

Lanesborough Economic Development Committee
February 3, 2021 – Held remotely by ZOOM due to COVID-19 Pandemic
Minutes

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

- 1). Meeting was Called to Order at 5:20pm.
- 2). The minutes of the January 6, 2021 meeting were reviewed. A motion was made by Tom Voisin and seconded by Kevin Towle to approve the minutes as amended. The minutes of the January 27, 2021 meeting were reviewed. A motion was made by Tom and seconded by Pat Hubbard to approve the minutes as amended. Both motions passed unanimously.
- 3.) Review Status of Agenda Items from January 6, 2021.
Barb Hassan noted that all the agenda items from the last meeting were continued on this agenda which eliminated the need to review agenda items at this time.
- 4). Lanesborough Business Handbook
Pat presented the draft outline of the proposed Lanesborough Business Handbook. Barb made the suggestion that the opening paragraph include three options. She proposed the following, “because you are opening a new business or because you are moving an existing business to Town or because you have purchased a business in Town”. She indicated that she wanted to include the option of moving a business to Town because Lanesborough has the advantage of the single tax rate which is not available in other communities.

As agreed, Laura Brennan met with Kelli Robbins to talk about the development of this handbook and she reported that Kelli felt the booklet would be useful to business owners and town employees working to support the efforts of businesses. Kelli proposed creating two documents, one that is very user friendly for the general public and one that is comprehensive for the staff. Kelli agreed to allow Laura to use staff time to support this effort. Laura suggested that she meet with Pat and that they develop a plan for the two documents and then give interested committee members the opportunity to write sections of the documents at the next meeting. Pat agreed and will contact Laura to arrange a conference call.
- 5). PACE Community Update
Laura arranged a meeting between Kelli Robbins and Julie Cowan from Mass Development. The Select Board must agree to have Lanesborough become a PACE Community because the financing goes through the Town accounts. This designation would allow property owners to make clean energy upgrades. Kelli supported the idea but was unclear about how to move forward as Lanesborough is an uncharted town. The proposal may have to wait for a vote at the next Town Meeting. Laura agreed to make a presentation on the benefits of being a PACE community for the members of the Select Board. Barb supported this effort as it will grow the tax base, help businesses and improve the environment.
- 6). Tour De Greylock
As agreed, Pat presented a proposed logo for the event. The group liked the logo but wanted Pat to ask Amanda from Beck’s Printing to add additional cyclists that included silhouettes that reflect families, women, children, men and varying sizes/types of bicycles.

The committee again discussed the viability of actually hosting this event this year given the COVID restrictions. Tom Voisin asked about the maximum participation that would be allowed. Pat indicated she thought 100 cyclists would be the maximum number. Tom asked what would happen if 500 registered. Barb reminded the group that we could cap registration at 100, if we chose too. Tom asked about whether Laston Park was the beginning and terminal end of the tour. Pat indicated that everyone had agreed that started the tour and having the ending celebration at a Town facility was important. Tom expressed concern about not having enough parking for 100 cars so Barb indicated that the new owners of Vacation Village could be asked about using their facility.

Pat agreed to establish a “to do” timeline for the event for the purpose of determining the last possible date that the decision can be made to actually hold the event in 2021 or to begin planning for 2022.

Kevin asked whether the billboard on the driveway from the former drive-in movie theatre could be utilized to advertise this event and potentially other events in Town. Barb indicated that she thought that renovating that deteriorated sign and putting Town announcements on it was a good idea. Accomplishing this would mean that there would be two community information signs in Lanesborough: one at the south end of Town at the Firehouse and the other at the north end of Town at the former drive-in specifically designated for outdoor recreation ads.

Pat agreed to update the current Chair of the Town Recreation Committee about Tour De Greylock and to ask for their support. In addition, she agreed to contact the Department of Public Works to assess the feasibility of refurbishing the existing billboard. The committee members agreed that the 2021 marketing budget might be used to help with the expense of these repairs.

Laura asked about our plans to use the marketing budget for digital ads that would promote general outdoor recreation in Lanesborough. The committee agreed to have Laura contact graphic designers she knows to ask them about prices for designing three different ads, i.e. hiking, boating/fishing, Tour De Greylock. Kevin indicated that he did not think that the digital ads were going to be too expensive. Marketing funds must be spent by June 30, 2021.

- 7). Next Meeting
Wednesday, March 3, 2021 at 5:15pm.
- 8). Adjournment
The motion to adjourn was made by Tom and seconded by Kevin. Members unanimously agreed. The meeting was adjourned at 6:35pm.

Respectfully Submitted
Patricia Hubbard, Recording Secretary