

Lanesborough Economic Development Committee
August 18, 2022 – Newton Memorial Town Hall, Lanesborough MA
Minutes

Present: Barb Hassan, Chairperson. Members: Tom Voisin, Pat Hubbard, and newly appointed member, George Keller, Laura Brennan, representative from Berkshire Regional Planning Commission
Absent: Kevin Towle Guest: Sabrina Damms from iber-shires.com

The meeting was called to order by Barb Hassan, Chairperson, at 5:00pm.

Members introduced themselves to new member, George Keller and welcomed him to the committee.

Update on LEDC Reappointment

LEDC members were reappointed by the Select Board on August 8, 2022. Select Board member Michael Murphy continued to question to role and responsibilities of this committee.

This special LEDC meeting was called so that members could hear the results of the meeting scheduled between Josh Lang, Town Administrator, Pat Hubbard and Tom Voisin. They met to discuss the future of LEDC, from his perspective, and based on the conversation held at the Select Board.

Pat made a motion to cancel Tour de Greylock based on the uncertainty of the future of the LEDC and a conversation held with Charlie Durfee about the coordination of services that need to happen with the Emergency Management personnel in each town. Tom seconded the motion, and the committee unanimously decided to cancel the event. Laura Brennan agreed to post the cancellation on the event Facebook page, to notify bikereg.com, make arrangements for participant refunds and to gather a list of participants so that Pat could send a personal word of thanks for their support of the event.

Tom provided a summary of the conversation held with Josh Lang. Josh had met with Select Board member Michael Murphy about his concerns about the role and responsibilities of the LEDC. Mr. Murphy indicated to Mr. Lang that he felt that the LEDC had taken on the role of a traditional Chamber of Commerce and was not focusing on what he thought were the essential activities of finding and writing grants and increasing the number of businesses in town. Laura indicated that the role of finding and working with the town to submit grants was part of the contract that the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission has with the town. Barb pointed out that the remaining land on the Route 7 corridor is primarily wetlands so cannot be developed to support additional businesses. Barb shared with members the overview she prepared of LEDC activities. The overall focus of activities has been the support of existing businesses:

- B2B to promote networking among local businesses
- Doing Business in Lanesborough Handbook to help new and existing businesses to navigate the bureaucracy of regulations and permits
- Proposed Home Business Expo that would highlight the impact of businesses in town that operate out of private residences
- Tour de Greylock to help promote Lanesborough as an outdoor recreation destination
- Welcome to Doing Business in Lanesborough letters and certificates to recognize the contribution of all businesses in town.

Tom indicated that if the Select Board wanted the committee to take a different direction, they should have updated and informed the committee so that members could decide whether they wanted to continue to volunteer in the new role. He also suggested that the Select Board ask each committee in town to make a presentation about their focus and activities.

Barb reviewed committee agenda going forward. Tour de Greylock cancelled. No B2B's scheduled at this time. Doing Business in Lanesborough Handbook, on hold due to changes in town website and email addresses of town employees. Laura is determining whether there is sufficient interest in a Spring Home Business Expo. Business Certificates on hold due to a back order of supplies.

Next Meeting: Members agreed to meet again on Thursday, September 8, 2022 at 5pm at Town Hall.

Adjournment: Tom made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Pat seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:35pm.

Respectfully Submitted

Patricia Hubbard

Recording Secretary

LEDC