



Whitingham Economic Development Group

Minutes of Monday, February 25, 2021

Attendees: EDG Members: Gretchen Havreluk, Chair; Carrie Northrup, and Karen Hein. Others: Gig Zboray, Selectboard Office Administrator; Jeff Whitcomb, Communicators Group; Jenepher Burnell, resident; Patience Merriman, retired from Communicators Group and resident.

Call to Order.

Meeting called to order at 5:07pm. There was not a quorum at the start of the meeting, but the meeting was opened because Jeff Whitcomb was in attendance as invited.

Digital Advertising Campaign-The Communicators Group Jeff Whitcomb:

The Communicators Group is a marketing communications firm out of Keene, NH. They are a certified team member with Google; a full-service agency, providing strategic marketing planning, media planning & buying, radio, tv, video, digital, and email advertising.

The Whitingham New Families Recruitment Campaign is a multi-part digital marketing plan:

- Establish social media profiles – Facebook and maybe Instagram.
- Ads on Facebook
- Google display
- Video for Facebook, Google and YouTube

Goals: attract new residents to the town (ages 29-42), especially families with school age children. Target areas: Baltimore/DC, Long Island, Hartford, Boston, Albany.

Calls to action: visit our new “move here” webpage, give us contact info so we can stay in touch, help them get connected with someone who lives here.

Overall budget is \$8,000, total ads is \$6,300; agency fee \$1,700.

Issues: there is currently a Whitingham Facebook page, but it is terrible and was made by someone “checking in”. They would create or take over the page strictly for advertising, not as a municipal information page.

They suggest we engage Mondo Mediaworks to create a video for us. It would be an unbudgeted cost of approximately \$5,000.

Karen Hein questioned the demographics of who are we targeting? Why was Westchester County, NY not considered? She suggested the Lions Club could partner to be ambassadors.

Gig mentioned that she is in the market for a home and there is nothing in town that she can afford and there is not a lot available of real estate available. Jenepher suggested that we move forward, start making a video. Gretchen agrees that COVID hit and the housing market went crazy, but we need to try to do this, COVID is starting to get under control now. The market changes all the time.

Additions or Changes to Agenda none

Minutes of February 1, 2021: **A motion was made by Carrie Northrup to accept the Minutes of February 1, 2021 as written, seconded by Karen Hein, all in favor.**

Student Engagement in Town Government:

Local business video interviews with students -Seth: Seth could not make it tonight.

Fire & Rescue Virtual Meeting with Students: Seth could not make it tonight, maybe Stanley should be asked.

Student Member - Karen to share information: Karen provided us all with the following summary of what she learned on the topic of youth onboarding:

Youth on Board—Useful questions may include:

- What skills will a youth board member bring and are these skills valuable to the board and organization?
- What perspective will a youth board member provide, and would this fill a current and important void?
- What does the board expect or hope to gain from a youth board member?
- Is there a particular youth in mind that the board finds to be exceptional and if so, what are the qualities and attributes the board believes are appealing and valuable to the organization?
- What does the organization gain from a youth's participation as a board member that it would not get through alternative forms of involvement (e.g., through participation on an advisory committee)?
- Is having a youth board member consistent with the organization's mission and values?
- How will staff, funders, donors, and other constituents react to a board with a youth board member?

Alternatives to board membership include:

- Creating a youth advisory board;
- Having the youth join an already existing Advisory Board;
- Having the youth join a committee;
- Establishing a mentor-mentee relationship between the youth and an individual in a leadership position at the organization;
- Assigning special projects or assignments to the youth that utilizes his or her skills and perspective; or
- Having the youth regularly attend and participate in board meetings (as a nonvoting guest).

Reference: Youth Board Members: Can minors serve on a nonprofit board? - Nonprofit Law Blog

Also, "Youth on Board" based in Somerville MA. Although they do leadership training, I thought you'd be interested in seeing how they envision elevating youth voice and presence in communities <https://www.youthonboard.org/>.

Connectivity Update: Phil was not available tonight. Gretchen noted that the RFP has been issued for the fiber build out. She is impressed with how amazing the CUD group of volunteers is.

Welcome Wagon Postcard: Phil did not work on this yet.

Update Route 100 Byway – Review plan and make recommendations for Chews & Brews: <https://www.vermontvacation.com/landing-pages/byways/scenic-route-100-byway>.

Tabled until next meeting.

Review action items

- Seth – local business videos with students
- Seth – fire and rescue virtual meeting with students
- Everyone – read Karen's information on student on boarding
- Phil – welcome wagon postcard
- Next meeting – review and make recommendations for Chews & Brews
- Gig – invite Stephen to come to next meeting to review Google analytics

Next meeting: The next regular meeting would be March 25th at 5pm. The Bi-Town meeting is next Thursday at 8am, Gretchen will send out an agenda and link.

Meeting adjourned at 6:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,
~Gig Zboray