

**Quality of Life Committee, Town of New Lebanon
Minutes for monthly meeting held via Zoom
August 23, 2022**

Present: Marianna Anthonisen, Bob Gilson, Tistrya Houghtling, Sharon Powers, Josh Young (via zoom)

Tistrya Houghtling called the meeting to order at 4:08 pm.

Tistrya Houghtling moved for an approval of the July 26 minutes. Sharon Powers seconded. The motion was passed unanimously.

Discussion:

Healthcare: Tistrya Houghtling began the discussion by asking if there is a way that ARPA funds could be used to help increase health and wellness opportunities. She wondered whether it would be possible to offer tax incentives to either new health-related businesses, or to property owners to help attract a pharmacy to New Lebanon. Sharon Powers said that she had volunteered to work on healthcare. She mentioned that at the last meeting Bob Gilson had spoken with David Himmelstein and Stephanie Woolhandler, two important healthcare professionals who live in New Lebanon, and they had agreed to be helpful. They said that the best course of action would be to begin with a needs assessment. Sharon agreed to reach out to Stephanie and David to see what a needs assessment would cost and who might do it. Marianna Anthonisen asked if it might be possible to use ARPA funds to conduct the needs assessment. Healthcare services that we discussed included: diabetes, mental health, addiction, and yoga, among others.

Housing: Josh Young said that he thinks we should research building senior housing in New Lebanon. He spoke about a senior housing project in West Stockbridge that he thinks is particularly well done. He said that he believes there should be money available to fund a housing project, but he has yet to start doing research. Marianna Anthonisen suggested that it would be good to speak with Mary Young to get a sense from her of what she thinks is needed. Bob Gilson suggested that like healthcare, we probably will have to do a needs assessment.

NY Forward: Bob Gilson said that he was working on a NY Forward grant, as part of a New York State Downtown Revitalization Initiative. In the last Town Board meeting the Board approved applying for funds to 4 projects: 1. To look into rebuilding 2 or 3 downtown structures to create new multi-use buildings that would house commercial spaces on the first floor and a combination of low cost senior housing and market rate apartments on the second floor. 2. To build a new community center that would be able to host clubs, meetings, classes, childcare, a place for kids and teens to hang out, seniors, a commercial kitchen for local farmers to process their products, and more. 3. To create a walkable downtown. 4. To collaborate with Collarworks, a Troy based residency program, to create an artists in residency program. Gilson said that having reviewed applications from other towns for past downtown renewal projects, that it is unlikely that New Lebanon would receive funding with its first application, but this application will at least be getting the town thinking about what's possible, and how best to move forward with future applications.

The next Quality of Life meeting, scheduled for September 22 at 4:00 pm, will be held in person.

Bob Gilson moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:05 pm. Josh Young seconded the motion. The motion to adjourn was approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted: Bob Gilson