

**Town of Waldoboro**  
**Economic Development Committee**

**Minutes**

**March 18<sup>th</sup> 2016**

1. Call to order

Jen Merritt called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. and determined the presence of a quorum:

Bob Butler

Dick Glidden

Seth Hall

John Lawrence

Jen Merritt,

Ted Wooster

Also present were Katie Winchenbach, Emily Reinhart, and Jan Minzy.

2. Approval of February Meeting Minutes

The Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the February 19, 2016 minutes

3. Chairman's report – Jen Merritt, as Vice Chair, said there was no report and suggested that, going forward, the committee needed to define its goals and priorities.

4. Community Planner's Report – Emily Reinholt

Emily reported that the Planning Board could have 2 or 3 plan reviews on the agenda. One is a farm on Bremen Road, which a young couple from Boston purchased. They are looking for a rural life style and found the farm by chance while touring the area after attending a wedding on Pemaquid Point. They are thinking about establishing an educational institution on the property, making it available for retreats and teaching crafts. The 3-phase implementation plan includes increasing awareness of ecology and organic farming.

A second item on the agenda is a plan review for an activity center on Manktown Road. The owner is a gymnastics teacher who anticipates working with local schools and making her large building available to others.

Jen Merritt reported that the smoke shop next to Hannaford's has been taken down and is to be relocated in the old Chinese restaurant across from Moody's

Likewise, the green house, mobile home and old antique shop between Ralph's Chevrolet and the old Pinkham Gas station destroyed by fire have all been removed, making the parcels they occupied more attractive to a potential buyer or more available to alternative uses.

Emily emphasized on-going efforts to install fiber optic cable in the downtown village and suggested the WBA as an excellent vehicle for developing interest among village residents and businesses.

Seth Hall mentioned that proposed changes to the Land Use Ordinance would more clearly define the responsibilities of the Code Enforcement officer's. A second proposed change would address signage. The proposed changes will come before the Select Board during their meetings in March.

Jen Merritt talked about the letter of interest submitted for the Cool and Connected grant and the possibility it holds for consultants to examine ways for village businesses to make money through the availability of high speed Internet.

She also said that the Comprehensive Plan is moving along. The committee has a running column in the newspaper. She suggested that a member of the Economic Development Committee attend Comp Plan Committee meetings to assist with the Economic Development chapter of the plan. Emily repeated the need for the EDC to be more involved in the Comp Plan effort.

Discussion moved to Tidewater's installation of cable in the town office and the village. There was some confusion about priorities, given on-going work to put a ConnectME grant application together for an area outside of the village. John Lawrence wondered if the former was a *quid pro quo* for the latter.

Butler mentioned requests of the Select Board to sign an IPTV (Internet Protocol Television) franchise agreement with Tidewater. He suggested the town attorney and CTC should review the agreement before it is recommended for signature.

John announced his intention to visit every occupied parcel along the road targeted for the ConnectME grant application. Grant scoring criteria are heavily weighted by the degree to which residents support Internet broadband and demonstrate a genuine need for it. John confirmed that Tidewater is also looking for sufficient interest to underpin its potential investment. He clarified that Tidewater is not expecting ironclad commitments from potential customers. John expects the information gathered from canvassing the residents will supplement information obtained through the broadband survey.

Tidewater is publishing a monthly rate of \$57.95 for 10X10 Mbps fiber broadband Internet, only.

It was suggested that the Communications Technology Committee should review the ConnectME grant application prior to its submission because the application will contain information the town has provided in support of it. The town should verify that information to ensure its accuracy.

Seth said we should continue to hold onto a possibility for a future open community broadband network in Waldoboro. He was concerned that Tidewater's proposed pricing could establish an undesirable precedent for such a network. He also thought the town could look to other sources for funding an open community network and said the EDC and the CTC could explore available funding options.

There was discussion of a re-orienting of the committee now that broadband Internet had become the purview of the Communications Technology Committee. Bob Butler read the following optional mission statement into the record:

### **Economic Development Committee**

#### **Mission Statement**

- I. To access and encourage the development of properly planned economic growth within the community.
- II. To fully investigate and stimulate economic innovations that could impact the quality of life for the town's residents.
- III. To strengthen existing business relationships and make recommendations to town officials that encourage the healthy growth of the town.

The committee agreed by consensus to pend discussion of the mission statement to a future meeting.

There was mention of the need for a guide to doing business in Waldoboro and possibly tying that into the Comprehensive Plan as a future action item. Wiscasset has apparently developed such a guide.

Seth brought up the idea of community solar and said that there is a solar company in Waldoboro

Katie Winchenbach suggested that the town's Facebook page could announce that Waldoboro is open for business.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Butler

Interim Secretary