

NOTES OF THE BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
FOR TOWN OF NEW LEBANON  
HELD ON December 7, 2021 AT NL TOWN HALL AND VIA TELECONFERENCE

Present: Gregg Carroll, Anna Duhon, Tistrya Houghtling, Ellen Ann Kafkalas, Jack Lancto, Peg Munves, Sharon Powers, Monte Wasch (Chair), Josh Young

Absent: Richard Beckwith, Deb Gordon, Chuck Gerald, Mitch Kelleher, Danielle Kuffel, Jack Lancto, Erminia Rasmussen

Member of the Public: Bob Gilson

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order at 6:32pm by Monte Wasch who began the discussion by trying to find a replacement for him as chair of the committee

Monte wants to resign as chair but is interested to stay on to work on the Local Development Corporation (LDC) – he explained that the LDC is not subject to the same requirements as would be a committee of Town government. His plan is to get information from other towns who have formed LDCs (i.e. Hillsdale) to find out what works, what doesn't, and what resources they have been able to access. He is hoping the LDC could work on, among other things, affordable housing in New Lebanon.

Asked if anyone at the meeting would consider the position. Josh Young said he had considered it but decided against it because he saw the LDC competing with the BEDC.

Discussion ensued which concluded that the BEDC would most likely be replaced by the LDC, since the LDC could perform all the functions of the BEDC but not vice versa. Some saw the BEDC as having the role of being policy advisors and the LDC as actually carrying out the activities. But this advisor role could also be carried out by the Town Board. Advantage of the LDC is that it has the ability to raise and receive money.

Josh Young said Monte should remain the chair and Sharon Powers asked why Monte would want to resign from the BEDC only to become the eventual chair of the LDC and do pretty much the same thing. Monte explained that he did not want to continue doing the administrative tasks associated with being chair, such as setting up the Google meetings and the calendar, etc. It was decided that Tistrya Houghtling and Sharon Powers would assist Monte with the administrative tasks in the future. Tistrya said that a meeting should be set up between the three of them to go over who would do what. Monte agreed that he would remain chair under these circumstances.

**SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Infrastructure**, presented by Josh Young

When asked about the door-to-door outreach that was discussed at the October meeting, Josh said that he felt there was no longer a need to do this so it was not done. Peg Munves and Deb Gordon will form an exploratory subcommittee on infrastructure with \$0 cost to the Town – trying to gather information on both traditional water and sewer and the Living Machine route that the Darrow School uses. They are looking for people to join their subcommittee.

**Healthcare Access**, presented by Tistrya Houghtling

The subcommittee met and agreed on some topics they would like to focus on, including Covid testing and Pharmacy access. They thought that it would be good to speak with the Lebanon Valley Health Assembly (LVHA) and they had a meeting with them. The LVHA said that a lot of their work is on hold right now, but they would meet as a group to see if they wanted to work with the subcommittee and what they could do. The LVHA is now focused on outside education such as yoga and meditation in New Lebanon. The subcommittee was hoping to have some type of clinic one or two days a week and possibly use Federal funding for that – were going to explore if ARPA funding could be used. Future plans are to meet with the LVHA after the LVHA meets as a group. Sounds like the idea of operating a free medical clinic would be very complicated because there are many regulations that would have to be followed. Providing resources and education is easier to accomplish.

In response to a question from Monte, Tistrya said that the LVHA is composed of Xavier, Eileen, Meg and Maggie. Monte suggested they also contact Maureen (his neighbor) who is a midwife. The New Lehigh School nurse also wants to get involved.

Mental health access and addiction support were also mentioned but there may be a separate group working on that.

**Outreach and Marketing Subcommittee**, presented by Tistrya Houghtling

The subcommittee is now working on a draft tourism packet and have already completed an initial draft template. The brochure will focus on New Lebanon restaurants, natural resources and event locations. Sharon Powers has designed it as the subcommittee decided they did not want to reprint the historic map that was previously done. If they had chosen to do so, they would have had to have approval from the prior committee and use the same designer (which would be beyond their budget). Their recommendation was not to update that map but instead to start fresh.

**MSC:** Made by Monte Wasch that the subcommittee should start a new map and brochure and not rely on the previous one. Seconded by Tistrya Houghtling. Motion approved.

**Food Committee**, presented by Josh Young

The market is doing very well and offering new products such as salmon and other fishes. He hopes that there will be enough products there that New Lebanon residents no longer need to leave town to get their groceries. Many take advantage of the free delivery service. They are hoping to add free delivery to seniors in January. They hope to be able to pay their staff soon, increase the days they are open, and expand the times as well. Monte commented that it was a miracle what they had achieved so far.

Meeting adjourned by Monte Wasch at 7:20, seconded by Tistrya Houghtling

Next meeting: January 3, solely on Google Meets.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Powers