

**Business Development Corporation for a Greater Massena
Board Meeting Minutes
June 20, 2019**

Board Members: Dan Pease Jeff Dobbins
 Chris Herrick Ben Murtagh
 Dave LaClair

Excused: Ron Bacon...

Staff: Jim Murphy, Executive Director

Public: Sue Bellor, Matt LeBire, Sam Carbone, Erica Leonard (late)

Call to Order

Dan Pease, sitting in for Ron Bacon, called the meeting to order at 4:35 pm.

Minutes of the May 2019 Meeting

The minutes of the BDC's May meeting were approved with one correction; Jeff Dobbins had participated in the May meeting.

Financial Report s

None

Treasurer Chris Herrick provided the latest Barb Dwyer update. He was told that she would be on vacation out of the state through the first week of July. We continue to wait for the 2017 audit, which is required by the Authorities Budget Office and by our other source funders, including the Town and Village of Massena. Dan noted that one takeaway he received from his ABO training was that failure to complete the audit does not exempt the organization from its required reporting.

Executive Director Report (See enclosed 6 months report)

Jim Murphy reviewed his written Executive Director's Report with the board. He noted that his position continued to evolve amid the changing goals and expectations of what "community development" entails. As an example, Jim related a recent conversation with Massena Chamber Executive Director Nate LaShomb, who told him that the Chamber was basically getting out of the events business, instead focusing on "membership development." Nate said that he viewed event planning to be a community development function and, therefore, the purview of the BDC.

Board members unequivocally stated that event planning was not the function of the BDC. Chris Herrick, who had served on the Chamber Board for decades, questioned how the Chamber could avoid being an event entity, noting that he felt the Chamber needed to be the driving force in this area. Jim said that events and activities would determine, in large part, the success of Massena's downtown revitalization efforts, so someone had to take the lead.

Matt said another issue that complicated things was what was described as a "muddy" relationship between the Chamber and the volunteer Downtown Christmas initiative which began this year. He noted that the Christmas initiative, if it was not going to be a Chamber-sponsored event, needed a firm, independent structure that would lend credibility to fundraising efforts. Would this be a role that the BDC could play?

Dan said that if an organization like the Christmas initiative "needed a place to park the proceeds, that might be something we could consider. But the more involved the BDC gets, the more likely that you are going to be sucked in to being responsible for everything. I do not want the BDC to be the event planner for the village... With just one paid employee, just keeping the books would be a burden."

Jim also noted the level of commitment that would be required to serve as administrator of the Town's Microenterprise Grant Program, a role that would be compensated through the grant. Dan said that he would have no problem with our role in the grant program, because it fell within the BDC's core mission.

Jim said the town and village hoped to meet with Jim and Nate and possibly others soon to discuss the roles of each organization moving forward and to lay out a clear list of expectations and explore opportunities to work together.

Jim discussed other ongoing projects, including a new town website initiative, joint strategic planning, START Training Center and the (Grasse River) Local Waterfront Redevelopment Project, entrepreneurship training, etc.

There was also some discussion regarding the status of the Massena Theater Grant, including delays in issuing RFPs to continue the project, which must be complete by January. Questions were raised about "the acceptable level of pace" to complete the project. The BDC is "on the hook" as grant administrator and Chris and other board members suggested that we need to be more aggressive in pushing this forward.

Board members also discussed the village's DRI application and other CFAs.

Board Action Items

None

New Business/Other Business

Dan said that his ABO training had pointed to a number of policies – including conflict of interest – that needed to be reviewed on an annual basis. He asked Jim to research what policies required updates. When ABO first came out, Dan noted, the BDC Board spent more than a year putting together a governance manual that covered many of these requirements.

Consultant and Liaison Reports

None

Questions from the Public/Press

None

Adjournment

Dan Pease made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:30 pm, that motion was seconded by Chris Herrick and passed with all members voting ‘Aye’.

Next Regular Meeting Date: July 18, 2019