

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT and TOURISM COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Monday, June 9, 2014
3:00 PM**

PRESENT: Bill Ackerman Chairman
Bernie Krasnoff
Rob Megnin
Bill Mercier
Gerrie Russell

This was a special meeting of the commission held at the Grand Hotel to give the Killington Resort an opportunity to outline future summer plans and development. The Selectboard, the Planning Commission, business owners and the residents of Killington were invited to attend.

AGENDA:

1. Call to order
2. Chamber Update
3. Town Update
4. Resort Summer Operations Update
5. Citizen Update
6. Adjourn

The meeting was called to order at 3:10 PM by Chairman Bill Ackerman who outlined the commission's purpose, which is to advise the town, and introduced the current members. He reminded those in attendance that the meetings were held monthly, are open to the public and encouraged residents to attend.

CHAMBER UPDATE: (Howard Smith, President)

Mr. Smith stated that great things are happening here on weekends and introduced Amy Morrison, the Executive Director of the Chamber. Amy went over the summer calendar and noted there were over 90 events listed which is extraordinary for a town of this size. She also announced that wifi will now be available to visitors who stop by the chamber location.

TOWN UPDATE: (Seth Webb, Town Manager)

Seth outlined projects and events that the town is actively pursuing. Green Mountain Golf Course has booked several tournaments and is actively seeking more. The town is promoting both summer and fall events. We are re branding our product and pushing way finding signage. Killington has been named a Scenic Byway Designation by the state of Vermont. The new gateway project is moving forward. Hiking trails, mountain bike trails and kayaking are active projects. Sidewalks, landscaping and new site developments are all in the planning stages. The new Park and Ride construction will start in August.

RESORT SUMMER OPERATIONS UPDATE: (Mike Solimano)

Mike Solimano, the Resort President, spoke of restoring the Killington brand, growing skier visits, taking back market share and retention of pass holders. He advocates a more open dialog between the Resort and the town. He firmly believes what is good for the Resort is good for the town. He made the point that return on investment is not as good during the summer season as during the winter season. A significant investment is needed and the Resort plans to move ahead regardless, but a repeal of the sales & use options tax would cause things to happen much quicker. At this point participants and attendees shared a beer.

Tracy Taylor, Director of Operations at Pico, began his part of the presentation with the statement that summer business is flat and the goal is to balance out cash flow throughout all seasons. First on the list is to enhance mountain biking by adding more trails and retrofitting the Snowshed quad for bikes. According to Gravity Logic, a company devoted to mountain biking, we have the best product on the planet for mountain biking and could own the northeastern market. At this point some future bikers made their way around the ballroom several times. Guided ATV/UTV tours as well as Action Sport Camps in conjunction with KMS are on the agenda. A “soaring eagle” zipline is planned for September 2014 and will be installed near Snowshed once permits are obtained. This zipline will be a 365 day operation. Lake Snowshed will receive a lot of attention with docks, paddle boarding and kayaks. In three to five years, plans include a “Beast of the East” zipline and an indoor arena. One umbrella bar will be relocated and the town and resort biking trails will be connected. All of the above will require significant funds which brought the conversation back to the options tax. If the town should revoke this tax, more funds will go directly to development. This ended the formal presentation.

CITIZEN INPUT:

Bob Montgomery: We have been waiting on his for forty years.

Jon Curtis: (could not hear comment)

Alice Sciore: Could we put all events and activities on one calendar.

Patty McGrath: These all sound like good ideas. Many resorts out west offer similar amenities.

Megan ? : What is the status of repairs to the road and when are sidewalks going to be put in?

Mary ? : How does completion of the ski village fit into these plans?

Dean Reese: Where are we going to draw new people from?

Jerry B. : Please consider adding lights to Snowshed.

Hanna Abrahams: What is your plan for the options tax?

Robert Salmeri: How would the money be invested?

Judy Intraub: Please consider bringing back cultural events.

Vince Chiarella: All of this would add to a healthier community.

Jim Haff: When can we vote? We need to start the process of voting on the options tax right away.

Patty McGrath: We have to make up the difference in money someplace so keeping property taxes at the same level is a big consideration.

Vito Rasenas: Just how firm is this commitment? Powder Corp. may be in financial trouble because of pending law suit.

Chris Bianchi: Perhaps a change in the options tax could be collateral for a loan.

Steve Finneron: The resort has presented its side, now this is really a question for the EDTC and Selectboard.

Howard Smith: We need more meetings just like his one.

Chris Bianchi: The EDTC makes the recommendations. The Selectboard decides what goes on the ballot.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 PM and attendees were invited to a reception hosted by the Resort.

The next meeting of the EDTC is scheduled for Monday, July 14th at 3:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted
Gerrie Russell