

Minutes
SKOWHEGAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
REGULAR MEETING
June 3, 2020
9:00 AM
Municipal Building– Council Room

Members Present:

Billy Finley, Vice-Chairman
Jason Gayne, Treasurer
Betty Austin
Kristina Cannon
Matt Dubois
Reid Gibson
Todd Smith

Members Absent:

Kurt Maynard, Chairman
Sally Dwyer

Others Present:

Dena Rich, Recording Secretary
Jeff Hewett, Director of Economic & Community Dev.

1. Call regular meeting to order.

Jeff Hewett called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m., quorum was met.

2. Nominate Chairman; Elect Chairman.

Motion by Matt Dubois, seconded by Betty Austin to nominate and elect Billy Finley as Chairman. Vote 6-0-1, motion carried Billy Finley abstained.

3. Nominate Vice-Chairman; Elect Vice -Chairman.

Motion by Billy Finley, seconded by Betty Austin to nominate and elect Matt Dubois as Vice-Chairman. Vote 6-0-1, motion carried Matt Dubois abstained.

4. Nominate Treasurer; Elect Treasurer.

Motion by Betty Austin, seconded by Todd Smith to nominate and elect Jason Gayne as Treasurer. Vote 6-0-1, motion Jason Gayne abstained.

5. Approve the Skowhegan Economic Development Corporation minutes the “regular” meeting March 11, 2020 and Email Polls from May 20, 2020 and May 26, 2020.

Motion by Matt Dubois, seconded by Jason Gayne to approve the minutes from the “regular” meeting March 11, 2020 and Email Polls from May 20, 2020 and May 26, 2020 as written. Vote 7-0, motion carried.

6. Approve the Skowhegan Economic Development Corporation financials from March, April and May.

Motion by Billy Finley, seconded by Reid Gibson to approve the financials from March, April and May. Vote 7-0, motion carried.

7. Old Business

a. Executive Session in accordance with M.R.S.A. Title 1 §405 (6)(C) to discuss property negotiations.

Jeff Hewett asked to move this agenda item to after 8. b.

Motion by Jason Gayne, seconded by Betty Austin to go into executive session in accordance with M.R.S.A. Title 1 §405 (6)(C) to discuss property negotiations at 10:01 a.m. and to allow Dena Rich to stay in the room. Vote 7-0, motion carried.

Motion by Billy Finley, seconded by Matt Dubois to come out of executive session at 10:19 a.m. Vote 7-0, motion carried.

Motion by Matt Dubois, seconded by Betty Austin to accept Ken Lexier’s draft proposal created for SEDC along with the amendments of that SEDC will act as fiscal sponsor for any grant applications to development the property, SEDC will not charge a fee for fiscal agency relationship, SEDC will also have a level of oversight with the Real Estate Subcommittee doing 6 month check to then be reported back to the Board for further transparency and SEDC is free from all liability for the project. Vote 7-0, motion carried.

b. Discussion and decision on extending the suspension of RLF loan payments for June.

Motion by Jason Gayne, seconded by Billy Finley to extend the suspension of the RLF loan payments for June. Vote 7-0, motion carried.

8. New Business

a. Discussion and decision to donate \$5,000.00 to the Skowhegan Regional Chamber of Commerce Gift Certificate Program.

Jeff Hewett let the Board know this is the Program that Jason discussed at our last meeting but we did not take action at that time. Jeff Hewett asked Jason Gayne give an update about the program.

Jason Gayne let the Board know at this time they have done 3 rounds of funding. The first two rounds were by donations, last week Dunkin Donuts donated gift certificates; if a \$50 gift card was purchased you were given a \$25 to Dunkin Donuts. There are a lot of people who want to support the businesses and this program has taken off. With this program the businesses get the money within 24 hrs. This is also not just for Chamber member businesses gift certificates can be purchased from any business.

Betty Austin asked if new businesses want to get involved as sponsors.

Jason Gayne said yes there are quite a few that have contacted to step up to do sponsorships.

Reid Gibson asked if there is a limit on the amount of the gift certificate that can be purchased?

Jason Gayne said the limit is \$250.00.

Motion by Reid Gibson, seconded by Betty Austin to donate \$5,000.00 to the Skowhegan Regional Chamber of Commerce Gift Certificate Program. Vote 6-0-1, motion carried Jason Gayne abstained.

b. Discussion and decision on providing emergency loan funds with minimum loan requirements and with delayed loan payments up to 12 months.

Jeff Hewett this is an offshoot from last meeting did donate money direct to Main Street to the Technical Assistance Program. This would be a step over that if we want to look at potentially going up to \$15-20,000 loans with some minimum requirements. Jeff Hewett did say that SEDC could use their own funds and not have to go to the Selectmen like the RLF and Micro loans require.

The Board had a brief discussion on using SEDC funds with less restrictions following the SBA emergency loan.

Kristina Cannon let the Board know what funding Main Street had received for the Technical Assistance Program. (\$5,000 from SEDC, \$1,000 Hight Family of Dealership, giving a total of \$10,000 on top of the money donated from the four banks). There is over \$50,000 in requests for the program at this time.

Motion by Matt Dubois, seconded by Jason Gayne to not to exceed \$50,000 of SEDC Funds to start an Emergency Loan fund with a maximum 10 year pay back and one-year delayed payments with an interest rate of 2.75% and security will be required.

Motion amended by Matt Dubois, seconded by Billy Finley to include a loan request amount of \$7,500. Vote 7-0, motion carried.

Motion by Reid Gibson, seconded by Betty Austin to donate an additional \$5,000.00 to the Main Street Skowhegan Technical Assistance Program. Vote 6-0-1, motion carried Mat Dubois abstained.

Reid Gibson brought up he has a couple of nominations of people who want to join the Board; Cole Clement from Skowhegan Savings Bank and Patrick Dore from Franklin Savings Bank.

Jeff Hewett said this came out after the agenda went out, and email came into the office from Davin Kangas owner of Victory Cabinets, LLC about renting the Retail Space at the Renaissance Center; the email as sent out to the Board separately.

Motion by Kristina Cannon, seconded by Reid Gibson to rent the Retail Space at the Renaissance Center to Victory Cabinet, LLC at \$450.00 a month with utilities included with a month to month lease to start immediately. Vote 7-0, motion carried.

c. Executive Session in accordance with M.R.S.A. Title 1 §405 (6)(F) to discuss loans.

Motion by Jason Gayne, seconded by Betty Austin to go into executive session to discuss in accordance with M.R.S.A. Title 1 §405 (6)(F) to discuss loans at 10:22 a.m. and to allow Dena Rich to stay in the room. Vote 7-0, motion carried.

Motion by Matt Dubois, seconded by Billy Finley to come out of executive session. Vote 7-0, motion carried.

Motion by Reid Gibson, seconded by Jason Gayne to make recommendation to the Selectmen to give an RLF loan to Stanley McGray for \$15,000 with a term of 3 years with the 1-year delayed payment at 4.5% with collateral that Stan has offered in his application. Vote 7-0, motion carried.

9. Items by the Real Estate Sub-Committee Members.

No items by the Real Estate Sub-Committee Members not already discussed during meeting.

10. Project Updates

Broadband, Comprehensive Plan, Electric Car Charging Stations, Marketing of Southgate, Run of River

Electric Car Charging Station - Jeff Hewett let the Board know that we are in the final stages of the car chargers. He is waiting on a quote from a contractor about cement work and should have that by the second meeting for the Selectmen in June.

Run of River – Kristina Cannon let the Board know working on the renderings for the donation/funding materials. They have hired a new environmental engineer who worked with Franklin, New Hampshire who received their whitewater permit two weeks ago. Kristina has been in contact with the park in Franklin and they are encouraged that having both parks in New England will draw more Whitewater enthusiasts to come try them out.

11. Items by the Members

Matt Dubois asked about the project at Southgate and the sign.

Jeff Hewett said we need to get in contact with Gary York with everything going on there have been some delays.

Betty Austin said after this meeting she will give Gary a call as well.

Kristina Cannon said Main Street applied and received funding from the Maine Community Foundation to do an industry market analysis for Skowhegan. Focused on the outdoor recreation industry in anticipation for Run of River and the local food industry. So, they have hired a firm to help with this and delivery a report to Main Street that tells about both industries. That report can be shared with developers, current business owners and new entrepreneurs who either want to start a new business in Skowhegan or have been interested in Skowhegan.

Billy Finley asked about the HDTV Main Street Makeover that a couple of rural towns have received \$500,000 for?

Kristina Cannon said a business owner in Town sent some information about this to her just before the deadline and didn't have enough time to pull anything together for it. But Main Street is definitely considering it for the future if it comes available again.

12. Economic & Community Development Office Items

Jeff Hewett said from our office he had a question for the Board at what date do we start looking at bringing the public restrooms back on at the Renaissance Center. We have had them closed because as of right now the guidelines are that you have to have them cleaned multiple times a day and we don't have staff for this. The Board agreed to hold off on opening the restrooms until the guidelines change and bring this back to the Board.

Reid Gibson asked if all future SEDC meetings would be zoom meetings?

Jeff Hewett said that the Planning Board last night met in person. The issue for them they met in person but because the public could not attend, they still needed to go live on Facebook. So, Jeff felt that zoom meetings make more sense to continue doing for SEDC Meetings. But we may get new guidelines that could change everything.

The Board agreed to do the July 1st meeting as a zoom meeting and be at 8:00 a.m.

Motion to Adjourn by Matt Dubois, seconded by Billy Finley at 10:56 a.m.