



Milton Economic Development Committee
Meeting Minutes – 3-12-2015
WBOC Conference Room - 5:30 PM
1 The Square, Milton

1. The meeting came to order at about 5:30 PM. Bob Howard chaired the meeting.

2. The following people were in attendance:

Committee Members:

- Bob Blayney
- Michela Coffaro
- Mike Clark
- Steve Crawford
- Jim Crellin
- Bob Howard

Visitors:

Councilman-Elect Ed Kost
Councilman-Elect Ted Kanakos

3. The agenda was agreed to as published.

4. The minutes of the 2/12/15 meeting were approved with a recommended change to include in the announcement section information about Michela Coffaro attending the National Main Streets Conference in Atlanta.

5. Announcements -

- Steve Crawford suggested to the members that if they have any agenda items for an upcoming EDC meeting they need to simply email Steve with that item. That due to FOIA rules, the agenda for any meeting needs to be sent to Town Hall at least 7 days in advance. Steve stated that he like to get the agenda to Town Hall 9 days in advance to allow for any changes and posting delays. He also stated that he sends out the upcoming meeting agenda and previous meeting minutes about a week ahead of the meeting to allow time for members to review. If members have any concern about how this is being managed, Steve is open to any and all suggestions.

6. Old Business:

6.1 Sussex Grant Recommendation Letter – Although the EDC made a recommendation to use the money for the mural project, the clock project and for tree replacement on Union and Federal streets, Bob Howard reported that the Council and Mayor voted to use the Sussex Grant money (\$10,000) to repair the sidewalk on Magnolia Street.

6.2 EDC Advisor for New Small Business – Steve Crawford stated that he has sent a revised write-up to John Collier who has acknowledged that he has received it. Steve is waiting to hear back from John for his comments. Steve explained to the 2 Councilmen-Elect that the purpose of this proposal was to help new storefront businesses with any questions they may have regarding the Town processes and meeting schedules. It is not intended to be a mentorship for the new business on how to run their business.

6.3 St Pats Day Advertisement - Steve Crawford stated that the advertisement was successfully run in the Feb 27 edition. He asked if there were any other upcoming event that might warrant a similar ad. After some discussion, he will investigate the possibility of supporting the Milton fishing contest.

6.4 Signage Project Status – Alex Donnan was not at the meeting but Steve Crawford reported that Alex had given him the following update. Alex is still working on finding a suitable site for the large Welcome to Milton sign to be placed on Route 1 north of the Route 5 exit. He is also working to get a final design on the Milton Riverwalk sign for the archway between Irish Eyes and the Mercantile buildings. The USDA grant has been extended.

Ed Kost, Councilman-Elect stated that he is pursuing a Milton Memorial Park sign to be placed on the Milton Museum's vacant lot across from Chandler Street. He presented a design that would identify activities that are available in the park.

6.5 Downtown District Application Ad-hoc Committee Recommendation Letter - Steve Crawford volunteered to write a letter recommending that the Town Council and Mayor form an ad-hoc committee to start the process of gathering information for next year's possible grant submission. The letter was reviewed and it was agreed that it was appropriate to be sent to Council and the Mayor.

6.6 Letter to Town Re: Disposition of Fundraising Funds - Bob Howard drafted a letter of response to the letter received from Michael Cote' regarding the return of the cash money held by the EDC from a previous year's bake sale. It requests clarification of the rules for managing such funds. In addition, it requests that the EDC be allowed to spend the money for activities that support the town. After review, it was agreed that it was appropriate for the letter to be sent.

Note: Although not on the agenda, Michela Coffaro asked about the Mural Project. A brief discussion ensued and it was explained that this project has been removed from the purview of the EDC as the Town did not agree to a funding request during the town budget discussions. As a result, the project is moving forward by a group of private citizens with the support of the Milton Community Foundation.

7. New Business Discussion

7.1 Sidewalks, Trees and Grates - At the last EDC meeting there was a discussion about the issue of sidewalk, trees and grates. With more businesses and visitors in the downtown area, walking and parking has become an issue re: tree and grate obstruction. In addition, the building owners/businessmen also have expressed a concern. (See Item 7.2 below).

As a result of a robust discussion among the EDC members and the Councilmen elect, was decided that a sub-committee be formed to start to address the issue with the various interested parties. Bob Blayney, Jim Crellin and Steve Crawford volunteered to be on this sub-committee and start to work the issue. Michela suggested that the Garden Club be brought into the discussion and further, asked for their input toward a solution. Based on a decision of the EDC members, it was agreed that this sub-committee be empowered to initiate an initial meeting to bring all parties together to work on a solution agreeable to all. They will report back to the EDC at the next meeting with a status of their efforts.

7.2 Advisory Committee Member Meeting on February 17th – Bob Howard reported that he and Steve Crawford met with Tom Jones and Glenn Howard, two of the four members of the Advisory Committee. Mark Carter, who had a scheduling conflict, and Richard Reed did not attend. During the meeting, the major issue that was discussed was the issue of the sidewalk grates and trees. Both Tom and Glenn see these items as a impediment to walking and parking on Union and Federal Streets. During the discussions, Steve suggested that a meeting with all interested parties be convened to find a solution to the issue.

In addition, the representatives of the Advisory Committee thought that the July 4th town event be paid for by the town. Their opinion is that the town benefits from the event and therefore should be paid for by the town.

Michela suggested that the EDC find out from Charlene Jones what the cost of last year's event was and what the costs were for. Mike Clark stated that there were a group of businesses and organizations that came together to plan the event. While it was not a high-budget event, it still required funding. He further stated that there are going to be discussions about how to expand this year's event. Bob Howard stated that at last year's event the EDC paid for the dunk tank and that it was a successful effort.

Ed Kost, Councilman-Elect suggested that if the EDC were to bring a recommendation to the Council for event funding, the first thing to be asked is for 'how much and what for'? The EDC will contact Charlene Jones for information.

7.3 Sustainability – Michela Coffaro presented information to the members about what sustainability is and how it can be used to the benefit of the town and it's residents. It can be a program to preserve our ecosystem and beautify our town as well as to preserve water. This can give us an economic development advantage. She brought handouts that included information about the 'Gathering Renewals' meeting in Rehoboth on May 31st to educate and inform the public about the advantages of sustainability efforts.

Jim Crellin offered that perhaps once a month the Farmers Market could support sustainability by having state and county representatives present sustainability information.

Michela and Bob Howard stated that on April 11th the Milton Theater will be presenting two documentary films on sustainability and that Bob will also be showing the sustainability pop-up displays in the lobby.

Michela is going to work to get Shelly Grabel from DelTech to present to the EDC a previously scheduled sustainability presentation that could lead to educational opportunities for the town and it's residents.

Michela suggested that a sustainability subcommittee be formed to move this effort forward. Michela volunteered to head this subcommittee and Bob Howard agreed to be a member.

7.4 Council Representation on the EDC – Michela Coffaro stated to Councilmen- Elect, Kost and Kanakos that the EDC is supposed to have a representative from Council at the EDC meetings. She asked that this issue be brought back to the Mayor for consideration.

Bob Howard also suggested that there be an effort to engage non-EDC members in volunteer work with the EDC.

7.5 Emergency Notification – Michela Coffaro stated that she was asked by several businesses to state that when there is a town emergency and/or disruption of town services; i.e. water, that the town send out notification to the businesses and residents about the event. There was discussion about how the town could do this. Bob Howard stated that Lewis has an email process to all who have given the town their email address and offered to send the Mayor a recommendation to institute a similar system. Bob Blayney stated that this was not an EDC issue but a town maintenance issue. Councilman-Elect Kanakos suggested that the EDC send a recommendation. Councilman-Elect Ed Kosk suggested that someone from the EDC attend a town forum meeting on Saturday the 19th to bring this issue up to the town for consideration. Bob Howard was volunteered to do this.

The next meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, April 9th at 5:30** in the WBOC Conference Room.

Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:55 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Crawford

Attachment: Action Items from 3-12-15 Meeting

- **Steve Crawford – EDC Advisory Activity: Proj Coord. to EDC Linkage**
- **Alex Donnan – Current activities and status of Signage Project**
- **Steve Crawford – Status of Future Town Advertisements**
- **Bob Blayney, Jim Crellin, Steve Crawford – Sidewalks, Trees and Grates Subcommittee Status**
- **Michela Coffaro – Status Sustainability Subcommittee**
- **Bob Howard – Cost Estimate from Charlene Jones Re: July 4th Event**
- **Bob Howard – Status of Emergency Notification Discussion**