



Falmouth Economic Improvement Committee

Wednesday, December 16, 2015 Minutes

Attendance:

Name	Present	Name	Present	Name	Present
Sandra Lipsey	√	Dimitri Balatsos	√	Pam DiPietro-Hale	√
William Lunt III	√	Chris Wasileski	√		

- Council Liaison:** -
Staff present: Nathan Poore, Theo Holtwijk
Others present: -

The meeting was started at 4:00 PM.

1. Review of Draft Minutes of October 21, 2015 Meeting

The draft minutes of the October 21, 2015 meeting were unanimously approved as written.

2. Draft Town Permit Review Survey

The committee discussed if responses to the survey would be kept confidential. This would not be the case. Pam was wondering if any person or business did not go through the application process for one reason or another. Staff could not recall any. Nathan explained that if there are any issues with commercial application he typically gets involved as it may require a zoning amendment or schedule issue. Bill mentioned the case of Christman Pool and issues with TideSmart. Nathan stated that he got involved with those. Pam said that she felt that there had been a perceived obstacle with getting permits in Falmouth. Chris felt that issues typically involve the broad interpretation of zoning language and timeframe issues. Sandra noted that the survey results will percolate those issues, and that LPAC felt that there was a sense of rigidity with the ordinances that was not necessarily present at the Council level and that new Councils have been known to change their mind on issues. One example of that was Ridgewood project.

Dimitri offered some language edits to the survey. Bill felt that the survey should invite respondents to add suggestions how things could be remedied. Nathan stated that he saw the on-line survey as an initial way for contact to be made. The committee felt that it should be clear that it wanted to meet with respondents. Bill wanted to make sure that agents of applicants get the survey as well. Nathan stated that he could get information from the Community Development department on permit turnaround time.

Theo will draft a cover letter for Bill's signature. Sandra wanted to make sure that the survey allowed people to respond to multiple experiences that they may have had. Meetings will

attempt to be scheduled during the committee's regular meeting time. Bill wanted to make sure that a thank you gets sent to respondents. Theo noted that in the past the Town also shared the meeting notes, and could do so again.

3. Shop Falmouth 2015 Recap

Nathan reported that this year's Shop Falmouth exceeded all expectations. He cited the volunteer help and 400-500 attendees, e-mails, touch-a-truck event, and rave reviews of Santa on the Segway. The Town spent about \$20K. Next year will likely have a program or bulletin that showed all mini events that would be occurring. Nathan noted the partnership with the Chamber and Town of Cumberland. He said that there were about \$700-800 worth of prizes for the scavenger hunt and that the horse and wagon rides were all full. He stated that before the awards were handed out he spoke some words to commemorate the recent passing of Anne Theriault who had been passionate about Shop Falmouth. Nathan stated that the restaurants loved the event and that shops reported sales bump that day.

Sandra stated that this Shop Falmouth event showed the most energy of all she had seen and that she hoped for more signage in each store next time. She felt that businesses are becoming more engaged and that the event showed enough for others to begin believing in it. It was asked if Maine Audubon had been part of the event. Theo said yes. Nathan stated that he hoped the Town would ultimately have a 49% stake in the event. This year \$2K came from the Chamber, \$6K from Cumberland, and \$20K from Falmouth. The event was a community benefit as it was free for participants.

Nathan noted that the Town Council allocated \$25K for seed money for Tercentennial events through the TIF fund since the committee had suggested doing multiple events each year. He stated that the Town Councilors liked the Shop Falmouth event a lot. Chris noted the special holiday lighting that had been installed.

4. Other Business

Dimitri asked if there was an FEIC membership update. Theo said that he had no update on that. Theo also mentioned that the Town e-mailed all known businesses on Route 1 North corridor including Northbrook Drive to encourage their participation on the Route 1 North committee.

Nathan mentioned that the Town will announce a new business opportunity on January 7, 2016. There was a question if there were any updates regarding the Falmouth Shopping Center and the movie theatre. Nathan said there were no updates. He gave an update on Rivalries.

5. Next Meeting

Next meeting will be January 21 at 3:30 PM.

The committee adjourned at 4:55 PM.

Draft minutes prepared by Theo Holtwijk, September 21, 2015