

**Town of Shaftsbury**  
**Economic Development Committee (ECD) Meeting**

Cole Hall and remotely via Zoom

Thursday, March 23, 2023

1. Call to Order

The meeting came to order at 3 p.m. Present were committee members Martha Cornwell (chair), Rick Bennett, Emily Cowperthwaite, Andrea Bacchi, and Marita Cockburn. Town administrator David Kiernan was also present.

2. Conflict of interest

No one reported a conflict of interest with any item on the agenda.

2. Public Comments

There were none.

3. Mission Statement / Goals

A discussion was held of how to make clear that all enterprises and occupations will be supported by the efforts of the committee. Mr. Bennett will make some edits and share with all.

4. Press release

Ms. Bacchi will send her draft to all.

5. Draft RFP for consultant

Mr. Kiernan said the RFP didn't have to include the offer of \$40,000 for the consultant. Ms. Cornwell read out some tasks outlined in the Newfane RFP which she found useful. Mr. Kiernan will craft a draft including some of the Newfane tasks. Ms. Cornwell said the consultant should help with the new community space, the renovation of Cole Hall, and projects proposed by the Historical Society and the Community House. She thought the consultant should share a portfolio with the committee. Mr. Bennett said he wouldn't want to include an analysis of existing conditions in the to-do list; those data are already available. Mr. Kiernan said he thought the emphasis should be on raising funds for high priority projects. He also noted that citizens will be asking for several things, many of which won't be all that expensive. Ms. Cockburn wondered whether an application process for citizen requests might be a good idea. Mr. Kiernan said the consultant should be able to connect committee members and citizens with resources. Mr. Kiernan will draft and share an RFP. He said it doesn't have to be voted on.

6. Sewer Feasibility update

Mr. Kiernan said the proposal is on the move at Montpelier. He hopes to hear by July. If the state approves the application, he hopes to receive at least some project deliverables in spring 2024.

7. Other Business

Ms. Cornwell said several citizens have asked her to host a public meeting about the ARPA recommendations. Mr. Bennett said that has already happened. Mr. Kiernan said nothing has changed since the priorities were formulated; once a consultant has offered ideas further comment would be appropriate.

Ms. Bacchi said the Southern Vermont Economic Development summit is coming up, at the Hermitage. Mr. Kiernan said the town will pay the attendance fee and mileage costs for anyone on the committee who wishes to attend.

Ms. Cornwell shared with the group an actions-organizing template created by McCullough Library. It might help the ECD focus its efforts.

Ms. Bacchi suggested a food truck festival. Ms. Cockburn suggested something a little outside the box. Ms. Cornwell said a few years ago the town regularly sponsored a block party on Cleveland Avenue.

#### 8. Review of Action Items

Mr. Bennett: draft mission statement.

Ms. Bacchi: press release.

Mr. Kiernan: RFP

Ms. Cornwell: library flier to Andrea and Emily.

Mr. Bennett asked that folks send their ideas to all ahead of time, so folks can think about them ahead of time and be ready to make decisions at the meeting.

Mr. Bennett noted there is an online center, "Playtime," for Pickleball in southern Vermont. Shaftsbury is not on it. He said the game is essentially a socializing opportunity. Mr. Kiernan said there has been no push from the PB audience in Shaftsbury for play time.

The next meeting will be held Thursday April 27 at 4 p.

#### 9. Adjournment

Ms. Bacchi moved to adjourn at 4:05 p.m. Mr. Bennett seconded the motion, which passed 5-0-0.