



### **Minutes: Economic Development Advisory Committee September 12, 2016**

The regular meeting of the Middle Smithfield Township Economic Development Advisory Committee was held on September 12, 2016 at 6:30 pm at the Schoonover Municipal Building with Robert Hetu as Chairman presiding.

**Board Members:** Robert Hetu, Carrie Wetherbee, Gina Bertucci, Carl Wilgus and Beverly Brown.

**Township Staff:** Supervisor Annette Atkinson, Supervisor Michael Dywer, and Joan Woisin as Recording Secretary as Robert Rengifo, Liaison, was unable to attend.

**Township Residents/Guests:** Michelle Dellavalle of the Parks and Recreation Committee, and Ed Regina

Meeting started at 6:32 pm with Robert Hetu presiding. It was mentioned that Robert Hetu was resigning from the committee as he is relocating. The Township is currently approaching businesses in the Township to recruit his replacement.

### **Minutes and Agenda**

- Motion to accept and approve the minutes from the August 8, 2016 meeting was made by Gina Bertucci, Carl Wilgus seconded the motion. All members were in favor.
- Motion to accept and approve the agenda with additions (LERTA update to old business and Economic Summit to new business) for meeting on September 12, 2016 was made by Robert Hetu. Carl Wilgus seconded the motion. All members were in favor.

### **Correspondence**

- No correspondence

### **Old Business**

#### **NPS/Geo**

- It launched this Spring and was a quiet summer.
- There were 651 different business contributors on the program which is double what National Geographic projected would be a good start.
- Over the course of the Fall, it would be broken down into committee structures and organization, Gina Bertucci and Carl Wilgus are on the stewardship committee.
- Currently working on marketing the website which will include marketing on social media.
- Meeting on Friday with William Penn Foundation (a major donor) to give a mid-year report.

### WhereMST App Training

- Robert Hetu trained Robert Rengifo, Annette Atkinson, Holly Freese and Courtney Woytko on the WhereMST app. He is looking into transferring ownership to either one person here at the Township as the developer or if possible, to the Township itself. Michelle Dellavale commented that it is possible to transfer into the Township name, that we need the EIN and a contact person to be verified by Apple.

### New Business Ribbon Cutting

- Joan Woisin mentioned that Pocono Springs Camp is interested in a grand opening ribbon cutting in the Spring of 2017.
- Gina Bertucci asked about the Four Seasons Diner. Mike Dwyer mentioned that the property was sold but we have not heard from the new owner in a while.
- Annette Atkinson mentioned that Retro Fitness was trying to open by the Fall 2016 but it looks like it will be after the New Year.

### LERTA Update

- Beverly Brown is to work with Robert Rengifo on contacting Realtors outside our area to continue the realtor education and inform them on our LERTA program.

### New Business

#### October 12<sup>th</sup>, Fossil Day - Dedication of Historical Marker for the Marshalls Creek Mastodon)

- Unlike the Mastodon Madness, which was an EDC event (created by Bob Hetu, scavenger hunt bringing traffic to our stores) and managed by the EDC, this is a Historical Commission event.
- Will be held at the Municipal Building with continental breakfast and speakers, with a photo op directly following, at the marker's physical location at Wendy's. Invitees include State Reps, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, National Park Service, Monroe County Historical Association, and descendants of the people who found and excavated the Mastodon.
- Discussion of "dressing the room" followed, with life sized freestanding replica of Historical Marker, and life sized mural for the boardroom suggested. Carrie will look into a poster of the mastodon for the Municipal Building and freestanding cardboard cutout of the marker. Annette mentioned staff had done some legwork for life size canvas of a Mastodon for the Municipal Meeting Room, etc., and Historical Commission and staff should coordinate.

### ShopLocal

- Planning phase at the end of September. There is no change to the production schedule yet.
- ShopLocal Discount Cards will be mailed the week before Thanksgiving with the official kick off on Small Business Saturday
- Discussion about tracking: templates are in place to begin, and we can track the success of the mailing, but that the biggest challenge is tracking the participation – the number of times and how a card is used. Gina Bertucci mentioned possibly partnering with Visa for tracking. Robert Hetu was going to look into this.
- Discussions regarding putting together past deals and make suggestions to the businesses for improvements, also try to get businesses to work together like a dinner and a movie deal.

- Annette Atkinson mentioned that she has been approached by other Townships about being included in our Shop Local campaign. Robert Hetu and Beverly Brown were not opposed to this idea but Carrie Wetherbee and Gina Bertucci expressed concern because it could take business away from our Township. Annette Atkinson also mentioned that consumers from Lehman and Smithfield expressed interest in being able to use the ShopLocal card. Everyone agreed that expanding the consumer base would be a good idea. It should be discussed further at next meeting.

#### Sewer Payment Plan #6

- Supervisors updated the EDC on a new EDU enhancement ---- the Board of Supervisors passed a resolution at the September 8<sup>th</sup> meeting approving a new Payment Plan for commercial customers that allows customers to finance tap in fees. The plan allows customers, whether existing or new, who want to acquire EDU's to finance them: customers must pay for 2 EDUs or 20% of their new tap in fees (whichever is greater) upfront, and can finance the remaining 80% over 48 months at an annual 3% finance rate.

#### Economic Summit

- Carl Wilgus commented that MST was mentioned at length at the Summit for their LERTA efforts, and was actually a part of the slide presentation.
- Carrie Wetherbee stated that at the Summit it was mentioned that the crime rate in Monroe County was high and that this is not good if we are pushing the LERTA program because businesses won't want to go to a high crime area. Mike Dwyer mentioned that the Supervisors were discussing the possibility, that in the future, a county police force could be created. It would increase the police presence county wide but spread out the financial cost countywide. Gina Bertucci also mentioned that her business hire their own security force so it might be possible to use a private/public force. Annette stated that Summit statistics should be taken in stride; a quick desk research right at the EDC meeting showed that the crime rate of Monroe County was in fact, well under the national average, and even then, the type of crime is what was skewing the numbers -- the burglary rate, which is due to the multitude of vacation homes in the Poconos area, which isn't unusual at all.

#### Public Comments

- Ed Regina asked about the paving of 209. Mike Dwyer explained that PennDot will be paving from Municipal Dr towards Bushkill starting in October. PennDot decided that Route 209 from Price Chopper to Municipal Dr needed more planning.
- Michelle Dellavale requested on behalf of Barrett Township to get our input and guidance on helping Barrett Township start a Restaurant Week. Annette Atkinson mentioned that since Barrett Township was extremely successful in their festivals, achieving thousands in attendance at their music festival, and attracting thousands of visitors for the Halloween Parade, perhaps Barrett Township could help Middle Smithfield with large attendance events.

**Meeting is scheduled for October 10, 2016. Meeting adjourned at 8:00pm.**