Washington Economic Development Committee

Tuesday November 16, 2021, 3:00pm in person and virtual

Minutes are subject to approval of the Economic Development Committee

Members Present -Daniel Sherr, Fran Keilty, Wayne Hileman, Jeffery Miller

Public: Chris Charles, Joan Lodsinn

Michelle Gorra- Economic and Community Development Coordinator

1. **Call to Order:** Michelle Gorra called the meeting to order at 3:02
2. Due to a lack of quorum the approval of the minutes of Oct. 19 2021 will be moved to the next agenda.
3. **Report on Activities of Economic and Community Development Coordinator**
 - Phil Markert has asked to resign. He has enjoyed his time and supports the energy and direction we are moving but is unable to attend at this time. The WEDC thanks him for his many years of service and great ideas.
 - Affordable Housing Plan- Board of Selectmen passed on October 28. The plan is posted on the website and will be distributed. The Housing Commission and the Board of Selectmen will now start the work of the plan which Michelle will assist with.
 - Sustainable CT- Washington was certified with Bronze status as a sustainable community by Sustainability CT. The committee is discussing next steps and big picture items. Michelle will look at the thriving economies section to see what next steps might be appropriate for the WEDC.
 - New Home Owners mailing. Only 3 home sales in October. Letters sent.
 - The winter Newsletter is in layout for distribution to mailboxes the first week of December. We had great participation from the non-profits and town government. Thanks to Dan for continuing to write several articles each issue.
 - Holiday in the Depot set for Dec. 10th. The WBA and Parks and Rec are working on an event that will be more like the event in years past but with Covid precautions in place and more activities outside.
 - Depot Lights- there is a plan in place to relight the original trees and light a few more however there has been a delay on the shipping of the new lights. We will have to wait to see if they come in.
 - Child Care- have a proposal to do a feasibility study and design but need to get money released to get it started. Joan asked about capacity. Preliminary plan we can have about 35 children year-round with an additional 17 in the summer.
 - Community Center- Jim put out a call for volunteers and has had 15 people respond. The fund raising should get started soon. It will be publicly as privately funded. The split has not yet been determined. Wayne asked about operating expenses. The intend is to have a design the uses very low energy. The programming will come partly from existing personnel with some additional.
4. **New Business-**
 - a. **Passport update-**

We have a proposal from SandorMax to update the Washington Guidebook. The EDC previously determined that due to businesses that have changed as well as the new services directory an update is necessary. We would need to add additional pages. The committee agreed that we should go ahead with the project in partnership with the WBA. There was strong feeling about the importance of the guidebook. The EDC wants to make sure the printing and paper quality is the same as last time.
 - b. **Calendar for 2022-** moved to next meeting

5. Old Business

- a. Kiosk-We did have a local artist come forward to work on the design. We also received some letters from the community with concerns about the need for the kiosk. Jim felt some of the concern was the location on the Town Hall side lawn. The committee agreed that we would prefer a location with greater foot traffic. Michelle also mentioned the idea of making more of a welcome center at the current Senior Center where we have the public bathrooms. Dan felt the grassy space between 5 Janes and the Market would be better. Dan also reminded us that the intent of explore was to be an electronic bulletin board, never becoming out of date. Maybe our “kiosk” should really point people back to explore. We will think some more about what exactly we would like to do and where.

6. Report of WBA & Selectmen on items not on the agenda.

Michelle reported back on some of the questions from last meeting. The career coordinator at Shepaug has left. Job postings can be sent to Michael Boucher, Head of Guidance, boucherm@region-12.org, and Kerry Schur, Guidance Admin, schurk@region012.org. The guidance department will also ask about the possibility of students taking the bus down to the Depot for jobs.

Fran reported that the WBA board was meeting the next day and she would report back on Holiday in the Depot and the Passport.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Gorra
Economic and Community Development Coordinator

<https://youtu.be/NLvgnNkPZOU>