

# CASTLETON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

**Thursday, March 16, 2023  
Castleton Fire Department  
and ZOOM**

Meeting Recording:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/y\\_utV2OTPkXDLd52ngSqueWHurD-Nnq8\\_mYnAA5xAVZPXNkXMyNK9Utfu-CALdQW.4AZkmR2TfjyB7eOd](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/y_utV2OTPkXDLd52ngSqueWHurD-Nnq8_mYnAA5xAVZPXNkXMyNK9Utfu-CALdQW.4AZkmR2TfjyB7eOd)

Passcode: YR\*P@^8X

**Those in attendance included:** Committee Members, Mary McIntyre, Zak Holzworth, Richard Combs, Ted Molnar, Petrina teRiele, Martha Clifford, Janet Currie, Bo Elliot Ramos

**Others present by Zoom included:** Allison Harvey, Recording Secretary

M. McIntyre called the meeting to order at 6:36 P.M.

## **Approve Agenda**

**R. Combs made a motion to approve the agenda as posted. T. Molnar seconded. All voted in favor of the Agenda. So voted.**

## **Approval of Minutes of February 16, 2023.**

**Z. Holzworth made a motion to approve the minutes of February 16, 2023. B. Murphy seconded.**

Anywhere BE Ramos appears, it should be changed to B. Ramos.

Page 2 – first line, *had* should be deleted.

Page 3 – a ? should be at the end of the second line of the Geo Fencing paragraph.

**All voted in favor. So voted.**

## **Janet Currie – Retail Cannabis**

J. Currie stated she owns the properties across from the Kinney Drug building and has tried to get retail cannabis sales passed by the voters and it has failed each time. She does not need voter approval to sell wholesale, manufacturing and process cannabis. She has done some polling to figure out what is going on and what the issue is and has met with the Town Manager and R. Spaulding a Selectboard member. She has five licenses relating to cannabis, and she hears the question of what does the Town get having a retail store. It has been said that 1% (tax) of sales was the estimate, and it applies to all of her businesses not just the cannabis sales. And this is in addition to any local sales tax that may be voted on and approved by the voters. J. Currie further explained the business that she is trying to introduce into the Town, as well as what she has done on the ground trying to get support from voters and the Town. She would like to ask for the support of this committee and discuss with them what can be done to get the support she needs to get this done. She has spoken to the Police Chief and three members of the Selectboard that also support her proposal. J. Currie also explained there is 6% sales tax, 14% excise tax as well as the 1% to the Town, so any purchases have an additional 21% in tax on top of the purchase total. The plan is to open a store, but because of the failed votes, she can sell everything except products that contain THC, she can only

sell CBD products and she feels it would like really bad to have that type of store and have to tell people to go elsewhere if they are looking for anything that contains THC. M. McIntyre explained that her concern with the 1% excise tax that is being proposed applies to all purchases within the Town, not just the cannabis sales, so it would affect all residents and patrons to all town businesses. Z. Holzworth questioned if this group has ever discussed the option tax, as he felt if it was explained to the voters what the financial benefits would be for the additional tax it may be seen differently. R. Combs felt the excise tax would not help the vote on the cannabis that is the topic of this discussion, but he does feel it would need to be explained in depth about that option tax and the affect it would have on the Town and its residents.

BE Ramos stated that the college campus population does have some involvement, and they also felt it was important to try to get people to stop in the Town. J. Currie questioned if this topic could be polled by this committee to see what the thoughts of the community are. M. McIntyre stated she felt that education does need to be done, and questioned if there has been anything in writing done on the topic, or social media, as she feels it would be beneficial. M. McIntyre also stated that she hear what J. Currie is saying and this committee is pro-business, and they are willing to work with the Board of Selectmen if necessary and would be willing to assist as much as possible. Further discussion on the topic and what the next steps should be. R. Combs stated he felt this committee should take a position, and he would be prepared to make a motion asking the board of Selectmen to prepare a letter of support of a retail cannabis store in Castleton and he would not be in favor of the 1% excise tax. He has spoken to Gilmore Home Center and it was felt from administration there that the tax would be a very large burden. It would only apply for sales that are in Castleton, any deliveries they make outside of Castleton would not be charged that tax. **R. Combs made a motion that this board generates a document to the Selectboard supporting and recommending the sale of retail and recreational cannabis in the Town of Castleton. Z. Holzworth seconded.** Brief discussion on the action and whether it would be helpful currently or if it would be next year as well as how many retail stores already exist. T. Molnar asked if they could put this to the side after they've voted on this motion, to see what the Board of Selectmen have to say about the action. **Five voted in favor. One opposed. One abstained. Motion passes.** M. McIntyre stated she would draft a letter and get it to the committee members for review before sending to the Board.

#### **Selectboard Update (Dick Combs)**

R. Combs stated there wasn't much to update. The Selectboard has authorized the Town Manager and Fire Chief to purchase a used fire truck in Pennsylvania. Should be in service around mid-fall.

Still working with the Town of Hubbardton on the CVS building buy out.

#### **Recreation Board Update (Bo Elliott Ramos)**

B. Ramos stated the recreation department is in between things since the vote. They felt the Hubbardton votes could be interpreted differently, so not certain where that will go. Programming is ongoing. Basketball is over, softball is up next, need to do some field prep work. There are some adult recreation things going. Multiple pickleball sessions and another program starting up as well. It was questioned if there were numbers of participants known. B. Ramos stated they have not gotten sign-ins but would seriously consider, that to get an idea of how many participants they have.

M. Clifford stated they will soon start with the beach start up and contacting past employees to see if they will be returning for this season.

### **Business Meeting Follow Ups**

#### **Broader Feedback/Survey – Beth Murphy/Zack Holzworth/Bo Elliot Ramos**

B. Murphy states she has been working on the survey and will be doing follow up. It has not been sent out yet, she is going to work on that. Part of the delay is there doesn't seem to be an up-to-date list of emails for businesses available. Z. Holzworth suggested putting the link to the survey monkey on the Town website and/or Facebook.

#### **Marketing (Contact Lyle Jepson/Olivia Lyons)– Ted Molnar**

T. Molnar stated they have forward photos and the video, and Olivia has already posted it to the Rutland Chamber Economic Development and they can do anything they want to add to the site. M. McIntyre stated she attended the Selectboard meeting and informed them of the input T. Molnar had asked her to present to them regarding the Facebook page and the Town webpage be further advanced and the idea of the marketing director as well as developing a focus for the Town. Discussion on the marketing director, M. McIntyre stated she spoke to Poultney's director, and she would be more than happy to come and speak with someone about what that part of her position does.

#### **CU Content Lab – Martha Clifford**

Dr. Talbert has responded to T. Molnar, asking for a summary of the project, what is expected and what the compensation would be. Since the school year is almost through, they may want to wait until fall. M. Clifford stated she felt there was a lot of field work to be done, maybe they should start with that. M. Clifford asked about how they should handle compensation. T. Molnar also suggested maybe a part time marketing director were considered, they could use a bit of this committee's budget to compensate.

#### **Water & Sewer – Mary McIntyre**

M. McIntyre again reached out on this matter, and R. Combs has indicated the sewer committee did meet early this week. R. Combs stated Castleton Corners to Parsons Hill sidewalk is hopefully going to happen this year, which needs to get through the State process before going out for bid. But the grant has been approved and matching town funds, so they are all set. The scoping study for downtown sidewalks is complete and is moving forward with grant applications and hoping to get federal funds for that as well. Discussion on where the project covers and what it entails.

R. Combs stated a gravity line at Crystal Heights for sewer an estimated cost is \$525-550,000. Preston Lane would be most viable as a gravity line and pump station at a cost of \$425-450,000. Depot Terrace is \$160-170,000 for that line and Brown's Auto Salvage has offered to pay some of that cost. The only Creek Road study is over a decade old and goes up to Avalon Beach at a cost then of 11 million dollars. Right now, if they go just to Woodard Marine it is estimated at \$500,000 to a million. The engineer, Wayne Elliott, is going to see if Depot Terrace could be a gravity line or not. There is also a possibility of contacting the State to see if the Conservation Camp may be interested in connecting.

R. Combs stated Fire District #1 was looking for financial assistance for their main line replacement from the reservoir to the Main Street, but they didn't get a very good reception from the Board of Selectmen regarding use of the ARPA funds. M. McIntyre stated when she last spoke with Kerry Fowler, they had gotten their loan approved, they are now waiting for the State paperwork to come through.

### **Signage - Mary McIntyre**

M. McIntyre stated she spoke with E. Splatt about the billboard. They had gone to Whitehall to see about signage for an upcoming boat show and got a hard no. They are hiring a marketing person to pursue as they purchased the property to put a billboard up on it.

M. McIntyre also stated she shared an email with committee members regarding pole banners that could possibly be proposed at the Four Corners. She is still researching as to the regulations of putting things on the poles. Discussion on signs and possible flowers or plantings that could be done in areas of town as well.

### **Bike Extravaganza – Ted Molnar**

B. Ramos stated that they have talked with M. Jones about a bike festival. It was questioned what the scale would be and they are looking for feedback. M. Jones felt as long as it was in Town and in a controlled environment and is looking for approximate dates. B. Ramos has thought about what the angle would be for the festival, a solo bike festival or is it to draw people into town. If it's getting people into Town, they would suggest looking for an easier function to start. M. McIntyre stated she would have something easier. B. Ramos stated if they are going to be the one in charge of it, they would want to take a different approach.

M. McIntyre stated she had considered a corn hole tournament. They would need to build the boards, which can be used multiple times and could also start a league if there was any interest. They could also consider Friday night fun nights and have various games available. Not to give up on the bike extravaganza to start out but start smaller and build up to it. A block party was also brought up as a possibility. Further discussion on the possibility of corn hole and materials needed to get started and how it could be developed.

### **AARPA Grant – Petie teRiele**

P. teRiele stated they have put an application in for four crosswalk signs to be put on Main Street, South Street and Creek Road. Two permanently installed solar feedback signs are proposed to be on Route 4A from Exit 5 and Route 30 from the north going south into town. She worked with the Police Chief to get the grant together. They also looked into the flashing signs at crosswalks, but they were not able to include those in the request. It will take a few months to hear on the application. P. teRiele also stated that the AARP has a lot of interest in the elderly community, and she had told Ethan, who helped her with the grant, that they would try to get some community involvement on sidewalks and what else can be used to help the elderly get around town. M. McIntyre stated she has noticed that the sidewalks at the corners are already being affected by the weather and asked if there was something they could seal them with. Z. Holzworth stated he recently had his garage floor sealed, Mr. St. Armour was the one that did it.

### **New Business**

M. McIntyre stated that T. Molnar feels strongly that the committee should do something to express they do not support the college closing the library and making the administration aware they are not in favor of the closing of the library. T. Molnar stated the consensus is that the long-range plan is to close all campuses and there will only be UVM left within the State. It is vital for as many people as possible to make it clear they are against the library and campuses closing by contacting anyone involved. Discussion on the potential closing of the campus and how it would impact the Town. **T. Molnar made a motion that CDERAC opposes the closing of Castleton University Library and will work on informing businesses in Castleton to enlist their support of the opposition and make the implications it will have on the town known. R. Combs seconded.** Discussion on who and how the businesses will be contacted and/or assigned to committee members to be contacted. **All voted in favor. So voted.**

R. Combs asked about the dog park if it was still an option. Z. Holzworth stated they are waiting to hear from the Rehlers. M. Clifford expressed concern with putting money into property that the Town does not own.

### **8:57 pm Meeting Adjourned**

**M. Clifford made a motion to adjourn. P. teRiele seconded. All voted in favor. So voted.**

Respectfully Submitted

Allison Harvey, Recording Secretary

Transcribed from Zoom Recording