

Community & Economic Development Committee
Thursday, December 9, 2021
Town Office Conference Room - 6:30 PM

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

The Poland CEDC meeting for December 9, 2021, was called to order at 6:32 pm, by Chair Jennifer Letourneau. The Chair, as well as members Cyndi Robbins, Sheila Foley, Norm Davis, Raymond Cloutier, Stacey Bsullak, and Chrissy Kimball, are present. Alternate Bill Eldridge is absent.

Public Attendance: Recording Secretary Alex Sirois and Selectboard Member Nate McNally.

MINUTES

November 4, 2021

- Vice-Chair Cyndi Robbins makes a motion to accept the minutes for November 4, 2021, as presented, seconded by Member Sheila Foley. No discussion.
VOTE: YES - 4 NO - 0 ABSTAINED - 1 (S. Bsullak)

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

REPORTS

Financial Report

- Vice-Chair Cyndi Robbins makes a motion to accept the financial report, seconded by Member Norm Davis. No discussion.
VOTE: YES - 6 NO - 0

Planning and Development Report

- No new businesses were registered by the Planning and Development Office since the last meeting.
- No new Site Plan Applications were approved by the Planning Board since the last meeting:
- The following commercial building permits were issued by the Code Enforcement Office since the last meeting:
 - Brenda Merritt received approval to install a new sign at 1484 Maine Street, with a cost of work totaling \$5,000.
 - RSU 16 received approval to install an 8' x 40' storage container to store drama equipment at 1457 Maine Street, with a cost of work totaling \$5,981.00.
 - Fairlawn Golfcourse received approval to renovate their existing structure at 388 Empire Road, with a cost of work totaling \$15,000.

COMMUNICATIONS

Downtown Design Standards Memo

- Vice-Chair Cyndi Robbins suggests adding in her meeting with Amy in May.
- Member Sheila Foley thinks the mission statement needs some tweaking. The goal of the CEDC is to make sure there is a certain appearance upheld but to still allow for some creativity that will enhance the town.
- The Committee has until December 16th to send any amendments to the letter to Alex.
- The Planning Board will be invited to the January 6th meeting for a joint workshop.

Board of Selectpersons Meeting with CEDC - December 21, 2021

- Chair Jennifer Letourneau will attend the Selectboard's December 21, 2021, meeting to discuss the proposed CEDC budget.

Letter to the Board of Selectpersons

- Selectboard Member Nate McNally takes a moment to address the minutes from the previous meeting. He has missed a few meetings due to sickness and other things that came up. He asks that if there is a problem that you reach out to him directly. If the Committee does not feel he is filling the liaison position correctly someone else can. Nate chose this committee because he is interested in seeing the town grow. In the future, if he is unable to make the meeting he will let us know.
 - Vice-Chair Cyndi Robbins apologizes to Nate that they did not reach out to him first and he read their frustrations in the minutes. The Committee is just frustrated, not with Nate specifically, but the Town in general. We take the CEDC very seriously and feel as though we are not being respected. Our job is to make recommendations to the Selectboard and it is hard to do that if we are out of the loop.
 - Sheila Foley informs Nate that in her opinion the CEDC sees him as their only ally to have their voice heard. We need someone to hear us and you are that person.
- Nate McNally did email the Town Manager about the lake protection budget item because he too does not see the immediate connection there.
- There is some discussion on the confusion of how the TIFs work and how the funds can be used. Nate suggests that the CEDC come to the Selectboard to discuss these things directly. One of the concerns the CEDC has is the plan for the TIF drawdown. They have not been included in the discussion for how that will play out. Cyndi reminds the Committee that when the sewer project was approved they were supposed to receive a report with the numbers post project but they have not received anything.
 - Nate hears the Committee's concerns and he will talk to the other Selectboard members.

OLD BUSINESS

Budget

- Vice-Chair Cyndi Robbins informs the Committee that they will need to remove \$1,500 from something in order to make up the needed difference for staff benefits (taxes).
- The Committee agrees to remove the needed amount from the events line.
- Chair Jennifer Letourneau asks if anyone knows why we are paying for lake protection and can even be paid for by the TIF.
 - Selectboard Liaison Nate McNally is not sure, but there should be minutes from a Selectboard meeting to support the decision.
- Chair Jennifer Letourneau will attend the Selectboard's December 21, 2021, meeting to discuss the proposed CEDC budget.

Christmas Parade

- Vice-Chair Cyndi Robbins informs the Committee that the Christmas parade went well despite it being very cold. She thinks it should be done again next year.

NEW BUSINESS

Bill Eldridge

- At the September 9, 2021, meeting, the Committee decided to remove Alternate Bill Eldridge from the Committee due to inactivity. No motion was made so this is on the agenda as a formality.
- Member Sheila Foley makes a motion to suggest the Selectboard remove Bill Eldridge from the CEDC since he has not made a meeting for over a year, seconded by Member Chrissy Kimball. The CEDC thanks Bill for his service to the Town.

Vote: YES - 6 NO - 0

OTHER BUSINESS

Winterfest

- Vice-Chair Cyndi Robbins would like to start brainstorming this idea. We could have a dogsled race, toboggan, ice bar, etc.

Senior Housing

- Chair Jennifer Letourneau recaps the news that this project has been stopped. In July the Committee was tasked with looking into affordable housing in Poland. Is the Town able to buy land and develop it?
 - Member Sheila Foley is wondering if anyone knows why the senior housing project has been stopped.
 - Cyndi heard it was due to increased building costs.

- Member Norm Davis suggests reaching out to some commercial realtors to let them know we are here. It might be helpful to see what they are hearing or why lots/buildings are not selling.
 - Cyndi suggests reaching out to the company that bought the Poland Crossing plaza and maybe inviting them to a CEDC meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourns at 7:45 pm.

Recorded by: ALS

Accepted on: January 6, 2022.