

Whitingham Economic Development Group
Whitingham Municipal Center, Selectboard Office, Jacksonville, VT 05342
Minutes of Thursday, May 23, 2019

Attendees: EDG Members: Gretchen Havreluk, Seth Boyd, Phil Edelstein and Jenepher Burnell. Gig Zboray, Selectboard Office Administrator. Doug LaPlante, resident.

Call to Order. Additions or Changes to Agenda

Gretchen called the meeting to order at 6:04PM. There were no additions or changes to the agenda.

Approve minutes from April 25th meeting

A motion was made by Jen Burnell to approve the Minutes of April 25, 2019 as written, seconded by Seth Boyd, Phil Edelstein abstained because he was not at that meeting, but the other three approved.

Blueberry Festival:

Jacksonville Church – Doug LaPlante the church will host a spaghetti supper (8th annual) on the Friday of the Blueberry Festival to be held at the Municipal Center. Mr. LaPlante offered the empty lot where the parsonage was for parking if necessary.

Mr. LaPlante suggested that the Jacksonville events get listed in the Blueberry Festival Passport for a cost of \$35. Gig will find out about the Passport and if there is a cost and a deadline.

Mr. LaPlante mentioned that he or his wife would be happy to come back to another EDG meeting to make sure everyone is on the same schedule. Mr. Boyd noted that we should know what other events are going on throughout the Blueberry Festival, so we don't duplicate anything.

Band – Jen The Jacksonville Blues Band agreed to play in Jacksonville on Friday. Tentative time-frame for the event is 4-7, probably the church will serve at 6pm. Doug mentioned that it might be good to have the band on a trailer.

Car Show – Gretchen Mike Mandraccia is moving forward with the car show (at 5pm?), Jen noted that a "car show" banner might still exist with the Farmers Market supplies in the back basement of the Municipal Center.

Farmer's Market we still don't have anyone to organize the Farmers Market.

Website Update

Training Kristine Sweeter has been trained to post Library events and items. Gig is basically comfortable making any edits that are needed. There are still a few minor things that need to be tweaked.

Advertising Seth questioned what the vision was for local businesses to advertise or be listed on the town website, he can think of a few smaller businesses that were not on our list, but the typed list that Seth was provided all received an invitation to be listed on our website. Only those who responded are listed on the website.

At a prior meeting Kyle had mentioned getting businesses to pay for advertising on the town website. Gig feels that we are not there yet.

Marketing Whitingham – Video, Mini Stay to Stay, Families to move here we have talked in the past about creating Whitingham ads, produce a video to advertise on social media, Phil noted that Whitingham's population is rising, even though the school population is going down, however Seth noted that the Wilmington school population is decreasing more than the Whitingham school population. We need to figure out what we are doing right and advertise it to the world. Jen told a story about Bethel, Vermont and their economic development through something they created called "Bethel University".

Whitingham website on business websites Initiative a draft letter to local businesses was reviewed and edited. Gig will send it out via email on Tuesday (after Memorial Day).

Sidewalk Update with Jacksonville Electric The WEDG will not work on the sidewalk project until directed to by the Selectboard.

Business Training – Collaboration with Library Gretchen will check in with Kristine to see how her trainings are going.

Living History Presentation Discussion Jim Dassati updated his packet of information for the Self-guided Historical Driving Tour of the Deerfield Valley. WEDG reviewed it and discussed the project. Jen contacted Stella of the Historical Society, they are not in support of this project, they feel it is expensive and redundant. This topic is now tabled.

Create Welcome Packets for New Residents Almira had suggested providing a packet of information to new residents explaining things like where to eat, get gas, list plumbers, electricians, etc. Seth suggested that it would be better to give them a card with a link to the town website. Gretchen suggested it could be a "welcome" card with the link to the town website listed inside. We need to keep updating the website.

Action Items Coordinate timing of Blueberry events. Phil will go through the business listings on the website and break them down into further categories. Add future priority planning to next agenda. Gig will send the letter via email on Tuesday. Gretchen will contact Kristine.

Adjourn

A motion was made by Gretchen to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Jen, all in favor.

Gretchen adjourned the meeting at 7:42pm

Next meeting will be June 27, 2019 at 6pm (Phil is not available, Gig might not be available).

Respectfully submitted,
~Gig Zboray