

Town of Farmington
Economic Development Committee Minutes
Tuesday, December 10, 2013
6:00PM
Selectmen's Chambers
356 Main Street

Approved by Committee on January 14, 2014

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Gail Young, Chairman
Ann Titus, Vice Chairman
Denise Roy-Palmer
Jim Horgan, Selectman's Rep

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Brian St. Onge
Joan Funk
Elaine Aylard
Rodney Jablonski
Jodi Connolly

1. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Gail called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance at 6:07PM.

2. REVIEW OF MINUTES:

Gail stated that the Minutes from November 12, 2013 would need to be tabled since they are not included in the Committee packet.

MOTION: Ann motioned to table the November 12, 2013 meeting minutes.

SECOND: Denise

DISCUSSION: Denise stated that she did do them and asked for them to be included in this month's packet.

VOTE: All in favor. Motion passed.

3. UPDATE ON PUBLIC SAFETY BLDG

Jim stated that there was a discussion last night and noted that the PSA Committee has come a long way and they have put in a lot of time and thought on the proposal. He added that there was a disagreement on the space and the location and they will be discussing these items again. He stated that he does not what to say much right now and that the PSA Committee will be back on December 23rd to discuss it more. He added that the intent is not to bring it to the Board this month but possibly next month and added that the plan is to get it on the books and move from there even if that is next year.

Gail asked if he could share any of the details and Jim stated that it is a proposed combined building and Gail stated that the Fire and Police Departments used to have two separate budgets but now they

are combined into just one. Jim added that the total cost is estimated at 4.6 million and Ann asked if the BOS asked the PSA Committee if that amount could be reduced. Jim stated that was something that was brought up last night as well as maybe trimming down the size of the building. He added that some of the dimensions were missing last night and explained that the meeting on the December 23rd should have much more information. Jim stated that people need to understand that we don't need to spend 4.6 million now, but if the opportunity so did arise, the Town would be ready.

4. REVIEW SARAH GREENFIELD BUSINESS SIGN:

Gail stated that Jim was not at the last meeting and added that the sign needs to be replaced at the Sarah Greenfield. Gail added that she has received some information about the signs and the website is www.rentsigns.com if anyone wants to look at examples of signs that the company has done around Rochester and in this area. Gail stated that she has pick out a 4 x 8 sign that would be about \$2,400 which would include the granite post. She added that the company also has LED boards, but she thought these were out of our league. Jim agreed. Gail stated that the sign would list Sarah Greenfield but wondered if we should also include the other business located there. She added that there are many options and ways we could do this. Jim suggested that we asked the business owners to come to a meeting and add their input. Denise stated that there may be an issue with not knowing how many business spots the sign can hold. Ann stated that she hopes that this is not the site suggested for the new Public Safety building and Gail agreed.

Gail stated that she will forward the information that she has received to all committee members and depending on the total amount to replace the sign, we may need to go out to bid for this request. Denise asked if that amount was limited to \$2400 and Jim stated yes.

Gail asked if anyone knew if the downtown committee budget included the Christmas lights and added that she wants to make sure we have enough funds in that budget for this request. Jim asked why we are looking at a 4 X 8 sign and Gail stated that the person she has been working with drove by and saw the sign that is currently there and it is 4 x 8. Ann stated that she would think we would want to replace the current sign with same size sign and Gail agreed. Denise stated that again we need to consider if we are adding business names and if there is enough room for all the business names to be added.

5. DISCUSSION ON MARKETING CURRENT TOWN OWNED PROPERTIES AND FUTURE PROPERTIES:

Gail asked if the BOS has done anything and Denise stated no RFP has been written. Gail asked Jim if he could get an update from Keith. Denise asked Gail if we are proposing the RFP be written for a commercial broker for the residential lots, and can a commercial broker handle the resident areas. Gail stated that she was not sure.

6. DISCUSSION ON MARKETING MATERIAL (ANY SENT OUT TO PROSPECTIVE BUSINESSES), ALSO UPDATE ON RITE AID – PLANNING:

Gail read letter from Kathy Menici at the Planning Board, which was included in the Committee Packet. The letter stated that in March of this year Kathy put together an information packet and sent it to Rite Aid's Director of Development for the Northeast Region and when she followed up with him later, he thanked her and told her that he will contact her when or if Rite Aid decided to look for another location in Farmington.

Gail asked if we needed Kathy to do another follow up. Jim stated yes and he thinks Rite Aid is thinking about expanding. He added that on one hand they don't want to move from downtown, but on the other hand they want to expand. Gail asked if we needed any other info in the packets and Denise stated maps would be nice. She added that we can always use google online to review maps but we also need the paper maps too. Gail stated that we have some nice property downtown that is vacate now and Ann added that a new clothing store opened where Jimmiz Restaurant used to be.

7. EDC BUDGET REQUESTS:

Gail stated the budget will come up soon. Ann asked what we were looking for during the year and Gail stated the sign at Sarah Greenfield, but she is not sure whether they have to budget for the downtown light too. Ann stated that if the lights are coming out of this budget maybe that could change so that they come out of the Downtown budget instead. Denise stated that if the lights are coming out of this budget then we will need to ask for more funds since she believed that the lights cost \$1000.00 last year. Ann stated that she like the lights and wondered if there is something else we could do to cut the cost. Jim stated that he thought there was not much more to do since all the lights have been replaced and updated recently.

The Committee outlined the following EDC Budget for 2014:

4x8 sign for Sarah Greenfield = \$2800

Downtown Lights = \$1000

Marketing Material = \$200

Total = \$4000

Gail stated that she wants to make sure they have enough funds to cover the sign and Jim asked if there were any fees or other organization commitments to think about. Denise stated just the Seacoast Association. Ann asked if we could look at what that costs and Gail stated that we need a full time Economic Developer. Jim stated that we tried that before; it cost a lot of money and didn't work out. Gail asked when that was and Jim stated when Ernie was the Town Administrator. Denise added that she thought we got a lot of good out of that position. Jim stated that they are still trying to get a part-time finance position filled. Jim asked if there was anything in terms of advertising that we need to invest in. Denise stated that we could add \$5000 for that purpose and she could show him some of the examples. Jim asked if advertising really would cost \$5000 and Denise said no the amount is about \$500 and they are working on advertising for next year's publication now. Jim stated that amount makes more sense.

MOTION: Ann motioned to add \$400 to the budget making it total \$4400.00

SECOND: Denise

DISCUSSTION: None

VOTE: All in favor. Motion passes.

8. NEW BUSINESS:

Denise thanked the Recording Secretary for being here. Denise stated that the Farmington Economic Development Committee is presenting a 4 part Business Development Series that is be here upstairs and is held on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 6:00pm until 7:00. She said the first session was held on November 19th and the second session will be on Tuesday, December 17th, which will cover Business Plan Basics. She added that the 3rd session will be held on January 21st and the last session will be on February 18th. All sessions are free and there will be lots of information given out, and she encouraged everyone to attend.

Gail asked if there was any other new business and there was none.

9. OLD BUSINESS:

Jim stated that he is going to talk to Keith to get any updates on the current or the past discussions from the BOS.

10. ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: Ann motion to adjourn.

SECOND: Jim

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: All in favor. Motion passes

Committee adjourned at 6:48PM.

Respectfully submitted by Debra Cantwell, Recording Secretary