

UNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
Feb 3rd, 2020 DRAFT Minutes

Note: Decisions and commitments made in ***bold italic***.

Present: Larry K., Ellen B., Najean S. Jean B. Tony A. Kari Hulva

Unexcused:

Excused:

Guests: Dan M., Penny S.

ITEM 1: INTRODUCTIONS OF NEW MEMBERS AND GUESTS

none

ITEM 2: REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES

Table until next meeting - no copies available for review

ITEM 3: REVIEW FINANCIALS

Decide how or if to spend appropriated but unspent TIF funds. Over 100,000 is available, distributed in various buckets (i.e. trails, grants, etc.) We also have 150K as yet unappropriated.

In 2019 we granted 5,400 + 3,400 + 2,475 + 500 + 1,100 + 1,500 (14, 375 in total).

ITEM 4: REVIEW GRANT APPLICATIONS AND PROGRESS

Review of submitted grant from UBx for \$500 (of an overall \$2,500 budget) Marketing Grant to support advertising for an Easter Celebration, bringing children and families from RSU 3 school district to Unity Elementary for a day. Includes an egg hunt [Sat APR 4]. They are also discussing involving businesses by having a Rabbit “guest”(will purchase rabbit costume) at the businesses and on the Train, which will be running out to MOFGA, around Easter time. (Report on prior UBx grant for purchasing Unity logo items for resale - Najean says March is a realistic timeframe for that money to be spent).

Jean B. moves to approve the UBx Easter advertising grant. Motions carried 4:1

Larry brings up outstanding grants which haven't been completed, or receipted, or reported on. If the \$ are not spent as allocated within a “reasonable amount of time” it could be badly perceived by the public (and make it more difficult to

trace). He would like to set up folders in the town office where invoices and receipts could be deposited and able to be accessed and reviewed by Larry (as EDC chair).

Jean - we could provide a suggestion of a timeline to applicants when grants are requested. Larry says that we need to reiterate that receipts need to come back to the town office.

FOLW grant (May 2019) - Ellen reports that due to a late start, not all the money for the grant was spent. There is approximately 2000K remaining. After some discussion, the EDC generally agreed that FOLW may continue to use the balance if it is spent on similar work as was described in the original grant.

ITEM 5: CHARGING STATIONS

Jean - has secured a UBr site next to the medical clinic for an electric car charger. She is working on a spot at the Depot/ train lot and potentially near the grocery store.

She hopes to bring us a proposal (with at least two hosts lined up). ½ of the cost should be covered by Efficiency Maine grants. General notes: Chargers may make it more people likely to stop in our town for an extended period of time, and so they should be placed nearby businesses. We may want to include a level 2 and a level 3 charger (level 3 is faster charging, and works with Teslas, which other types cannot) next to each other at each location (this will last us longer and not be obsolete as quickly).

ITEM 6: UNITY POND ICE RACERS

Larry is reporting on behalf of Mike, one of the organizers. 200+ people attended the first racing weekend. A second weekend is upcoming (Feb 8th), with more sleds coming.

We could market this well with some drone footage of the races?

The Knox Boosters sold food from a food truck. - While the food was good, Larry would love to see a local group selling concessions.

Mamie's Country Kitchen opened early to accomodate guests and there were a lot of cars in their parking lot. Dunkin Donuts had a long line, too. Also reported more traffic at Edward's Shop n Save after the races.

The organizers have been flooding the track periodically to get a smooth surface.

ITEM 7: UNITY FARM DROP UPDATE

Kari Hulva: now has a Unity College student intern for marketing. Pick up hours have been expanded (2-6 pm, Friday). Order numbers have been increasing. He expects greens and early vegetables to come in during March. Customers want choice, farmers want to have more volume - they need to find a balance of options / farms (he thinks they need 2,500\$ in orders to reach a good balance - that is ~ 100 orders at our current average of 25\$/order.) They are working on offline marketing options like pizza giveaways/ hand out and talk events, etc. So far, all customer generation has come from already existing customer base from the farmers.

ITEM 8: UBx UPDATE

See grant review (Easter Event, getting logo apparel)

ITEM 9: MARKET OF UNITY UPDATES

Will start next month trying to line up vendors (some new vendors have been inquiring, and Larry will be soliciting at Bangor Mall craft fairs) and advertising. He would like to see it grow, though more people would require more work in organizing tables.

Jean B. suggests they consider allowing collectables as a category if they reserve a table. Other suggestions to avoid having people leave trash (after a 'yard sale') for example, is to take a "largish" deposit.

ITEM 10: ELECTRONIC SIGN

Larry - we have been told that we'd have to track sharing if we shared costs (TIF/town) which has held us back, but maybe this isn't as difficult as we might think. Events at businesses could be advertised, though not specific business offers. Emergency notices and resources could be posted. Anecdotally, involvement in town events increased when the town of Monroe put up a sign there.

Jean says - we ought to make sure we have a maintenance contract and a warranty if possible.

ITEM 11: ITEMS FOR WARRANTS

Penny says we should write an article (for an electronic sign) that describes what amount will be asked for, and what portion will come from Town funds vs. TIF funds. (By Feb 28 budget meeting at the latest).

Penny agrees to write the warrant if Larry will provide up to date pricing.

Najean S. moves to include an article for an electronic sign in the annual town meeting with a $\frac{2}{3}$: $\frac{1}{3}$ split (TIF: taxes) for no more than 15,000\$. Jean B. 2nds the motion. Motion passes unanimously.

ITEM 12: OPEN FLOOR

Penny - they will submit a budget for Kanokolus beach, for the PortaPotty, the CBI position, and boat launch maintenance and repairs in the sum of 3000\$. We have money still appropriated for Trails, so she simply needs EDC to agree it is ok to request these funds.

The EDC agrees that the Town can request 3000\$ for Boat Launch maintenance from already appropriated TIF fund.

Kari Hunt has, outside of Town Clerk duties, has digitized and put all graphs and charts from our old Comprehensive Plan (plus making some updates) in Excel and in an editable form that will make it easier to utilize for future planning projects. Penny requests 800\$ to pay for these services from "Professional Services," appropriations from TIF funds. Jean would love to see the digital version when it is available.

Larry moves to allocate no more than 800\$ to pay for the services in digitizing the old comprehensive plan. Ellen 2nds the motion. Motion passes unanimously.

Penny reports a used car business to move in the old trailer manufacturing location.

ITEM 14: ADJOURN - 7:40 pm.