# **Destination Groton Committee meeting minutes Wednesday March 9th**

# Present via Zoom: Greg Sheldon, Mairi Elliott,, Jeff Gordon Julie Platt Joni Parker-Roach

# Attendees: Judy Anderson

# **MOTION**: made by Jeff Gordon to approve the meeting minutes of March 2nd 2022 Mairi Elliott 2nd

# Roll Call vote unanimously **approved**

# **Agenda Item C-David Wang Update**

# M. Elliott states that she emailed David wang a request for his intentions in writing so we could best align our needs with his goals. She reports that he replied with having it doen by 3/7. As of yet we have not received it. M. Elliott will follow up with him.

# J. Platt asked if it was for a calendar only or to integrate all things? Committee agreed that it would make more sense to be a central location for all things beyond just a calendar

# Julie Platt pointed out there is a crossover with the visitor center website on the wix platform

# **Update Earl Carter Museum**

# G. Sheldon is reaching out to Connie Sartini and the History Center along with Don Black and will be scheduling a meeting to begin negotiations to broker a deal for the Earl Carter museum’s new location.

# He also mentions Historical Commission meeting with Bob deGroot and discussions around who designates National Register locations will be had

# M Elliot asks if we have talked to John Amaral about housing the Earl Carter museum at the Waters House

# J.Gordon states he had a conversation with John Amaral and for now his main focus is on the Deluxe property currently and isn't starting new projects

# **Discussion on MA Municipal Association “One Stop” webinar**

# G. Sheldon noticed that there were 140 local officials on the call and we had a solid presence with our questions. He asks for discussion and takeaways the committee had.

# J. Gordon stated that it was good to learn that there can be more weight placed on applications that have monetary matches and combine towns

# M. Elliott states she was impressed with the programs ability to refer to other grants if what we are looking for is not covered under the “one stop” umbrella J. Platt pointed out the Expression of Interest or EOI at the first step is a great way to be guided by the committee to the right programs.

# J. Parker-Roach points out that the meeting with the director of the MA so office of travel and tourism has not yet confirmed for the 23rd but we will know further later in the week

# G. Sheldon mentions strategic plan along economic continuum infrastructure is what seemed to be a key phrase that they were looking for in their applications that they are looking for investments parallel to tourism and travel

# fiscal year 2022 is now closed but it gives us time to do our applications thoughtfully for our fiscal year ‘23

# Greg Sheldon brings up the select board meeting the previous evening and that Jeff Gordon brought his attention to 3.3 million and ARPA funds that the town is receiving and that there is $228,000 unaccounted for at this point

# Judy points out that the Sewer Commission would most likely be using the surplus to clean up Nod Rd.

# G. Sheldon states we may or may not have access to separate infrastructure funding and that should be looked in to

# M. Elliott points out that in some of the grant funding structure there is a small and rural town section that we don't seem to fit per population being over 7k but we may fit per capita requirements and we should look into that because there is more funding there as well

# **Discussion on GBA Branded video**

# Jeff Gordon shows video branded by the Groton Business Association and that we will have it placed on our town website page

# G. Sheldon requests we send photos into The IT department as well and also suggests we post Jeff Gordon's video to our personal social medias and business pages

# **Agenda Item E-Short Term Initiatives**

# **Forums- Dates and Times**

# G. Sheldon- If we use the Middle school performing arts center we would need janitorial services and a budget to pay for that

# J. Gordon asks if the Senior Center is too small for our purposes he also recommends Grotonwoods for the east Groton forum

# Jeff Gordon asks if we need a West Groton location

# M Elliott affirms that is important to include the West Groton section because they do you feel separate from the center of town in large part She volunteers to call Ashley at the Groton Center for available dates for our first forum

# G. Sheldon will start slide presentation for the press for forum display

# J. Parker-Roach asks what questions are we asking, what is our goal? Jeff Gordon asks how we can record info accurately in these forums

# G. Sheldon mentions the World Cafe is a way to record answers as Joni has explained in previous meetings, he suggests we have separate tables for subjects such as marketing, infrastructure, financing etc.

# M. Elliott reiterates that getting input from the town members on their concerns and their desires should be at the forefront of our goals

# J. Platt reminds the committee that opening many opinions up in a public forum can sometimes get out of hand

# J. Gordon suggests that we relay the vision that is unfolding in town and then ask for input on what the what they see their vision is. Ask what their concerns are and what the opportunities are that they see.

# G. Sheldon states “let the conversation begin” being a driving force for the report done by the Groton Business Association

# M. Elliott suggests that that quote should be the banner slogan we use for our public forums

# G. Sheldon will create a framework for the conversation well we will have two smaller forums with World Cafe and the third larger with questions for us

# Jeff Gordon volunteers to bring refreshments

# Judy mentions that from a stakeholder standpoint the biggest concerns are traffic and parking and it would be smart for us to have some answers during these forums

# **Budget Proposal**

# Vertical videos for weddings, history, hospitality, conservation and arts/culture

# Greg Sheldon asks if that is still 50 videos Jeff Gordon says he's narrowed it to 25

# G. Sheldon suggest the videographer cut the 25 videos into the above categories with snipits that could fit in to each. He asks the committee to think through any other categories that we should include

# J. Gordon states 25 his request number of 25 was for government agency or committees videos he has requested $7500 to Mark Haddad for the government based videos which does not include the local businesses that will be paid by business owners.

# Judy reminds us to include postage in our budget

# G. Sheldon brings up GELD mailings as a possibility but asks the committee to give thought over the week to identify any other outstanding budget items the might need to be included

# **Director EDC job description**

# Still no update in progress

# **Advisory Group**

# J. Parker-Roach suggests her husband Patrick Parker-Roach to be a member of the advisory group stating he has many skills in marketing and other practices that could be very beneficial to us.

# G. Sheldon mentions Art Prest and Bob deGroot to be added to the advisory group and perhaps one month from now we could have a large meeting in public with as many members as we'd like to invite. He also mentions Bonnie Biocchi former Director of all municipal power of Massachusetts out would be a great member to add as well

# **Agenda Item F-Long Term Initiatives**

# **Infrastructure**

# G. Sheldon has been in touch with Bruce Easom regarding burying the utilities and he mentioned that in the past a 1 1/2 percent surcharge was put on the bill in Concord. It would be about $1,000,000 per mile and we could pay for over about 10 years with $2.20 a month addition to each households bill.

# Massworks also has grant programs that we will be looking into and we may be in competition with others in town so she we should look to how we prioritize when we apply for these grants

# **Agenda item G- Other Issues**

# National and state historical sites

# G. Sheldon has listed out existing National Historical sites in Town:

# Boutwell House, Meeting house/First Parish Church, District 7 School, Prescott School, Bennet- Shattuck house, the original Groton Inn, Groton LeatherBoard Co (currently River Court)

# Potential additions:

# Town Hall, the Library, Boutwell School, Legion Hall, Waters house Lawrence Academy

# Committee adds: Groton School, the Old Burying Ground, School House in Ayer, School house on Chicoppee Row

Greg Sheldon suggested having a recording for hold music at town hall about the history of Groton

We will not be meeting next Wednesday instead we will meet Tuesday 3/15 /22 at 6:15 PM

Meeting adjourned 8:15pm.