

Lanesborough Economic Development Committee
October 20, 2022 – Newton Memorial Town Hall, Lanesborough MA
Minutes

Present: Barb Davis-Hassan, Chairperson. Members: Tom Voisin, Pat Hubbard, George Kellar, 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 5:13pm.

A motion to approve the minutes from September 8, 2022, meeting was made by Tom Voisin; seconded by Pat Hubbard, so moved. A motion was made by George Kellar to approve the September 23, 2022, minutes as written, seconded by Barb Davis-Hassan, so moved.

Tour de Greylock

Laura Brennan reported that there has been a full accounting of the funds collected and spent related to Tour de Greylock. The Town of Lanesborough has a credit of \$1400 (100 hats) at Elegant Stitches, LLC in Pittsfield for swag for the event. Tom suggested that if the LEDC wanted to try to reschedule Tour de Greylock that the committee should consider a route up and down Mount Greylock. This plan would eliminate the need to involve the other towns that surround Mount Greylock and therefore, reduce the expense of the event. A suggestion was made to limit the route to the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail.

Drive-In Movie Sign Update

Pat Hubbard left a message for Charlie Durfee, DPW Director, requesting that he look at the sign to determine what, if anything, his department could do to help renovate it. Pat agreed to follow up with Mr. Durfee.

Review and Changes in LEDC Bylaws

Committee members reviewed the current bylaws and suggested necessary changes. A motion was made by George Kellar and seconded by Tom Voisin to approve the bylaw changes. The motion was unanimously passed. Barb will submit the revised bylaws to Josh Lang, Town Administrator. A copy of the proposed changes are attached to these minutes for the record.

Review of Goals, Strategies and Objectives

Members reviewed the goals, strategies and objectives and did not recommend any changes.

Doing Business in Lanesborough Handbook

A discussion was held about the Doing Business in Lanesborough Handbook that committee members have been working on. Tom Voisin suggested that the committee consider a YouTube video that outlines the process of establishing a business in Lanesborough. Members outlined the process to include: Town Clerk presents the handbook and issues the business license, which triggers the owner getting the Welcome Letter from LEDC. The next step is presenting the certificate at a Business 2 Business (B2B) Networking meeting. Pat Hubbard volunteered to personally present the certificates to new business owners if a B2B meeting was not scheduled. DBA businesses are not currently scheduled

to get certificates. Pat Hubbard suggested that every business, regardless of whether they are “brick and mortar” be recognized for their contribution to Lanesborough and be included in the entire process of welcoming new businesses. Laura Brennan reminded the group that the town would soon have a new website and that staffing changes would require another review of the content of the handbook. Laura agreed to continue to move this project forward. Members thanked her for her leadership on this project.

Special Municipal Employee Insurance Status

Barb Davis-Hassan has been advocating that the Town of Lanesborough provide the Special Municipal Employee designation to all volunteers who are working for the town that might be at risk for a lawsuit without the designation. A letter from Jeff Blake, Town Attorney, agreed that the Town should move forward to ensure the volunteers that qualify for “Special Municipal Employee” status should be so designated. He went on to further note that the State Board of Ethics also encourages it.

Barb Davis-Hassan found, through a records request, that the Town was unwilling to move forward with the possibility of insuring any volunteers under “Special Municipal Employee” status until the ethics complaint filed against her by Select Board Member Michael Murphy was settled. This insurance protection is crucial for volunteers, especially those that own businesses. Volunteers providing vital services to the Town are at risk because of the Town’s failure to provide this coverage. Laura Brennan suggested asking for clarification about who currently might be covered and who still needs the coverage. Tom Voisin and Pat Hubbard both commented that either all volunteers are granted coverage or none of them receive the benefit. With this, volunteers could decide whether it was worth the risk to serve the community. Tom Voisin further suggested waiting for the Ethics Board decision.

Barb agreed to post the LEDC minutes from 9/8/22 and 9/21/22 on the Town website.

Next Meeting

December 1, 2022 at 5pm

Adjournment

The motion was made by Tom Voisin and seconded by George Kellar to adjourn at 6:50pm. The motion passed and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted by
Patricia Hubbard
Recording Secretary - LEDC