

**Economic Development Committee  
Meeting Minutes – September 20, 2021**

A meeting of the Economic Development Committee was held on September 20, 2021 via remote participation pursuant to Governor Baker’s March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c.30A, §18, and the Governor’s March 15, 2020 Order Imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place.

Present from the Committee: Chairwoman Carole Marchand, Vice Chairman Marc Becker, and Members Andrew Jolda, John Milas, Nancy Healy and Dale Viger (joining the meeting at 5:57 p.m.).

Present - Ex Officio Members: Director of Community Development Carol Cyr; and Director of Planning & Economic Development Ann Morgan.

Chairwoman Marchand called the meeting to order at 5:36 p.m.

1. Action Items

- a. Meeting Minutes of August 23, 2021 – tabled.

2. Discussion Items

- a. ARPA Funds and Grant Allotment – Ms. Marchand provided an update on the status of the Grant application process. Businesses, non-profit organizations and property owners can apply for up to \$25,000 and will need to submit materials including quotes, demonstrate that they are in good standing with the Town and signature from the property owner. People can apply for more than one grant. The applications will be reviewed and acted upon by a Fund Allocation Committee. The application was reviewed. Ms. Morgan noted that some formatting and organizational changes were made since the draft was distributed to the Economic Development Committee. Ms. Marchand asked that Committee members review the draft and send back comments by the end of the week.

Ms. Morgan noted that the Fund Allocation Committee consisted of the Town Administrator, the Director of Planning & Economic Development (herself), the Director of Community Development (Carol Cyr) and two members of the Economic Development Committee which needs to vote on who should serve.

Motion to appoint Carole Marchand and Marc Becker to the Fund Allocation Committee as representatives of the Economic Development Committee made by Mr. Becker, seconded by Mr. Jolda. There was no discussion. Motion passed unanimously 5-0 by roll call vote (Mr. Jolda – AYE; Mr. Becker – AYE; Ms. Marchand – AYE; Ms. Healy – AYE; Mr. Milas – AYE).

- b. Attracting New Members – Ms. Marchand noted that Chris Charniak has tendered his resignation from the Committee and that Dale Viger has been appointed. She wasn’t sure if Jessica Valby was still interested in serving noting that she will contact Ms. Valby. With those changes, that leaves one vacancy on the Committee. Ms. Morgan noted that interested parties could apply for to fill the vacancy by using the on-line form on the Town’s website under the Boards and Committees Resources page or that they can send a letter / email stating their interest to the Board of Selectmen. She noted that she would send the website link to the Committee to forward to anyone they think might be interested.

Mr. Milas asked if the Town had a list of businesses that the Committee could reach out to. Ms. Morgan stated no as that information isn’t compiled in any one location. Businesses are supposed to

file a Business Certificate with the Town Clerk but some businesses don't always do that. And sometimes small, home based businesses don't know that they're supposed to have a Business Certificate.

Ms. Marchand asked the Committee if they were interested in continuing to meet via remote participation / Zoom or if they would like to go back to meeting in person. Ms. Morgan noted that the remote participation option will continue to be valid through April 1, 2022 or until such time as the Open Meeting Law requirements change. It was noted that in person meetings tend to be more productive and no one objected to having the next meeting in person. Ms. Morgan stated that she would see if the Local History Room in the Library would be available for the next meeting. The Committee agreed to meet next on October 19, 2021 in person in a location to be determined.

Ms. Viger joined the meeting at 5:57 p.m. Introductions were made for those who had not met Ms. Viger in person or at the last meeting. Ms. Marchand provided an overview of the ARPA grant application discussed earlier. Ms. Viger noted that she had no edits and asked how the Committee and the Town can get the word out. It was noted that the final application packet would be sent to the Webster Dudley Business Alliance, the Webster Dudley Oxford Chamber of Commerce as well as being highlighted in a Town Facebook Page post. It will also be available on the Town's website and that a press release in the Webster Times would be helpful.

- c. Other Funds to be Used – Ms. Marchand noted that there approximately \$10,000 in Town's Economic Development Fund which was approved at Town Meeting. She added that these funds can't be used for the benefit of private property or business owners which is different from the ARPA funds.

Ms. Cyr stated that some of the Economic Development Funds should be used to clean up Town property for such things as weeding and tending to Town owned landscaping particularly in the downtown area. Mr. Jolda noted that any weed treatments within 100 feet of the French River would require review and approval and asked if a permit from the Conservation Commission or the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection would be required. Ms. Cyr noted that she has a standing Order of Conditions from the Conservation Commission and would check to see if any changes to that Order would be required.

Motion to authorize Ms. Cyr to proceed with securing a contract for an amount not to exceed \$800 for weed treatment at the French River Park to be expended from the Economic Development Fund and contingent upon receiving the necessary approvals from the Conservation Commission made by Mr. Becker, seconded by Mr. Jolda. There was no further discussion. Motion passed 6-0 unanimously by roll call vote (Mr. Jolda – AYE; Mr. Becker – AYE; Ms. Marchand – AYE; Mr. Milas – AYE; Ms. Healy; Ms. Viger - AYE).

Ms. Cyr noted that an additional project should include the care and maintenance of trees planted on Town property such as around Town Hall and along Memorial Drive. These trees have not been significantly pruned or maintained since first planted. The Highway Department has been taking care of them but work from an arborist is required. She could apply for ARPA funds for this project and asked the Committee to vote to allow her to move forward with releasing an RFP to seek the required quotes.

Motion to authorize Ms. Cyr to release an RFP for tree maintenance on Town owed land using fund available through the ARPA grant program made by Mr. Becker, seconded by Mr. Jolda. There was

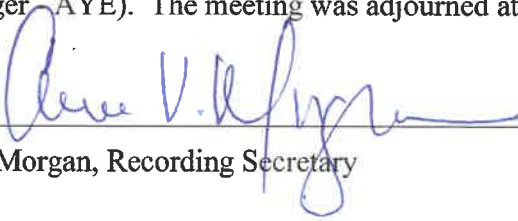
no further discussion. Motion passed 6-0 unanimously by roll call vote (Mr. Jolda – AYE; Mr. Becker – AYE; Ms. Marchand – AYE; Mr. Milas – AYE; Ms. Healy; Ms. Viger - AYE).

3. Next Meeting

The Committee agreed that the next meeting would be held on Monday, October 19, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. in person at a location to be determined.

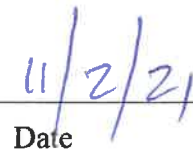
4. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn made by Mr. Jolda, seconded by Ms. Healy. Motion passed unanimously, 6-0 by roll call vote (Mr. Jolda – AYE; Mr. Becker – AYE; Ms. Marchand – AYE; Mr. Milas – AYE; Ms. Healy; Ms. Viger – AYE). The meeting was adjourned at 6:11 p.m.



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Ann Morgan, Recording Secretary



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Date

EXHIBITS – none.

