

Minutes
Economic Development Committee
Town Manager's Office
December 10th, 2019
5:00pm

Attendance:

Committee

Cody McEwen (Chair), Mike Madore, John Davis (Town Manager)

Councilors

Louis Pelletier, Randy Jackson

Public

Ailish Keating (Northern Forest Center), Jessica Masse (designlab), Lucy Van Hook (Our Katahdin), Mike Elliot (EMDC)

Meeting called to order by Chair McEwen at 5:00pm.

I. Review of prior meeting minutes.

No changes.

II. Update on Citizen's Institute on Rural Design (CIRD) grant.

Lucy updated the committee on our status with the grant. Lucy and Cody had a recent call with Omar to discuss the feasibility of our workshop. We still want a design workbook to come out of this project, but it would not represent a full design package. That would include finer details such as code and would not fit in the current scope of work. We need to identify what we can actually contain in a three day workshop. Lucy noted that Omar was directed to the Katahdin Gazetteer to see the work that has already been done so there is no duplication of work.

The workshop target date should be set within April 13th and the 24th. The committee noted that if we can coordinate the workshop with the wayfinding workshop around that time, it would be beneficial. Ailish and Lucy will continue to update the committee and coordinate the events if at all possible.

Lucy said she had a call with Evelyn scheduled for next week. We need to finalize our contract with the grant team. The form we sent back was just a template. Lucy will fill in the missing elements with data from our initial application.

Mike Madore asked if we can also try coordinating their stay with the council meeting on the 23rd; it would be a nice close out to their visit with a public presentation at a council meeting. The committee noted that would be beneficial if at all possible.

III. Update on BikeMaine event.

Cody and John updated the committee from an initial meeting they had with Mike Smith and Joshua Firmin, volunteer coordinators for the Town of Millinocket for the upcoming

September 2020 BikeMaine event, and Will Elting and Emily Lozeau of BikeMaine. The initial conversation went well as Will presented on what this event would look like with the community. Both John and Cody noted that Mike and Josh would represent the community well for this event and they have direct knowledge of how this event should run. Initial logistics were discussed and Mike Smith would be having a conversation with Frank Boynton, Superintendent of Schools, to introduce the event and ask initial permission for the event to be located throughout the athletic field. The fields and Recreation dept grounds will be an initial start in locating the event.

Randy asked how food would be coordinated and what costs would be associated. John noted that BikeMaine works with Maine Land and Sea to coordinate food and will work with local volunteers and establishments with stipends to offset the cost of food and labor. Cody noted that he would share a digital .pdf of the presentation with the committee, which has more information about the event and what benefits are associated with it.

The event is going to be held during the week of September 13th 2020. It was questioned what the dates for the Trails End Festival would be this year. Cody noted that the Trails End Festival Committee met initially and have not decided on the date yet. They are meeting again in January, the week before the next BikeMaine meeting. Cody would update Mike, Josh, and the committee when that date is decided. Coordinating the BikeMaine event with both the Trails End Festival and the Truck Pulls will be essential. The BikeMaine event has been an economic driver for the regions the event is held. This will be another great boost for the economy in September of next year.

IV. Update on Comprehensive Plan.

Cody updated the committee with an email he received from Vicki Rusbult of EMDC on the status of the Comprehensive Plan.

Vicki has hired a full time planner William Harper who started last Monday. His first and only task is working on the comprehensive plan. He has been incorporating all the communities comments and she will be sharing those as well. She noted that she spoke briefly with John Davis at a conference in Bangor and let him know of that status. William will be working on the plan next week to address unfinished information, and she hopes to bring it all together before the end of the year to review and finalize.

She would like to meet within the next two weeks if possible to start wrapping things up. Mike Elliot noted to keep him in the loop on the status of the comprehensive plan as he works under EMDC and can be of assistance if needed.

V. Update on Millinocket Annual Survey 2019.

Cody updated the committee that paper versions of the survey were distributed and are located at the Town Office, the Our Katahdin Office, and the Millinocket Memorial Library. The digital version is online and will be live until December 31st. Once the surveys are compiled a report will be created and distributed to the committee, council, and will be posted on our website.

Cody and Jessica will get a gift certificate from Angelo's to be used as an incentive for people to take the survey. A gift certificate has been used in the past as an incentive and was effective. Jessica will change the social media post for the survey to reflect that change.

VI. Update on Community Development Block Grant and Downtown Revitalization.

Cody shared the 2020 letter of interest and application for the Downtown Revitalization Community Development block grant program. Cody spoke with Terry Ann Holden, Development Program Manager at the Office of Community Development to inquire about the program and Millinocket's position.

The letter of interest is due Jan 24th and the application Mar 27th. The committee attempted this last year and did not have enough time to complete the requirements of the application. A setback of last year's application was that due to Millinocket having a Low to Moderate Income (LMI) threshold of under 51%, there were income surveys that would have needed to be distributed and returned to meet initial requirements. Now, the LMI is at 55.94%. Because of this increase, less documentation is required for the initial phase of the process. The committee determined that we can base how we approach this application with information we used in the CIRD grant. For cost estimates, we can check with local contractors and catalogs. Terry provided a lighting contact; Rick Forbursh 1-800-338-1315 which would be a good resource for municipal lighting: lamp posts, luminaire, and other street light fixtures. She also noted we could check with Olver and Associates on cost estimates for sidewalks. If the project is funded, then we would have to go out to bid on the specific project(s).

Sidewalks would be an initial goal for funding. The maximum award is \$300,000 which requires a \$75,000 cash match. Further goals include public restrooms, lighting improvements in the park, bike racks, and improved benches and trash receptacles.

Lucy said she would gather the indicators from the Katahdin Gazetteer that relate to downtown improvements that we can use. Cody noted that we can pull from information from the downtown revitalization discussions, as well as the video he and Ailish worked on. John noted that we can use the drafts that Rick Angotti produced on cost estimates and notes for sidewalk replacement.

It was asked if we could get impact data from the various festivals and events that happen in town and can impact the downtown. I.e. Trails End Festival, Marathon, Truck pulls. That data can assist in the application. Check with the Maine Office of Tourism on impact.

Mike Madore asked how the wayfinding study will be funded and what requirements would the town have. Ailish noted that out of the roughly \$50,000 allotted for the study about half of that has been pledged by various organizations including the Northern Forest Center. She noted that the town is not required to fund, but it would be beneficial if there was some allotment that could help offset the cost of the study. Cody noted that the council will need to have a discussion on the feasibility of funding part of the study.

The next committee meeting is set for January 7th at 5:00pm in the Manager's Office.

Adjourned at 6:13pm.