



August 29, 2014

To: Mayor Jones and Milton Town Council

Re: EDC Report and Recommendation for Media Consultant

Mayor and Council,

The Economic Development Committee (EDC) did not meet in August due to a lack of a quorum at the scheduled meeting so this letter and the attached proposal will serve as our report for August. At our July meeting the committee agreed to recommend to you that the town hire a part time media consultant for the purpose of creating and managing social media advertising, i.e. FaceBook, etc. Attached for your consideration is that proposal which the EDC recommends you accept and act on

Based on the current social media environment and its importance to businesses and people, in general, the EDC believes that the time has come for Milton to more fully participate in the communication environment that clearly has been adopted by most of the country.

As an example, it is so important to Dogfish Head and Irish Eyes that they have dedicated resources managing their social media and advertising.

We believe that Milton needs to embrace this new environment to provide an opportunity for the Town to grow.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert S. Howard". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail that extends to the right.

Robert S. Howard  
Chairman – Milton Economic Development Committee

## **EDC Proposal for a Town of Milton Media Consultant**

### **Background:**

The Town of Milton is, in ones sense a business, albeit a non-profit business, but a business just the same. All businesses offer services and/or products and need clientele to make the business successful. The clientele for the Town of Milton are the residents, visitors and small businesses. Its income is derived from property taxes, licenses and fees. It competes for clients with other communities in Sussex County.

All businesses, including the Town of Milton, require promotion via marketing and advertising. Without these, the residents, visitors and small businesses that already exist and those that might want to establish a presence in Milton, have little information that is readily available about what Milton has to offer.

### **Opportunity:**

If one looks around at other small towns in the area, it becomes obvious that these towns are self-promoting themselves in print, TV and most importantly social media.

Most small businesses will agree that promotion on social media is the most important and successful way that they advertise their services and products.

The Town of Milton does not have a Facebook presence and is only visible on the Internet via the Town website. While the Town website has information about Town events and activities, it does not lend itself to Internet visitors looking for reasons to come to Milton.

This lack of Internet presence puts Milton at a huge disadvantage when it comes to promoting the Town for prospective small businesses and visitors.

### **Recommendation:**

The Economic Development Committee recommends that the town hire a part time employee, preferably as a contract employee, with specific responsibilities to improve the town's presence in Social Media. Specifically, the employee should develop and maintain a Facebook page for the Town of Milton, establish links between the Facebook page and the Town's Website, recommend improvements to the Town's Website and make recommendations to council for other ways to improve its presence in Social Media and to improve its image through advertising.

Although the work effort proposed could be performed by a volunteer, this would minimize the responsibility and accountability required by this position as,

Steve Crawford/Bob Howard  
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particularly with social media, updating of information is essential. Therefore, the Town should invest resources to hire a part-time person with the sole responsibility of planning and executing an on-going marketing and advertising campaign that promotes our Town to visitors and small businesses. Attached are some of the vehicles that should be explored to support such a campaign.

A primary requirement for this individual should be that he/she be experienced with social media. In addition, this individual should be familiar with print and TV advertising.

If the Town of Milton, both government and residents, are serious about moving the Town forward, this should be considered an imperative.

**Cost/Benefit:**

Recognizing that any time there is a suggestion that will require funding, there is a valid question of 'cost versus benefit' that typically is raised.

**Cost Estimate:**

The following information was gathered from some businesses in town and individuals who are familiar with media advertising, social and otherwise. The cost of an individual to perform the required work would be approximately \$20/hour with an initial amount of work-time to be 8 hours/week. This would result in a cost of \$160 per week or \$8,320/year.

By using a contract employee, the effectiveness of the arrangement could be evaluated periodically and if the arrangement does not appear to be beneficial, it could be ended with minimal impact.

**Benefit Estimate:**

Anyone who is familiar with advertising, and social media as a form of advertising, will admit that hard benefit data is not easily obtainable, if at all. Qualitative evaluation of the benefits should be relatively straightforward, however, and could be evaluated by interviewing citizens of the town, visitors and new arrivals. The fact that most all successful businesses advertise in some form or other and have internet presence suggests that regardless of the lack of defined benefit, advertising and social media are required to promote a product or service. In this case, we want to promote the Town of Milton and all the good attributes it has to offer.

The solution to the town's budget problems, other than tax increases or service cuts, is growth. Some growth is bound to happen in the Sussex County environment, but we can, and should, try to improve the rate of smart growth in every possible way. This proposal has a modest cost and a potentially large impact.

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**Attachment**

**Marketing/Advertising Media Suggestions:**

**Town promotion advertising:**

Town website

Billboard

Movie Theater

Social Media

Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, etc.

Webpage linkage to other sites; Dogfish, Irish Eyes, etc

Print

Magazines

Newspapers

Brochures

You are here maps

Coordination with businesses and Chamber of Commerce (COC) for event driven advertising

Collaboration with businesses and COC for non-event 'town' advertising

Real estate site ads