

Upper Valley Economic Council

Meeting Minutes: January 22, 2018

Next Meeting: Monday February 26, 2018 at 4:00 pm.

The meeting was brought to order at 4:05 pm.

Present: Alvin Theriault, John Qualey, John Owens, Steve Gould, Lois Eash and Jeff Packard.

Consultant: Jill Ducharme, Sustainable Writing & Consulting

Guests: Debra O’Roak - Town Manager Sherman and Doug Currier - Sherman

Minutes: It was moved, seconded and passed to accept the minutes of November 27, 2017.

Treasurer’s Report/Sign Warrants: Office Manager Packard presented the Treasurer’s report for January 27, 2018. The Board voted to approve the report as read. The Board signed the warrants.

Chairman’s Report

1. **Broadband/Fiber Optics:** Steve Gould & Jeff Packard update the Board on the sign up project. Jeff was told by Don Flewelling in early December that December 31 was not a deadline but a goal. So during the Holidays Steve had backed off an signing people up. Steve brought in 4 more new sign ups on Monday January 15. That made the the total sign ups to 92.. We only needed 8 more. At that time Jeff had receive an email from the CEO of Pioneer Broadband that he project was done and they were no longer accepting any new sign ups. Tim stated that other options need to be explored. Steve tried to contact Tim but was not successful. Steve and Jeff contacted Don. Don said there was nothing to stop UVEC from starting their own grass roots sign up.

Steve asked when we might be able to have a phone meeting on this because we needed to know if the conditions were still available such as the installation deal of \$25 that would cover the standard installation fee of \$100. Don said to call them next week. Don gave us a figure of 150 people to expand everywhere.

Jeff asked Jill to call Axiom to setup a meeting. The Board discussed the situation and considered our options:

- A. Call Pioneer
- B. Call Axiom
- C. Contact Consolidated Communications who bought out Fairpoint.

The Board asked Jeff to contact Consolidated first.

2. **UVEC Bylaws:** We need to amend the bylaws concerning the signing of documents. A motion was made by Alvin and seconded by Jeff Packard to designate John Qualey the authority to sign the deed transfer of the Miniature Golf building in Millinocket. If a second signature is needed, Jeff Packard can also be present for the signing and fulfill that requirement. The motion passed.

3. **Jill Ducharme Update:** Jill gave a run down on the Millinocket Heritage Park project. Millinocket Heritage Park is designed to create an attractive community gathering area that celebrates the natural, cultural, and economic history of the region. The park can serve as a gateway landmark for town, providing a venue for seasonal events, places for quite relaxation and a template for promoting the remarkable history of the region. The

project involves two lots, the Newberry lot and the Miniature Golf Building on Penobscot Avenue. UVEC will be taking ownership and needs to add these two lots to their liability insurance. The grant for this project will pay for the additional cost of the insurance. UVEC will not have to pay for this insurance cost. The Byway Committee is planning to become a Nonprofit organization. When this happens, the properties would be transferred to the Byway organization. Questions and answers about this project was held by the UVEC Board.

Office Manager's Report

Food Pantry Statics for January: 60 Households Served, Sherman – 27 Households, Stacyville – 17 Households, Other Towns - 20 Households.

There were a total of 160 people, 49 of these were senior citizens, 46 were children, and 65 adults. We also gave out 65 Christmas Baskets.

We have 17 volunteers with a total of 93.25 hours as of 1-22-'18

The Katahdin Gazetteer process is coordinated by the Katahdin Collaborative, a network of local economic and community development groups, municipalities, businesses, and citizens. The dates and times were passed out to the Board.

There will be a public meeting to discuss Winter uses in the Monument on Wednesday, Jan. 24, 2018, at the Higher Learning Center in East Millinocket.

Future Farm Technologies buys 120 acres in Aroostook County to grow the plant, a cousin of marijuana, for producing cannabidiol, a hemp derivative used in medical treatments. Future Farm Technologies recently purchased 120 acres in the Aroostook County town of Amity and plans to lease another 100 acres for an operation that would dwarf all of Maine's current licensed hemp farms. Future Farm also reportedly secured a lease option on an additional 1,000 acres in Amity, a town of fewer than 250 residents located south of Houlton along the Maine-New Brunswick border.

Gloria MacKenzie Grant - Stacyville ADA compliant entry way and Veterans Monument will be done in the spring. The backup generators in Sherman will be done in the spring as well. The utility truck for Sherman will be ready by approximately by April.

New Business/Other:

Business update: Jill has reached out to Kimberly_Goodall and will be having a phone conference with a representative from the Northern Forest Center to see if they have any interest in this project.

Scenic Byway: The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 7. at 1:30 pm. It will be a phone conference.

UVEC RBEG Update: Thomas Cummings & the Wilsons made payments in December.

Sherman Boralax Plant: No Update

Meeting Adjourned at: 5:05 pm.

Respectfully Submitted

John Qualey, Treasurer
