

## **Economic Committee**

**Sep 13, 2021**

**7 pm**

**Fitzwilliam Town Hall**

**Present:** Beth Lorenz, Chelley Tighe, Jim Millar, Kevin Love, Jason Newcomb & Suzanne Gray (via telephone)

**Absent:** Skip Hagstrom, Steve Reinhart

**Guests:** Richard Marshall, Rik Eckstrom & Leonard Mead

Beth opened the meeting at 7:04 pm.

**Minutes:** Chelley made a motion to approve the minutes of Aug 9, 2021 as read with a second by Jim; all voted in favor 5-0-0.

Beth indicated to the new members, Jason and Kevin, that they needed to see Town Clerk, Heidi Wood, to be sworn in.

**Fitzwilliam Farmer's Market:** Next market is scheduled for Sep 18<sup>th</sup> with the last one being Oct 16<sup>th</sup>. Chelley will put the sandwich board signs out in the morning. Beth asked all members to do a push on social media promoting this event. Also brought up was the veteran's participation where they receive bonus dollars to spend at some farmer's markets. As seen in local advertisements, veterans can receive these perks at Keene, Jaffrey & Hinsdale markets. That is something Fitzwilliam can look into and try to incorporate for the 2022 season. Beth will reach out to Courtney Kadlik on this.

**Ribbon Cutting:** Kevin shared that he contacted Monadnock Firearms. He stated he was not able to reach Carousel Grille. Beth stated she was told that the committee was late in the game. The question is, should we start now with the new businesses, like the car restoration? They have an October open house/grand opening celebration planned. Jason suggested we have a business recognition/dedication ceremony instead to bring attention. Beth thought maybe we could do a business spotlight each month. After some discussion, the plan going forward is to focus on the car restoration and then beginning in January, do business spotlights. Suzanne recommended a newsletter article and Facebook promotion. Once other local businesses see the value in this, they may want to join. She reminded the members that as a municipal committee, we cannot promote one business over the other.

**Master Plan:** Rik Eckstrom and Richard Marshall returned to continue the discussion on the 10-year vision for Fitzwilliam. Mr. Marshall wants these discussions with the Economic Committee to continue. When Beth inquired about what they want to see, Mr. Eckstrom

answered that he would like them to provide a chapter on what kind of businesses the committee wants to attract to Fitzwilliam. He would also these talks to be on a regular basis referring to the Master Plan and all their surveys, keeping the steering committee apprised of these discussions. Kevin asked about the goals the Economic Committee were to meet, according to the 2012 Master Plan, and without elaborating, Mr. Eckstrom responded that some had progress and some did not. To answer Suzanne's question of what can the Economic Committee do for the Master Plan Steering Committee, Mr. Eckstrom stated, 1) what is the current state of Fitzwilliam business?, 2) what do citizens see as economic development? and 3) ideas on how to get there, ie. see smaller businesses in the village or bigger ones on Route 12. Suzanne commented that the current state of the business survey will answer #2 and then the Economic Committee can work on #3. Chelley added that the Economic Committee has focused on supporting and promoting our existing businesses as opposed to collecting data on the businesses. Mr. Marshall stated that the Economic Committee's task is to support the economic development in Fitzwilliam. Chelley agreed that they could compile the information that has been gathered throughout the meetings; just a shift in focus. Beth stated that it will be a priority to filter the updates for the business listing, share with the Master Plan Steering Committee, add the Master Plan to the agenda until completed, and support not only the present-day business, but the future business. Kevin asked about issues with zoning and Mr. Eckstrom answered that zoning will be part of the Master Plan discussions. Jason shared that he would like to read all the goals the economic Committee had in 2012 and have them on the agenda. Mr. Eckstrom stated the 2012 Master Plan can be found on the town website.

Beth thanked Mr. Eckstrom and Mr. Marshall for their participation in attending this meeting.

**Fitzwilliam Business Listing:** Beth stated the business listing will need to be updated and shared with the Master Plan Steering Committee. Suzanne added that the Planning Board is currently reviewing home occupations and home businesses and once it is complete it will be shared with the Economic Committee.

**Halloween:** Beth had an idea about local businesses participating in "trick or treating" on the common. With some discussion, it was agreed that more time in planning is needed and perhaps it could happen in 2022. Suzanne recommended it be brought before the selectman and thought it was a wonderful idea to build community. Kevin agreed that it could be an event for both young and old.

**Next meeting:** October 4, 2021- Town Hall 7pm

**Agenda for next meeting:**

Chelley made amotion to adjourn the meeting with Jim seconding. All voted in favor 5-0-0

Meeting adjourned at 8:17 pm

*Minutes taken by Marion Wheeler*