

**Economic Development Committee**  
**March 28, 2024 -Final**

**Present:** Ron Rzasa (Chair), John Pieper, Gerald Lins, Marion Rzasa, Erin Soltys, Doreen Monahan, and Barbara Girs (BOS Representative)

**Absent:** Chele Hood,

**Guest:** Jeff Scott

**Meeting Called to Order at 6:05PM**

**Presiding:** Ron Rzasa

**Secretary Report**

The March 14, 2024, minutes were unanimously approved as amended.

**New Business:**

1. **New BOS Representative:** Selectman Barbara Gris is replacing Fran Shippee as our BOS Representative.
  - a. Ron made the following motion Marion seconded:  
*"Make Barbara Girs is a voting member of this committee"*  
The motion passed unanimously.
2. **Workforce Housing Update:** Ron has invited Rik Ekstrom to attend the May 16<sup>th</sup> EDC meeting to discuss workforce housing. David Gale, who owns a couple of possible properties that could be converted, should also be invited. Jeff Scott will invite David Gale.
3. **Budget Committee:** The Budget Committee will be reviewing the EDC and CRG budget on Oct. 22, 2024. It is strongly recommended that members attend to justify any changes.

**Old Business:**

1. **Chesterfield Creative Artisan Fair, Sat. April 27, 10A – 2P:** The event has a waitlist. If some of the tables are split, the waitlist can be accommodated. If the weather is good, additional vendors can set up outside.
2. **Chesterfield Revitalization Group (CRG):** The warrant article passed at the Town Meeting. CRG's next meeting will be on April 9<sup>th</sup>. A retired architect has expressed interest in joining the committee. He will attend their next meeting.
  - a. At the town meeting, a grant writer spoke on behalf of the committee. But no one caught her name. She would be an asset. Hopefully, her name is in the minutes.
4. **Chesterfield Business Expo – April 6<sup>th</sup> 9AM – 2PM:** Doreen has managed to confirm 18 vendors. Confirming vendors has been difficult with unreturned messages and competition with the date.
  - a. Doreen will make up index cards with vendors' names for the tables.
  - b. Jeff Scott has placed posters around town. He will see if there is room on Big Deal's Community Board. Donna has placed ads in the Sentinel (hopefully it will go into the ELF), Monadnock Shopper, IBrattleboro, The Commons, and on the digital Event calendar, Discover Monadnock.
  - c. A sign should be placed outside the Town Hall on the day of the event.
  - d. The vendors should be canvassed to see if they would be interested in the Business-to-Business Mixer.
  - e. Fri. April 5<sup>th</sup> set up time 4:30pm. Jeff will open the doors.

5. **Childcare:** The American Legion is interested in providing the building for childcare. In their letter dated March 6th, which was received just before the meeting, they noted that they will be in contact with the code enforcement office to have the building inspected to see what would be necessary to bring it up to code. Ron will contact Lester Fairbank to see if this has been done.
  - a. The code enforcement report will give a good indication as to the extent of the necessary renovations. From the EDC visit, it was concluded that the building will need at least a septic system, mold removal, an ADA entrance, and bathrooms.
  - b. A contractor will have to be found to make the necessary estimate.
  - c. After the estimate, grants to cover the cost will have to be found. The availability of funding has changed since last year. Hannah Grimes and SWRP may be able to help.
  - d. There is always a concern about who will manage it. It is in a perfect location for the school district to become involved. Also, the YMCA or Village Children's Center may be interested in pursuing it.
  - e. Any future layout has to conform to the State specifications. It would be prudent to have the future manager be included in those plans.
  - f. It is important that when the project is completed, the childcare cost will be affordable to lower income families.
  - g. This is a long-term project with numerous complicated steps.
6. **Business to Business Mixer:** From experience, the best time to have this event is before summer vacation. It was proposed to have it either on May 23<sup>rd</sup> or June 13<sup>th</sup>. Possible venues:
  - a. Copper Cannon: Erin texted them and they are interested. However, it has been held there for the past two years.
  - b. Village Creamery: It is believed there is an upstairs room to gather in. Doreen will contact Sara Pratt to check if she is interested.
  - c. Big Deal: Its open back deck may be able to accommodate a gathering and pizzas could be served. Doreen will check on this venue too.

**Public Comment:**

There has been feedback from the community that three Artisan Fairs a year are too frequent. The vendors have been similar. Twice a year, spring, and late fall, would be better. Last year's summer fair wasn't as well received as the spring and fall ones. If it was eliminated, it would create anticipation for the fall fair. The fall fair should have more of a Christmas atmosphere, maybe timed later than last year's date of Nov. 11<sup>th</sup>. However, there will be a lot of competition with a later date.

**Meeting Adjourned at 7:11PM**

**Next Meeting:**

**April 11, 2024  
Town Hall Offices – 6pm  
McKeon Room**

**Respectfully submitted by  
Donna Roscoe  
Secretary  
March 28, 2024**