

MINUTES
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS/ ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
Meeting of Tuesday, March 12, 2019 – 8:30 a.m.
Conference Room A

Present: Councilor Suzanne Phillips, Chair; Councilors Lee Pratt and Ronald Shepard.

Also Present: Town Manager, Ephrem Paraschak; GEDC Director, Tom Ellsworth; GEDC Vice Chair, Kathy Garrard; GEDC Clerk, Brenda Caldwell; Executive Assistant, Jessica Hughes.

1. Consideration of minutes of January 25, 2019 meeting.

A motion was MADE by Councilor Shepard, SECONDED by Councilor Pratt and VOTED to approve the minutes of the January 25, 2019 meeting. Unanimous vote.

2. Current Business

A. Open discussion with members of the Gorham Economic Development Corporation.

Councilor Phillips thanked everyone for attending. The committee then held a general discussion regarding the Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) program, and that the program acts as a gap program where traditional banks lend up to 80% or some percentage and the RLF can help fund remaining financing needs.

Tom Ellsworth commented that Woods Excavating was a successful loan fund. Tom further added that the Senior Home Care Center on lower Main Street and the Blue Pig Diner were possible future loan opportunities.

Councilor Phillips asked Tom Ellsworth how the Town can incentivize the RLF program, to which Tom replied that more promotion to get the word out would help.

Town Manager Ephrem Paraschak shared that the Grondin TIF will be on the April Town Council Meeting agenda and if approved and renewed for 10 to 15 years, a large portion of TIF revenue would be allocated to the RLF fund and the Town could also allocate a percent toward economic development.

Tom Ellsworth shared that Harvey Performance Co. is in the process of bringing in natural gas and Harvey representatives are looking at whether there is any interest from other parties to share the cost. Maine Natural Gas is asking for 50-55% local contribution.

Tom Poirier suggested creating an impact fee, to which Ephrem Paraschak replied that an impact fee could take months.

Councilor Pratt suggested that the owner of the development could take a 0% APR loan and incorporate the loan cost when selling future lots from the development.

Ephrem Paraschak suggested that -worst case scenario, the Town includes a \$25,000 investment in Capital Part II budget for approval to fund the remaining balance.

Ephrem suggested that Tom Poirier and/or Tom Ellsworth can reach out to Harvey representatives to find out what the deadline is for the remaining local contribution that is needed.

Tom Ellsworth commented that Harvey will likely ask for a TIF, to which Ephrem replied that we can note the local contribution in the TIF.

Councilor Shepard suggested that the Town fund the entire \$55,000 loan contribution.

Ephrem Paraschak commented that the Town could propose that, however, we don't want to set a precedence for businesses that no contribution is necessary.

Kathy Garrard commented that the CIP/ED Committee is welcome to attend GEDC meetings and Councilor Phillips replied that the GEDC members are welcome to attend CIP/ED meetings as well.

Councilor Phillips shared that the CIP/ED Committee will continue to touch base with Tom Ellsworth and work through tasks assigned by the Town Council. Ultimately, the goal is to further help economic development.

Kathy Garrard shared that the Gorham Village Alliance (GVA) are looking to become a 501(c)3 non-profit and apply for available grants for downtown.

Ephrem Paraschak shared that MaineDOT have exceeded deadlines and original project dates to repair Main Street.

Tom Ellsworth shared recent input from a GVA workshop that sidewalks are in poor condition.

Ephrem Paraschak shared that water improvements are slated to be done from the Village Square to the USM campus. Sidewalk improvements that will be done only entail ADA accessibility, which will include bump outs and lowering of the curb.

Ephrem Paraschak shared that LED street lights are moving forward. The Town will own the fixtures and the estimated energy savings would be one-half of the current CMP energy bill. The report is due before the end of the year and will include the project cost.

Councilor Pratt asked if Tom Ellsworth and Ephrem Paraschak can share a Google Sheet of GEDC projects, to which Ephrem replied that a shared Google Sheet or list of projects would be helpful.

Ephrem shared that the GEDC should be aware that the Town is hiring a consultant to look at rezoning the South Gorham Crossroads.

Tom Ellsworth suggested that GEDC members should attend Ordinance Committee Meetings.

3. Other Business

A. Long Term Plan

Ephrem Paraschak asked the Committee if there was a philosophy or something that the Committee did not see on the Long Term Plan, to which Councilors Phillips and Shepard replied more traveled roads and sidewalks.

4. Schedule next meeting and discuss agenda items for next meeting.

The Committee advised that they will schedule the next meeting at a later date.

5. Adjournment

There being no further business, a motion was MADE by Councilor Pratt, SECONDED by Councilor Shepard and unanimously VOTED to adjourn at 9:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jessica Hughes, Executive Assistant to the Town Manager/HR