

Lanesborough Economic Development Committee
February 27, 2020 – Newton Memorial Town Hall, Lanesborough MA
Minutes

Present: Barb Hassan, Chairperson. Members: Kevin Towle, Tom Voisin, Pat Hubbard and Laura Brennan, a Representative from Berkshire Regional Planning Commission. Absent: David Vogel

The meeting was called to order by Barb Hassan at 5:34pm.

A motion to accept the minutes of the December 11, 2019 meeting was made by Kevn Towle. Seconded by Tom Voisin. Motion passed.

The status of agenda items from the December 19, 2019 were reviewed.

Discussion on Next B2B Event

SkiFanatics ultimately declined the opportunity to host a B2B winter event stating that “They were just too busy at this time of the year”. They would be interested at another time of year but indicated that their store is too small to hold any sizable group so suggested that they might contact Olde Forge to see if they could co-host an event in the future. A golf course was suggested as a possible spring location for the next B2B event. Squaw Peak, a travel agency that just moved from Pittsfield to the Adams Community Bank Plaza was suggested as a possible future B2B venue by Pat Hubbard.

This discussion led to a conversation about events held in other towns that attract tourists and notoriety. Tom commented that there are so many outdoor recreational opportunities in Lanesborough that this community should have an annual event that everyone looks forward to each year. Perhaps an event that would lead to the creation of a foot bridge over Constitution Hill. The event could be titled” Build a Bridge to a Higher Road”. The town could apply for a Mass Trails grant and/or an entrance fee could be charged. As a possible example, Pat Hubbard told the group that she and her husband had talked about having their campground host a bicycling event called Tour De Greylock. Their vision was to set up a bicycling route through the communities that are at the base of Mount Greylock. This 44-mile ride would have two rest areas and a lunch stop in one of the communities. Members agreed to continue to discuss the possibility of having LEDC host this event to showcase Lanesborough and the advantages of doing business in this community.

Pat Hubbard suggested developing a specific procedure for welcoming new businesses to Lanesborough that could include a visit from LEDC members, press release, photos and other recognition. Barb recommended adding this topic to a future agenda.

Discussion of Status of FY21 Budget

Barb presented a proposed budget for LEDC that if agreed upon, the LEDC would submit a \$3,700 request for funding from the Town of Lanesborough in the 2020 budget that begin on July 1, 2020. She asked for a vote. Tom made the motion to approve and Pat seconded the motion. Members unanimously voted to request \$3,700 to support LEDC activities in the next fiscal year as follows: 2020 LEDC Budget Request: \$3200 rack card printing and distribution (12,500 pieces, plus distribution) \$200 professional development for LEDC members, and \$300 postage for B2B events for a total of \$3700.

Social Media

Regarding Google advertising, Barb will call her computer tech, Ron Bryant, regarding S.E.O. work for us. She would like to see a landing page on outdoor recreation on the Lanesborough Town website.

LEDC members requested that the town funds designated for print media be reallocated to a digital marketing campaign that would replace the printed rack cards used in the past.

Department of Housing and Community Development Biennial Update Request from the Commonwealth of MA Pertaining to Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI)

Barb reported that although LEDC has does not have a role in the creation or sustaining of low or moderate income housing, these housing resources or lack of resources have a direct impact on the economic development or lack thereof, in our community. If low income residents cannot find or afford housing, those jobs go unfilled and businesses may be reluctant to locate or expand their businesses in the Lanesborough community.

The Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI) is reviewed and updated by municipalities in Massachusetts every two years. The SHI is used by Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) to compile percentages of low and moderate income housing for the purposes of Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40B. The current report is sent to Town Managers, Board of Zoning Appeals and Planning Departments/Directors for their review. Submission of changes, additions or deletions should be received by the state before February 24, 2020.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 26, 2020 at 5:30pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:50pm.

Respectfully Submitted by
Patricia Hubbard, Recording Secretary