

BUSINESS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

SPECIAL JOINT MEETING DECEMBER 29, 2016 MINUTES

PRESENT

BEDC Members: Robert Clarke, Joe Donato, Paul Luchetti, Ray Manzi, Karen Reddington-Hughes,
Kathleen Dowd (by phone)

BEDC Members Absent: Irene Hanley

BOARD OF SELECTMEN: William J. Butterly, Jr., First Selectman; Barbara Perkinson, Mike Gransky

Also Present: Mr. Tim Good, Kent Chamber of Commerce & The Good Gallery; Mike Preato –*Voices*,
Residents – Kathy Doyle, Barbara Potter

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Donato called the special joint meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. at the Rec House.

SEATING OF MEMBERS

Chairman Donato seated all members.

WOODBURY VISITOR GUIDE

BEDC Member Karen Reddington-Hughes explained the Visitor Guide idea came out of the SDAT/AIA study. She found the "Passport to Kent" in her travels and contacted the Chamber of Commerce in Kent to learn more. She spoke with Tim Good, Vice Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce in Kent. Ms. Hughes spoke to the benefits of the Guide and its sections. It can have a reach beyond local business to include travel writers and tourist centers. The cost of the guide is paid for by the advertising. Ms. Hughes also indicated that this can be easily partnered with a 'visitwoodburyct.com' visitor website. She turned the discussion over to Mr. Tim Good.

Mr. Good provided an overview of "Passport to Kent" and how it came to fruition. He passed out the prospectus for Woodbury. The costs are not finalized. The actual cost to produce it will depend on the number of advertisements and listings sold. He explained how the cover, center pages and maps can be 'customized' for an organization or business for an additional fee. The goal is to start after the holiday, if the go ahead is given, so that it can be printed and distributed in time for spring tourist season. Mr. Good provided the attendees with a spreadsheet of a sample layout of the pages. First Selectman B. Butterly asked if the map could be different for Woodbury as there is no 'Town Center'. Mr. Good indicated there is flexibility with the map. The book can be bound as vertical or horizontal. It is a decision that will need to be made. Selectman Perkinson asked how often Kent's book is updated. Mr. Good replied it is now an annual publication. Selectman Perkinson asked where Kent's book was placed. Mr. Good indicated that it is at all the schools, local businesses, town hall, tourism centers, a few neighboring towns and the Mass Fair (Big E). There was a discussion about whether the CT tourism centers are still open. This will be confirmed before any distribution is done. First Selectman Butterly wanted to know if the Town of Kent contributed to the initial guide. Mr. Good responded the beauty of this product is that it paid for itself through the ads.

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The discussion turned to advertising sales. BEDC Member R. Manzi wanted to know who sells the ads. BEDC Member K. Reddington-Hughes indicated the BEDC. She indicated that information will be placed on the town website and sent out to the media so to attract as many interested businesses and organizations as possible. Mr. Good indicated that he would be available to assist if needed. He also offered to prepare a leaflet for use by the BEDC to provide information to the potential advertiser. BEDC Member Donato asked if selling at least 21 pages of ads and three pages of premium listings is the goal. Mr. Good indicated there is no specific limit. This is a good target. First Selectman Butterly commented that Woodbury has more business so it is possible that Woodbury's visitor guide may be larger. Those present then had a discussion of possible businesses and organizations who might be interested in the 'customized' version that highlights their business/organization. BEDC Member R. Manzi wanted to know what would happen to the revenue if ad sales exceed the cost to produce the guide. Mr. Good responded that the decision could be made to put the monies toward the next guide or use it to fund future BEDC activities. Selectman Perkinson asked if there is data to support Kent's Passport success. Mr. Good replied there is no empirical data, rather, it is anecdotal. The response from local retailers is very positive. Business owners are asking him when they can buy space in the next guide. First Selectman Butterly indicated that the Board of Selectmen will act on the project at their first regular meeting in 2017. He did not foresee any objections as no seed money is involved. Mr. Good left the meeting at this point.

WOODBURY VISITOR WEBSITE

Chairman Donato explained the BEDC wants to establish a visitor website, "visitwoodburyct.com". This will complement the visitor guide. He said the cost to acquire the domain name is \$70 for five years. Mr. Donato reviewed the costs for establishing a visitor website. First Selectman Butterly said it appears the website may be in competition with the Town's. Mr. Donato said the new website would be targeted to visitors. The Town's website is informational in nature and for residents. The new website can have a link to the Town's website. Chairman Donato reached out by phone to BEDC Member K. Dowd so she could provide additional information on the project. Ms. Dowd reviewed the pricing. She indicated that the new website would mirror the passport look and feel. It can be developed at minimal cost. Ms. Dowd reinforced that it is a promotional website for the Town of Woodbury.

BEDC Member Dowd spoke about the need to improve the Town's on-line presence in search engines. She said this requires an investment of \$2000-\$3,000 to set up and at minimum \$500 per month commitment for advertising. BEDC Member Dowd considered this a long term goal. Selectman Perkinson raised the cost of website maintenance. Ms. Dowd explained this is included in the initial price. The website is being designed using WordPress – a free software program. It will be managed and maintained by the BEDC. First Selectman Butterly would like a Visitor Website Proposal with all the particulars for review. He wants to be sure it is not competing with other businesses. He wishes to run it by former members of the Ad-Hoc Telecommunications Committee. First Selectman Butterly briefly described the work done for the Town website by the committee to prevent items like pop-ups. They have the technical knowledge and can ensure proper protections are in place. Once the proposal is received in his office, he will have another meeting to discuss the proposal in detail.

CERC WORKSHOP- January 11, 2017

BEDC Member K. Reddington-Hughes reminded the committee about the upcoming workshop on January 11th. She said a letter was sent out from the Selectman's office to all Board and Commission Chairmen. To-date only ten people have signed up (six are BEDC members). Selectmen Gransky and Perkinson indicated they would be in attendance. There is a required minimum of 20 participants. First

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Selectman Butterly asked Ms. Reddington-Hughes to contact him on Tuesday about sending out a reminder.

BEDC SPECIAL REVENUE UPDATE

An update on the balance will be shared at Wednesday's BEDC meeting on January 7th.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Donato adjourned the meeting at 5:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted subject to committee approval,

Kathy Doyle

Kathy Doyle, volunteer clerk

RECEIVED & FILED
IN WOODBURY, CT

This 4 day of Jan 2017

at 11:15 o'clock A M

Sandra L. Cash
Town Clerk