

**Meeting Minutes for Hardwick Downtown Commission
Birdsong Beer & Wine
June 20, 2022, 9 a.m.**

Present: Tobin Porter, Gary Michaels, Bethany Dunbar, Shari Cornish, Katie Tandy, Sandy Scott, Rose Friedman, Tara Reid

Minutes from May meeting approved.

- Shari has submitted application to Select Board for \$50K in ARPA funding to use toward the salary for a person to run the future Downtown organization and other, unknown expenses.
- The funds (total of \$355K allotted to the town) are to be used for economic development and recovery from Covid.
- Deadline to apply is June 30, so we will find out whether we will receive the money in July. Funds awarded will probably lean toward gap funding rather than long-term projects.

- Downtown updates:
 - Co-op move is planned for June 26-27.
 - Nora DeMuth is still working toward the purchase of the Co-op building on Main Street
 - The owners of the Blue Donkey in Stowe are interested in opening a restaurant on the Brochu Citgo property. Heather will be reaching out to them on behalf of the downtown commission.
 - Owners of the old bank building on Mill Street are working on apartments upstairs, but commercial space at street level is being left for renters to renovate.

- Report from Downtown Preservation Conference - Shari, Bethany, and Gary attended
 - All found the conference inspiring.
 - Lots of focus on housing and the creative economy (what it is, how to foster it).

- More updates:
 - Yellow Barn project is still up in the air, due to the gap between the budget and most recent bid.
 - Meet the Town Manager events are happening; Heather will attend tonight's event.

- Next meeting - Heather will share a Zoom presentation about her work so far.
 - She is looking at existing town properties and use or potential for future use.
 - We will work on preparing for the presentation to the Select Board in August.

- Report on the Civic Standard from Rose and Tara:

- They are working on cleaning out the Gazette building - have met with the Historical Society and will meet with Ross Connelly to make sure they aren't throwing out anything of historical value.
 - The Civic Standard is leasing the building from Ray Small. (The Gazette itself is now a non-profit, and Ray has moved out of state.)
 - Currently, the group is learning how to create and run a non-profit and organizing programming.
 - Hope to utilize Better Places grant funding.
 - Mission: "Making excuses for the people of Hardwick to get together."
 - The Gazette building will be both office and community space.
 - They are welcoming community input about ideas for programming and activities that could happen in the building or around town.
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- Final other business: The community development coordinator position has been filled, and the candidate to be hired will be announced in the next two weeks.

Meeting adjourned.

Next meeting to be held Monday, July 18, 9 a.m., either at Birdsong or via Zoom.