

TOWN OF WASHINGTON

Washington Economic Development Committee

Tuesday, February 20, 2024

Minutes are subject to approval of the Economic Development Committee

Members Present: Jim Brinton, Wayne Hileman, Lisa Stein, Robyn Gray, Kristen Atlas, Trisha McMahon, Rudy Montgelas, Liz Fenton

Staff: Michelle Gorra- Economic and Community Development Coordinator

Guest- Michael Ferreira, Ann Jamieson (Voices)

1. Call to Order- Michelle called the meeting to order at 3:01 PM

2. Approval of minutes of January 16, 2024 - Trisha made a motion to approve the minutes seconded by Liz, all voted in favor.

3. Report on activities of Economic and Community Development Coordinator

- a. **New home owner mailings-** a few months behind- 4 home sales in January. We now have 1,586 address on the Selectmen's email list. Up over 200 since the tax mailing.
- b. **Newsletter** - Currently in production, will be in mailboxes for March 1st.
- c. **Arts Council-** Continues to meet, and set goals for the whole year. Met with the selectman to present the budget request- and the feedback was good.
- d. **Affordable Housing-** continuing to do their outreach with communications also met with the selectman for the budget request, significant capital request for this year, to go to the affordable housing fund. It's important we support this request.
- e. **Sustainability-** committee has decided to renew our bronze certifications, and will need to update our communications plan. They're making a goal of putting out an earth day newsletter.
- f. **CEDS** - comprehensive economic development strategy for the northwest corner though the COG, -There is a public comment meeting that Michelle emailed with the document to all the members. Michelle asked the members to review that email, or if you are free tomorrow to attend the zoom meeting that would be great.

4. Old Business

- a. **Budget Request-** met with Selectman for our budget request, asked for money to be put into for the sidewalks (capital portion) Wayne H. Mentioned fiber is currently being strung throughout the town, Frontier is putting full fiber to the home.
- b. **Sidewalk project-** We will continue to develop plans while we wait for the next round of grants.

5. New Business

Restaurant week - a small committee has been formed, Michelle, Victoria and Zoe (owner of The Pantry) put together an action plan and try to pick a date. Michael wanted to share a few things regarding this, He has done 6 other restaurant weeks in different towns. He owns and operates Southbury.co, He started a new website "Litchfield.Co" with the concept of showing people places to eat in the area, events happening etc. He mentioned the thought of a giveaway, if a customer takes a picture of their receipt from Restaurant Week and submits to the Litchfield.co they'll be the drawing to

win a prize. Robyn G. mentioned a way to marry the two ideas of Restaurant week and incorporating the art, we could place art at different restaurants and people could vote on their favorite artwork, and the artist with the highest vote would receive a prize. Michael shared his screen with the committee showing where they are planning on promoting the Restaurant week on the Litchfield.co Website. Michelle shared the proposal for all of this, flyers, ads, website total \$1,800. The hope is for the Arts Council, WBA and the EDC to split the costs of this. Michelle would like to start the EDC with this and get approval for \$600. **Wayne made the motion to approve the \$600, seconded by Rudy M. all voted in favor of this motion.**

6. Report of WBA & Selectmen on items not on the agenda- annual meeting is tomorrow, anyone who is a member of the WBA is allowed to go. Trisha will be at the meeting and will report back to the committee with any reports. Jim B. Has been busy with budget requests.

7. Visitors

8. Adjournment-motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:13 Pm made by Trisha M, all in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,
Amanda Reale
Selectman's Assistant

Recording : <https://youtu.be/DINXLDvyyhg>