

MINUTES FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

February 5, 2013

Called to order at 7:15 pm

Present: Lana Razdan, Peter Beacham, Rollyn Hoffman, Jim Cox, Bob Rushton, Steve Attwood

Absent: Gary DellaRocco

Guests: Barbara Sparks, John Sparks, D.J. Tardif, Sam Colbourne

➤ **Minutes of the Meeting of January 8, 2013**

Approved.

➤ **PR/ Marketing**

The committee considered a report submitted by Matter Communications which summarized its January activity. Following the hosting of several travel writers, press coverage of the town is now expected in several publications, and active dialog is ongoing with several more. A very positive blog piece has already appeared on the Boston Examiner website. Lana reported that she has been pleased with Matter's work so far. It was noted, however, that John McElhenny, the committee's principle contact, is leaving the company. Lana has met with the replacement and the committee expressed the desire to meet the new team also. On behalf of the committee, Rol will look at enhancing the dissemination of positive pieces about Rockport on the web.

➤ **Wayfinding Path and Information Booth**

There is considerable interest among town officials to create a marked path from the train station to the downtown/ cultural district area. The path itself needs to be decided on, as well as image selection. A community contest may be held to choose an image, and the same may hold for redesign features of the Information Booth. Lana will continue to coordinate with town officials on both of these projects. Bob Rushton undertook to get involved in the wayfinding path project.

➤ **Spring Town Meeting**

Lana will ask Matter Communications to contribute to the preparation of an update report to citizens on the PR initiative for the Spring Town Meeting. She will also ask committee members to assist with preparation of materials.

➤ **Other Business**

- It was decided that an interactive forum with the community should be considered for the Fall. Lana asked that committee members think about who would be good speakers for such an event.
- Jim Cox made members aware of the POI (Points of Interest) Factory website and how it could be applied to assisting visitors to Rockport find the attractions of interest to them. There are many possible developments and options, and it was proposed that this would be an excellent project to

involve RHS students. Jim will prepare a proposal for discussion with school officials.

- John and Barbara Sparks, on behalf of the Millbrook Meadow Committee, asked that the EDC express its support to Selectmen for a major restoration of Millbrook Meadow. Lana will circulate a draft letter to committee members in support of the project, before transmitting it to the Selectmen.
- Lana presented the EDC annual activity report to the Selectmen.
- Peter reported that serious negotiations are underway for the Blacksmith Shop, with a new restaurant targeting opening for the summer season.
- Lana will be undergoing surgery in early March. The question of the timing of the next meeting will be resolved following recommendations from committee members to Lana.

➤ **Date of Next Meeting**

TBD

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

