

Cornwall Economic Development Commission

Meeting Minutes for 3/22/2022 @ 7:30 p.m. Via Zoom

In Attendance: Bianca Griggs, Simon Hewett, Gary Steinkohl, Jane Herold, Duncan Webb, William McClane, , Mare Rubin, Gordon Ridgway (ex officio), Oscar Anderson, Janet Carlson (Ex Officio), Priscilla Pavel (Ex Officio), Richard Bramley, ArnonFischer.

Guests: Nancy Berry, Neil Frauenglass, Richard Griggs, Ella Clark, Jen Markow (Parks & rec), Michelle Ship (Parks & Rec.)

The meeting was called to order at 7:35

Minutes from the February meeting were approved with one change requested.

Progress against Goals for 2022

Simon stressed that all EDC members should be associated with and work to support these goals for the coming year.

1. Continue to execute the Buy/Hire Local campaign launched in 2021.
 - a. Use of social media.
 - Bianca gave a brief report on getting new images for kiosk posters
2. Develop free Wi-Fi in Cornwall Village
 - a. Wi-Fi zone launched in West Cornwall in 2021
 - Gary reported on meeting with the technical installer who installed the wi-fi at the Library on. Options are being explored. Signage to indicate location of hot spots discussed.
3. Develop Spring and Summer Events.
 - a. The 12 Days of Christmas and a Spring/Summer event.
 - b. Propose a sub-committee to develop the summer events.
 - Mare reviewed recent meetings, including interest in a summer event. Discussed ideas such as home tours, fishing events, open air painting .A sub-committee was proposed. Gordon reminded the group on rules for such a group.A motion to set up the committee was proposed and passed, with Bill, Bianca , Jane and Jen Markow to join with Mare. Various event ideas were discussed, as was a coordinated event calendar that would be complementary to the Town calendar.
4. Support BOS in attracting new businesses/residents to Cornwall.
 - a. Support the Town website
 - Summary of website/EDC /Explore Cornwall activity and goals -
 - Jane has not yet met with Town website committee but will report soon.
 - It was suggested that available commercial properties be added to the website.
 - b. Create a strategy and tactics for the Explore Cornwall social media.

- Jane and Neil are working on a mock website for Explore Cornwall, similar to the one for Litchfield. Neil shared a preliminary version with the group.
- c. Purchase social media advertising to attract tourists and potential buyers
 - Neil discussed a small ad purchase to drive people to the website.
- d. Develop report of key local economic indicators.
 - Oscar reported on challenges of accessing meaningful data. A framework was offered to the group. Additional possible metrics might come from social media. Gordon will connect Oscar to more and better Town data. There were additional comments on how EDC should support local businesses. And how Mohawk visitors might be encouraged to support local businesses.
- 5. Improve connectivity in Cornwall, including cell and fiber.
 - a. Monitor Optimum fiber-laying plan for improved internet coverage of Cornwall
 - Gordon reported on progress, now developing questions for Optimum.
 - Optimum was reported to have applied to install cabinets, and it plans to string fiber later this year.

Unfinished Business

1. Text and Design for Kiosk Posters
 - Bianka reported that posters will be going to printers soon.
2. Recommendation to the BOS to have Mare Rubin be Cornwall's representative on the Western CT Tourism Board.
 - Gordon reported on the uncertain status of Tourism Board. He will check in with current representative as a next step.

Report of Selectmen

Gordon reported on West Cornwall Wastewater Treatment Facility project, advising that a \$3 million grant has been approved within coming federal budget. Next steps include updating project budget, applying for additional grants, bond counsel preparing text and then preparing for Town meetings leading up to a vote hopefully in July.

Gordon also advised that the West New England Greenway Bike Trail will soon be opening along Routes #7 and #4, bringing additional cyclists to the community.

Janet reported on her work bringing primary healthcare to Cornwall. The current plan is to have those services available in two Cornwall locations on May 6 at no cost to the Town. There is also a nurse with mobile facilities expressing an interest in coming to Cornwall.

Public Comment

Nancy commented on annual town report with all of its excellent information and metrics.

Announcements

The next meeting of the EDC is on April 26th at 7:30pm by Zoom.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:07PM