

## Minutes, Bucksport Economic Development Committee – September 20, 2016

*Attending: Paul Rabs, Peter Stewart, Andy Lacher, Linda Plourde, John Wardwell, Mark Eastman, Frank Dunbar, Daphne Eyerer, Larry Wahl, John Paul LaLonde, Jeff Hammond and Rich Rotella.*

Paul Rabs called the meeting to order at 5:02pm. June minutes were reviewed and the minutes were accepted by Frank Dunbar and seconded by Mark Eastman.

**Economic Development Director Update:** Rich updated the group on the Small Business Essential Series in Bucksport. The first of 5 sessions was being held September 20, 2016 @ 6pm in the Jewett School. The event is put on by SBDC and sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce. Paul asked about the number of registrants. Rich said the person he has been in contact with is out of the office until next Monday. Linda asked if we had any feedback in regards to the sessions. Rich said he has heard from 1 person who he has been working with for the last 3 months that will be attending the event. (Update 26 out of the maximum 30 people attended the event). Rich updated the group on an advertising conference with Tom Ray that he attended at Husson University. Rich said the BEDC talked about marketing/advertising a couple of months ago and agreed then wasn't the right time. He explained that he had 2 follow up sessions with Phil from Tom's office who interviewed Rich, viewed the Town's website and looked at the last 3 commercials the Town did. WLBZ came up with a package for online advertising where they would film (3) 2 minute videos every 4 months that could then be uploaded to different sights on the internet including, Facebook, You Tube Channels, etc at a cost of \$4,995. Peter asked if there were other Towns who did this same project. Rich said no this was part of a mutual partnership with the advertising company and WLBZ. Linda said it is important that the right message is being sent. Peter asked if money would come from TIF... Rich said he spoke to Sue and it would come from Reserve Funds. Peter made a motion to approve to council, seconded by Daphne. Unanimous vote to approve.

**Heart & Soul Update:** Rich updated the group that Heart & Soul had 2 more block parties. One held in August at Jewett School in which Guns & Hoses served over 200 combined hot dogs & burger meals. The second one was a pot luck at the Rod & Gun Club. The people really enjoyed having people going door to door handing out flyers for the invite. The next one will be October 16 @ 4pm at the Golf Course. The next Heart & Soul meeting is September 21, 2016 at the H&S Headquarters at 6pm with our advisor Jane Lafleur.

**NEDA Conference Update:** Rich attended the conference Sept 11-13<sup>th</sup> in New Haven, CT and the conference was centered around transportation. Rich made some new connections while at the conference and took back some materials that could assist Bucksport.

**RSU 25 Update:** Rich said that RSU 25 got soccer score board sponsorship in the amount of \$5,000 from Seaboard Federal Credit Union and a \$5,000 sponsorship for the football score board through Camden National Bank. Also, Evelyn Beaulieu applied for and received a \$25,000 grant from the Stephen & Tabitha King Foundation that will be geared towards Bucksport Middle School. \$20,000 will go to books for each middle school student so that they each receive up to 4 books to be purchased at the local book store, Bookstacks. Andy said that translates into \$26,666 as he gives a discount. The remaining \$5,000 will go towards bringing in get speakers and lecturers.

**Leadbetter Superstore Update:** Rich said the Planning Board approved the permit with groundbreaking to be at the end of October beginning of November. Jeff will also be having the

propane tank down at Harborview removed so the town will get that piece of land back from the easement. Jeff Hammond said that this project will displace a local food vendor and he was wondering if there was any discussion on where he would end up.

**Lighthouse Arts Center Update:** Kathryn has been holding classes at her house since the building isn't ready as of yet. The Grand Opening is slated for October 14<sup>th</sup> in the downstairs learning area as the upstairs won't be completed.

**Chamber Golf Tournament:** Gotoberfest is slated for Saturday, October 1<sup>st</sup> @ 1pm at Searsport Pines Golf Course. There were 4 teams signed up to participate.

**Heritage Park Sign Update:** Rich handed out photos of what the sign looks like in its current condition. The quote came in at \$4200 posts to be painted and sandblasted \$1600 for total \$5800. Rich also sent out a photo that Larry designed for a new sign. The 3<sup>rd</sup> design was drafted by Banner City Graphics. Linda Plourde asked if the sign would be lit. Rich said that it currently is not lit. The group decided they would like to get quotes on the design Larry created.

**Terra Law:** Terra said this is a projection mapping project. Previously she was involved with standpipe and it was covered in 360 degrees projection. Would like to do popup projections on our buildings downtown. She will be doing projection on a sailboat in Belfast Harbor on October 6<sup>th</sup>. Chamber of Commerce has agreed to let her use their building for office space and projection. The group thought it was a good idea to move forward with her project. Peter made a motion to approve the support for Terra Law and her project and John Wardwell seconded the motion. The group voted in favor to support her project.

**Code Enforcement Officer Update:** Jeff said planning board met and they approved Leadbetter's Superstore and the Catholic Cemetery expansion. They reviewed expansion for Evergreen Recycling at 65 Heritage Park. There were 2 proposed amendments to Appendix K but those weren't discussed because the meeting had already gone on too long, so these amendments will be on the next meeting's agenda. The owner of 184 Main St (the former lumberyard) he has 1 business moving in that has a permit. Mr. Nichols is planning on offering office space for other parties interested in his building. The Friars have informed Jeff on moving their brewery to the old Qwik Stop. Wilson Hall has been shown to other contractors but is too much to move forward. Jeff has talked to Sue about property to save it... It is stabilized but not saved because roof is still leaking. Sue suggested to bring to Town Council for vote to put out RFP for another developer. Jeff thinks the building will continue to deteriorate unless the roof is fixed and that is more than a tarp put on it. The Lighthouse Arts Center has done a great job on the back of the building with a new railing and walkway. Picnic Point project is completed and came out well. Jeff working on changes to Chapter 6 of Ordinances and has met with Ordinance Committee. There are licenses the states says we need to have that aren't there and there are some that don't need to be there that should be taken out of the ordinance. Jeff says there will be substantial changes to Chapter 6. He believes it will make it easier to administer by making these changes. He is half way through and hopes to have something for the Ordinance Committee in October. Paul asked what the differences would be. Jeff said any new license must go to Town Council and any renewals to go to town clerk. John Paul thinks we need to target someone philanthropically to save the building because it would take a lot of money to save the building. Linda asked if there was list of people who graduated from that school because maybe someone has a real attachment to the building or may have money to save the building as it was a school until 1931. The Oblates ran it for another 40+ years.

**New Business:** None

**Old Business:** John Paul said that he left town one day and the streets and curbs were lined with weeds, he noticed public works started working on it but would like to not see it get to that place again.

Peter said it came about during the walking tour with the town manager, councilors and citizens. Paul said the sidewalks were being replaced too. Linda Plourde asked if we could talk to Jeff Leadbetter about the hours and closing of the Harborview Restaurant. Paul said they are closing the end of October. Larry said the issue he heard was that like other businesses in town, they were having a hard time retaining and hiring staff. Peter said should be answer coming within couple of weeks from board of trustees with MMA with a nay/yay go forward with survival institute at mill site. They are still looking at that site and other sites but the consultants said it looks like the best spot to put it. It is in board of trustees' hands and waiting for consultants' final decision. Peter said it's a \$20 million some odd infusion put into the town because you will have places in town saying I'm going to need to stay open throughout the year because there will be 2000-3000 people saying we need somewhere to eat and sleep. Peter is optimistic he has seen the plans and numbers and what things are looking like. They know the Academy can't go grow anymore in Castine. The way the economy is they can't increase tuition because kids will go elsewhere because parents won't be able to afford tuition rates. They have to look for another revenue stream and that is where the whole idea about coming up with this institute came from. Talking about a couple of million dollar in revenue will cover the shortfall they seem to have every year down there. The need is there and the Coast Guard said mariners need to be recertified every 5 years and there is nowhere on the East Coast from NY north we will be the only place. The fear is that if they don't do it soon someone in Massachusetts will pick it up in a hurry. Because everyone is seeing the same thing that they are seeing which is an absolute cash cow waiting to happen. The question the board is pondering is "Is the Bucksport/Bangor area enough for people to want to come here?" The answer is no matter where it's at people have to go whether it is Bucksport, Portland, or Boston they are going to come. One thing they are looking for are amenities they want a nice place to eat, a nice place to stay, and a nice place to do things. The President of the Academy is behind the AIM site. Peter said there are 12 people on the board and there is some resistance because it's not in Southern Maine, but this is the cheapest alternative. The Coast Guard requirement goes into effect January 1, 2018. If they were to purchase AIM site they would be on the waterfront, use EDC building and other existing structures... John Wardwell asked if there was an MOU between MMA and AIM and Peter said no. Peter believes there should be an answer by October 1, 2016. John Paul made a motion to have a letter drafted by Sue & Rich send to the President and the board at MMA, Linda Plourde seconded it. It was unanimously voted in favor of having the letter drafted and expedited. Peter said that all board meetings are open to the public.

**Adjournment:** Peter made the motion at 6:32pm and it was seconded by Mark.

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Submitted by Rich Rotella

***Next BEDC Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 3rd @ 5:00 pm  
Council Chambers at the Town Office!***