

MINUTES
SKOWHEGAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday January 5, 2022
9:00 AM
Municipal Building-Council Room

Members Present:

Billy Finley, Chairman
Jason Gayne, Treasurer
Donna McGorty
Kristina Cannon
Steve Gray
Steve Govoni

Others Present:

Jeff Hewett, Director of Econ. & Comm. Dev.
Renee Belliveau, Recording Secretary

Absent Members:

Cole Clement
Reid Gibson

1. Call regular meeting to order.

Billy Finley called the meeting to order at 9:05am.

2. Approve the Skowhegan Economic Development Corporation minutes from the November 3, 2021 meeting.

Jason Gayne motioned, Steve Govoni seconded to approve the minutes from the November 3, 2021 meeting. V- 4/0, motion carried.

3. Approve the Skowhegan Economic Development Corporation financials from November & December 2021.

Steve Govoni motioned, Jason Gayne seconded to approve the financials from November and December of 2021. V- 6/0, motion carried.

Steve Govoni asked if the Renaissance Center value was correct on financial reports. Jeff will look at last audit and get a copy sent out for Steve to look at. Donna McGorty said there is a difference between value of property at the time of purchase and the value today. We could ask the auditors to prepare a supplemental report showing current market value of the properties. This will provide a way to show the book value to the actual value for grant reporting. Steve Govoni asked if having too much in assets will hurt us in applying for grants. Jeff Hewett replied that it would depend on what you are trying to do. Donna McGorty asked to have the city tax value of each property sent to the Board for comparison to the balance sheet.

4. Old Business

a. Update the board on the potential tenant of the empty space at the Industrial Park.

Jeff Hewett stated that he was hoping to present some positive news about a potential tenant. A southern Maine company had interest in the empty space and the building met all of their requirements for space, however, they backed out when they found out that we could not provide natural gas for them.

Billy Finley heard that Maine Cedar Hot Tubs might want more space. Jeff Hewett said, yes, they did and they took the remaining space surrounding their already rented space. The 14,000-15,000 sq. ft. space is still available.

b. Update the board on work done at the Industrial Park.

The ramp is in place; however, the door replacement part is being pushed out further and further due to supply issues. Jeff Hewett wants to have Bryan and the fire department come in and assess whether everything meets requirements around the door.

Jeff Hewett said in regards to the change of supplier for propane, there were supply issues with tanks but now that everything is squared away with that, we will split off Maine Cedar on their own soon enough. All the heating is working well now that everything is insulated properly.

Billy Finley left the meeting at 9:28am.

Jeff Hewett explained to the board that they looked at natural gas near Industrial Park but gas in Skowhegan is at Sappi, which is a high-pressure line and not a line you can tap into. The other spot in town where you could tap into is where Rt 139 and Rt 104 come together, but you would need to bring the lines up. There is also the option to tap in from Madison side and bring over to Skowhegan, which would be easier and cheaper but it is still not feasible.

Something we could do is try to work with the gas companies and make a case that Skowhegan would be a big enough user and it would make sense for gas company to do the work to get natural gas to the rest of Skowhegan area.

5. New Business

a. Discussion and decision on the annual meeting date of the SEDC board.

The annual meeting is generally done in March, but they have been done differently at times. It's whatever the boards preference is. SEDC's next meeting

is on March 2nd. A decision was made by the board to hold the annual meeting on March 2, 2022 at 11:00am.

6. Committee Reports by Members

a. Broadband

Jeff Hewett updates the board that he hasn't heard much from Christian Savage for the county plans of the ARPA funds for this. He did state that there are some areas that are covered better than others in Skowhegan, but still not where we need to be. One good thing is that Beeline is doing massive upgrades in the area, however, there are still places that cannot connect to Beeline.

b. Natural Gas

Nothing to report at this time.

c. Acquisition/Development

Jason Gayne stated he had seen pictures of progress for the trampoline park going in.

d. Marketing

Nothing to report at this time.

e. Run of River

A meeting was held Tuesday, January 4, 2022 and the name was changed to Skowhegan River Park. Kristina Cannon updated that fundraising paths are moving forward and they are working on a pyramid plan for the remaining fundraising.

f. Real Estate Sub-Committee

There will be a meeting on January 24th with Amber Lambke to update the committee on her project.

7. Items by the Members

Nothing to report at this time.

8. Economic & Community Development Office Items

Jeff Hewett made the Board aware that there are some personal things taking place and he apologizes for being preoccupied. He let them know that we have yet to start legal action on the delinquent trophy shop loan and the daycare loan, but he has not forgotten about them and will get moving forward with it. He is currently working on façade grants. We have four applicants with applications in and everything is done except the historical review. There is potential for opening up for other applicants to come in and apply since we are short on some of the originals for our application. Everyone needs to be ready to move forward in the spring. Jeff also states that if any members know of any businesses in town that need façade work, to please send them our way.

Meeting adjourned 10:01am. Steve Govoni motioned, Steve Gray seconded, V- 5/0, motion carried.