

BRANDON AREA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
JANUARY 17, 2013

Call to Order - The meeting opened at 8:30 am

Present: Devon Fuller, Jim Leary, Janet Mondlak, Alyssa Zollman, Jim Leary, Bernie Carr, Steve Beck, Jeff and Linda Stewart, AnnMarie Roth, Stephanie Jerome

Minutes - Motion by Fuller / Stewart to approve the minutes of the October 16, 2012 meeting. Passed

Meeting Day / Time Reminder: Third Thursdays mornings - 8:30 am. Start in January. Every other month. Next meeting: March 21

Reports:

Steve - Reports from Steve Beck to the Selectboard for last three months were distributed and reviewed. Discussion on Steve's time and how it is split between downtown and all-of-Brandon.

Linda asked for the consumer surveys electronically and Steve will send to everyone.

Discussion on grant-writing, if Steve is going to be writing grants, it needs to be outside the economic development work. Discussion on a grant that Steve was asked to write on behalf of the DBA.

Devon said we should put together an updated job description for Steve's job. Jim suggested Steve do an indepth time sheet to look at where he is spending his time.

General Economic Development

Devon said Adam Danschler, entrepreneur working on a biomass heat system for town, has been working with Steve. Devon said he is looking at the school first.

Medicinal Marijuana facility - the woman with the authorization is looking at a property in Brandon. Steve has been working with her.

Hannaford zoning - Steve said he tried to reach out to Hannafords corporate and has not been able to get a response. There was discussion on the zoning of the current lot and the zoning of Union Street. Linda said the Planning Commission can be approached regarding the Hannaford zoning but they are not inclined to do spot zoning. They would prefer if the Hannaford request waits until form based zoning is in place. The Planning Commission is working on it. When the land use ordinance was last revised, Union Street became zoned Neighborhood Residential and many believe that was a mistake. Jim suggested a change might be in order that would not be considered spot zoning, but rather correcting a wrong that was made the last time the land use maps were changed.

Devon's Report:

Devon said because Steve splits his time between the town and the DBA, the town might be looking at cutting part of Steve's salary which the DBA would have to come up with. Linda suggested charging a 1% tax on bed nights to be used for economic development. Janet said she thinks this is wrong of the town. If the DBA can't come up with the funding, that would leave the E.D.O. with 10 hours a week and not necessarily working for the downtown. She doesn't think Steve's time working on downtown issues should be categorized as working for the DBA.

Toolbox - Discussion of items to be “put in the toolbox”. Toolbox to be formatted for paper or electronic delivery. It should be considered a business concierge or welcome wagon type of product. Everyone was asked to send Steve information they might have by the end of January. Steve was asked to bring back the first draft of the toolbox by the March meeting.

- commercial inventory
- Act 250 permitting process
- local permits
- sign ordinances
- local revolving loan fund
- info on: the best water in the state
- Small Business Development services and contacts
- attorneys
- doctors
- training opportunities
- VMEC - Vermont Manufacturing Extension Center
- our great schools and downtown
- access to hospitals in Middlebury and Rutland
- Chamber’s membership directory

Stephanie recommended the Economic Development office create a regularly scheduled press release for area papers touting our great schools, town, events, activities, etc. “Market the heck out of the town”. It was noted that more people will probably take a chance at opening a business here if they already live here, than people moving here just to open a business. Stephanie said the local realtors should be writing “Neshobe School District” when writing their ads.

Everyone was encouraged to send Steve whatever they could regarding the items listed above.

Alyssa said she would like to see a resource guide listing all the skills in town.

Linda said she heard EMS was leaving the Diamond Run Mall. She suggested Steve contact their corporate offices. Brandon is the gateway to the Green Mountain National Forest, the Moosalamoo National Recreation Area, a center for the healing arts, etc.

Adjourn at 9:55 am.

Next meeting: March 21 at 8:30 am at SAD.

Committee members: Devon Fuller, Jim Leary, Janet Mondlak, Alyssa Zollman, Frank Spezzano, Jim Leary, Bernie Carr, Linda and Jeff Stewart. Others? Discussion about other committee members. Discussion about breaking into committees and engaging other people as part of that.

- Industrial
- Agriculture
- Downtown
- Education
- Building the Residential Base
- Zoning and Town Policy

Discussion about Steve Beck getting an update on these properties before each BAEDC meeting:

Tubbs, Hill School, Aubuchon block, Scheck building, Watershed, Park Village, Bob Read properties, Town Offices, video store, Vites & Herbs, residential expansion projects, Hannaford's,

Needed: Anonymous collection of rental data from commercial landlords that can be available for lessors and lessees to use to make business decisions.

Discussion items:

- **Steve was asked to contact Hannaford Supermarkets** corporate personnel to ask what we can do for them and to welcome their expansion. Discussion on their lot zoning. Steve was also asked to contact Anne Bransfield, Planning Commission chair about this issue.
- **Ideas for people to be asked to work on committee:** Brian or Stephanie Jerome, Bob Read
- **Get more "locals" initiative. A "New" way to do business:** Bernie presented ideas for a "new" way to do business. Attached.
- **As the town budget needs to be expanded** which will then raise taxes, residents who receive income sensitivity assistance to pay their property taxes need to see how little it will cost them in new money
- **Look at sewer impact fees** for new development. Seem to be prohibitive.
- **Let's get more people involved on each of the committees.**

Next meeting: January 17, 2013 at 8:30 am.

Adjourn - Being no further business the meeting adjourned at 9:15 am.

Respectfully,

Janet Mondlak