

Lanesborough Economic Development Committee
August 11, 2022 – Newton Memorial Town Hall, Lanesborough MA
Minutes

Present: Barb Hassan, Chairperson. Members: Kevin Towle, Tom Voisin, Pat Hubbard, Wylie Goodman, representative from Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (by Zoom)
Guest: Gordon Hubbard

The meeting was called to order by Barb Hassan, Chairperson, at 5:02pm.

1). A motion to accept the minutes of the June 26, 2022 meeting as corrected was made by Kevin Towle, seconded by Pat Hubbard. Motion passed.

2). Doing Business in Lanesborough Handbook

Kevin agreed to review the drafts of the flow charts in the handbook. Members agreed that the earliest that the handbook could be launched would be October due to the proposed changes in the Town of Lanesborough website. Once the new website is launched then the draft of the handbook can be updated to include the updated links.

3). Doing Business in Lanesborough Business Certificates

Members agreed that the businesses that have received their certificates really appreciated being recognized by the Town. Wylie Goodman informed the committee that the folders and certificates that we have been distributing are now on back order.

4). Update on LEDC Reappointment

When it came to the reappointment of members of the LEDC on the Select Board agenda on Monday, August 8, 2022, the Select Board did reappoint existing members of the LEDC committee and George Keller, a new member. During the discussion, Selectman Mike Murphy questioned whether the LEDC functions within the mission of the committee and indicated that he would like to abolish the committee once "the race" was held in September.

In response to Selectman Murphy's questioning the role of LEDC going forward, Barb presented to members, an outline of all of the activities completed by the LEDC since the August 22, 2016 creation of the committee. The original mandate was to create an Economic Development Plan. Once the plan was accepted, the committee continued to meet and plan activities to ensure that the plan would "not just remain on a shelf and not be implemented". Kevin suggested that the definition of the committee might need to change and go in a different direction if the Select Board requires that members take on the professional role and primary responsibility for bringing new businesses/employers to town. Members agreed that there is a lack of property to be developed that would attract new businesses and that the Route 7 corridor is a mix of residential and commercial and there is little or no available property that is not wetland protected available for development. Tom suggested that the role the committee has had is that of a Chamber of Commerce.

Barb reminded members that Josh Lang has requested that committee members decide on staggered terms so that not all members rotate off the committee at the same time. Members agreed that this was a futile discussion as the committee may not exist going forward.

5. Tour de Greylock

Wylie reported that there are nine people registered for the tour and there are 60 followers on the Facebook page. She is planning to do a press release to bolster participation. Pat asked if the letter to Lanesborough businesses asking for their financial support of the tour had been mailed. If they had not been mailed, she requested that they not be mailed until some resolution about the Town and Select Board's support for LEDC and the event be clarified. Based on Selectman Murphy's comment at the Select Board meeting on Monday, that the LEDC Committee be allowed to function just until the completion of the tour, Pat, as the volunteer Chair of the event, indicated that she was not willing to put in the hours of work it would take to make this event safe and successful if the LEDC were to be dissolved after the event. In addition, there was a miscommunication with Charlie Durfee, Lanesborough Emergency Management Director. He had requested the ride details and Pat sent them. He never received them. Pat read her letter of apology to the committee. Mr. Durfee also indicated that he thought that committee members would need to meet with every Emergency Management Director in every town that cyclists would pass through on the ride. In addition, Jen Weber indicated that it would be impossible to dedicate the use of the Lanesborough Ambulance to the event. Given these considerations, Tom Voisin suggested that a few of the committee members schedule a meeting with Josh Lang, Town of Lanesborough Administrator to discuss Tour de Greylock and the future of LEDC. Pat agreed to arrange the meeting and Tom agreed to attend. Tom suggested that if the committee decides to postpone Tour de Greylock that an alternate route up Mount Greylock and back that would just involve permits from the Town of Lanesborough and Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation.

6). Next Meeting

Thursday, August 18, 2022, at 5pm at Town Hall.

7). Adjournment

Members agreed to adjourn at 6:35pm.

Respectfully Submitted

Patricia Hubbard

Recording Secretary, LEDC