

MINUTES
SKOWHEGAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION MEETING
February 3, 2021
9:00 AM
Municipal Building Council Room & Online Zoom Meeting

Members Present:

Billy Finley, Chairman
Matt Dubois- Vice Chairman
Jason Gayne, Treasurer
Kristina Cannon
Reid Gibson
Cole Clement
Steve Gray

Members Absent:

Betty Austin
Todd Smith

Others Present:

Jeff Hewett, Director of Economic & Community Dev.
Renee Belliveau, Recording Secretary

1. Call meeting to order.

Billy Finley called the meeting to order at 9:02am., quorum was met.

2. Approve the Skowhegan Economic Development Corporation minutes from December 2, 2020.

Motion by Matt Dubois, seconded by Jason Gayne to approve the minutes from the “regular” meeting from December 2, 2020, vote 6-0 motion carried.

3. Approve the Skowhegan Economic Development Corporation financials from November, December of 2020 and January of 2021

Motion by Matt Dubois, seconded by Billy Findley to approve the financials from November, December of 2020 and January 2021. Vote 5-0, Jason Gayne abstained, motion carried.

4. Old Business

a. Discussion and Decision on New Balance renewal lease

New Balance has decided not to renew after the expiration of their current lease, April 30, 2021.

Genplex may be interested in the 7,000 sq feet bordering what they are currently renting.

Maine Cedar Hot Tub has shown interest in renting the space used by New Balance (about 14,000 sq ft). Matt Dubois proposed that if Maine Cedar Hot Tub would only like to use about 8,000 sq feet, they would pay the current market value for production rent (\$3.74/sq ft) and warehouse rent (\$2.40/sq ft), which is equal to what New Balance is currently paying at the moment. If they are interested in the entire 14,000 sq feet, we would offer a 20% reduction in costs for the full 1st year of rent. This would be on the manufacturing space as well as the warehouse space, depending on how it was decided on use by them.

Motion by Matt Dubois, seconded by Jason Gayne. Vote 5-0, Reid Gibson abstained, motion carried.

Jeff to assess odors/materials used by Maine Cedar in production and whether or not it will affect Genplex.

5. New Business

a. Discussion of the update to the Comprehensive Plan

Kristina proposes the board to review the documents and attachments given along with agenda, as well as her notes posted to meeting: “Because a comprehensive plan is a roadmap for a city's future. It tells a city how to manage growth, anticipate future infrastructure needs and create municipal budgets that support the future growth and needs of the city. The contents of a comprehensive plan can vary from community to community, but in most cases, a plan should consist of the following elements: land use (both existing and future), demographics (existing and projected), housing, infrastructure, education, recreation, and throughfares.”

Plan to discuss at next, regular meeting.

Kristina will collect data from absent businesses that cannot attend planning board meetings.

Jeff will get out information regarding comprehensive plan.

Jason will contact Cindy from Code Enforcement about Joel’s plan to discuss all aspects of plan and when this will occur for meetings.

b. Discussion and decision to approve up to \$2,264.06 for conversion of the second-floor lights at the Renaissance Center.

Motion by Matt Dubois, seconded by Reid Gibson, Vote 5-0 to move forward with quote and work from Kris Laney to replace second floor lighting in Renaissance Center.

Jason Gayne proposes to send out all projects to contractors so we are not only using the same companies for everything. We need to do better about allowing other

companies the chance to do work for us.

Jeff will look at creating a new way of posting work to make it competitive throughout local businesses.

c. Update to the board about the potential removal of Shawmut Dam.

Discussion about the impact this will have on Sappi, who will need to invest about \$100,000,000.00 to get water from the river, if allowed.

This will affect property values, recreation of the river, and Run of River project.

Kristina will check in with environmental engineer for a more neutral party to assess the affects this removal may cause.

There is a public hearing regarding this February 16th at 3:30pm.

6. Committee Reports by Members

a. Broadband

Jeff announced there is a big push for broadband home testing of speeds. There are state-wide issues, he will be sending out a link for everyone to initiate test on their own. Companies will be compiling information from the testing to help deliver better speeds for customers.

Cole left meeting at 10:19am

Kristina left meeting at 10:21am

7. Items by the Members

a. Cole will need to come in and sign oath.

b. Discussion about chairs in renaissance building corridors and are a fire hazard, that need to be stored/removed.

Jason Gayne proposes broken/damaged ones be thrown out. Billy Finley proposes the good ones be donated to the library store.

c. Discussion about issues with people sleeping in bathrooms at the Renaissance center. Jeff looking into a way to padlock bathroom doors but in the meantime, will ask tenants to lock up after they are done for the day. Will also look into intercom system for clients to use to unlock doors for meetings.

Motion by Billy Finley, seconded by Reid Gibson to adjourn the meeting at 10:36 am. Vote 4-0, motion carried.

