

**Meeting Minutes for Hardwick Downtown Partnership  
Birdsong Beer & Wine  
Monday, April 17, 2023, 9 a.m.**

Present: Shari Cornish, Emily Hershberger, Gary Michaels, Katie Tandy, Nora Lakhani, Sandy Scott, Abrah Griggs, Tracy Martin, Gabi Benham (Caja Madera)

Gary moves to accept minutes from the last meeting, Emily seconds. Motion passes.

Shari has sent out a link to the Google [sheet](#) with town contacts as well as a [folder](#) to share photos of the town. If you have trouble accessing the documents, email Shari to request permission & add information and photos as you like.

Kristen Leahy has Hardwick Downtown Partnership business cards and handouts to distribute to people coming into the Zoning office.

Treasurer's Notes: There have been no changes in our finances since the last meeting.

- Gary proposes retaining a bookkeeper to attend to tasks such as filing state and federal tax forms. He recommends using Laurel Schoop of Wolcott; she has emailed a proposal which states that her services will cost \$30 per hour.
- Gary makes a motion to approve this retainer, Nora seconds. Motion passes.

Discussion of the VTRANS Bike and Pedestrian Grant

- Question: Can HDP write this grant to use toward the connector trail project (to connect the LVRT to downtown)?
  - Tracy does not think this is needed, as there is already \$12K set aside for this project from an earlier USDA grant, which should be sufficient.
- Funding is still needed for the park at the end of the pedestrian bridge - could the VTRANS grant be applied to this project?
  - It may depend on whether VTRANS sees this park as pertaining to bike and pedestrian usage; could highlight plans for bike racks/repair station and connection to the pedestrian bridge.

More LVRT discussion:

- Tracy reports that the state is holding a meeting this week to discuss LVRT signage & wayfinding - what the state will provide and recommendations for town maintained signage.
- Hardwick's trailhead will be at the Town House & Depot building. There **will** be a picnic table, trash collection facilities, a kiosk/map, bike rack, and water. There may also be a bike repair station, and Opie is trying to get the bathrooms located at the back of the Town House repaired for use as trailhead facilities.
  - Trailhead maintenance will be the town's responsibility, which means the town may need to hire or pay a current employee to take care of trash, cleaning the area, and cleaning the restrooms.
- Nora is concerned about traffic through town posing a risk to bikers and walkers visiting from the trail.

- Shari says that the Select Board and police department are working together on plans for added signage and potentially a lower speed limit through town. (Downtown Designation allows the town to post speed limits below 25mph.)
- The Memorial Park will be designated as a “pause place” for visitors venturing off the trail from the trailhead.

#### Discussion of Spring Festival

- It has been recommended that the HDP not act as a fiscal agent or sponsor for Spring Festival, especially given the fact that this year’s event is well into the planning stages. If HDP were to take on that type of role, we should be involved as a true partner, from the beginning of the planning process.
- Another way to support is becoming a sponsor. (Spring Festival Sponsorship Opportunities handout is shared.)
  - Sandy motions to donate \$500 toward tent rentals and the street dance. \$500 sponsorship is considered “Sunshine Level” and includes mentions of the business/organization on the Kiwanis Facebook page, on posters, and special thank you from the event’s announcer at the event and the parade. Emily seconds the motion, and the motion is approved.

It is noted that the “draft” blurb about HDP that Shari sent around can be used for phone calls, emails, and other communication to the public.

Emily proposes hiring Sharon Fialco as a facilitator for a longer planning meeting. Her fee is \$50 per hour, and we could hire her for up to 3 hours.

- Emily makes a motion that we hire Sharon as a facilitator (meeting date TBD), Nora seconds. Motion is approved.

Shari contacted Kathryn Lovinsky about doing web design work and has received a proposal. We will review this at the next meeting.

Abrah brought in sticker mock-ups based on the banner design. The four stickers are oval and printed with four different background colors and a subtle rainbow line along the edge. Abrah says that it would be easy to adjust the shape and color of the design for different purposes.

Tracy suggests having a banner printed for the HDP that two people could carry in the Spring Festival Parade, as a float does not seem manageable at this time.

Next meeting will be held May 15 at 9 a.m. at Birdsong.