

TOWN OF SMITHSBURG
Economic Development Commission
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 28, 2023
MEETING MINUTES
Submitted by C. McCormick, 12/29/23.

Commissioners in attendance: Elizabeth Farmer Bedard, Chair; Jamie Fogle, Vice-Chair; Cathie McCormick, Secretary/Bookkeeper; Tracey Knight-Simane Town Council – Liaison, Dawn M. McKinnon, Benjamin Rodriguez, Dennis Sickmen

Absent: Amber Dwyer

Meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by Chair Liz Bedard
A motion to approve the November meeting minutes was made by Sickmen and seconded by Fogle. **Motion carried.**

Agenda was approved: Sickmen moved; Fogle seconded. **Motion carried.**

Chair's Report

Farmer Bedard reported that the town attorney responded to her question regarding sub-committee meetings and the Maryland Open Meeting Act. Only a meeting with four or more EDC members discussing EDC business would be in violation. Subcommittees should keep notes at their meetings.

Bookkeeper's Report

No new information to report regarding budget expenditures.

Rodriguez discussed Shop with a Cop Fun Run strategy regarding EDC financial involvement for next year. As reported at the end of the Q1, the EDC's Fun Run related expenses for 2023 were \$5,443.08. This amount was \$1,943.08 over the budgeted amount of \$3,500. Rodriguez is recommending an EDC budget amount of \$7,500 for the 2024 event. Chair Farmer Bedard suggested tabling the item to include in the overall EDC event planning/budgeting process either at the end of this meeting or next meeting. McCormick moved. McKinnon seconded. **Motion carried.**

Old Business

1. *Artist's Palette Ribbon Cutting Event*

County officials are not available for the ribbon cutting dates proposed for January. Discussion followed regarding the best way to set a date so all parties can attend. Farmer Bedard will check with Mayor Souders on the possibility of a joint discussion with Fogle and county officials to choose a new date.

Sub-Committee Reports

1. **Events and Promotions** – tabled to be discussed under New Business
2. **PR Committee** – no updates
3. **Business Development** – McCormick met with Town Manager Brandt and Clerk Zeis on 12/13 to discuss boundaries for the proposed business survey since many businesses fall outside town borders. Part of the discussion also included the process for businesses to be listed on the town website. Both pieces of information will be useful in conducting the proposed survey. The suggested informal boundaries identified were businesses on both sides of Route 64 from Ivy Hill to CC Firearms. Sickmen suggested EDC members visiting businesses should carry the application form for being added to the directory so they can be registered.
4. **Arts & Culture:** McCormick reported progress on the application for a New Artwork Planning Grant to the state's Public Art Across Maryland initiative for downtown murals as discussed in November. Rodriguez raised a concern between the connection between murals and business development. McCormick added that the goal of encouraging tourism to the town is a key component of public art such as murals. Kathryn Gratton has agreed to assist with the writing and submission process as the town representative with the sub-committee. McCormick shared a draft of the proposal language and rubric (attachment 1) The proposal deadline is January 26, 2024. This initial grant is planning only and requires a strategy for significant community input during the process. Farmer Bedard noted that \$3000 may be an insufficient fee for a consultant, and McCormick will research the issue to determine the need for adjusting the budget. Fogle moved to approve the plan. McKinnon seconded. **Motion carried.**

Public Comment

None

New Business

1. The members engaged in a lengthy discussion of the plan to switch from the current Farmer's Market program to a series of monthly, themed, town-centered events. McKinnon noted that the current schedule of Monday afternoon/early evening events is inconsistent with the 2019 BAE report that most town residents work outside Smithsburg making it difficult for them to attend during the current times of the market. She suggested that weekends would be a better match, and Sickmen added that Saturdays are better than Sundays. It was decided to move forward with planning for the third Saturdays of each month making "Third in the Burg," branding possible.
2. As part of the Events/Promotions subcommittee, Fogle proposed several events throughout the year beginning with a Spring Scavenger Hunt in March. The EDC would

place plastic eggs in area businesses to be discovered by community members. The eggs would contain relevant promotional items for other businesses, and scavenger hunt progress would be reported on social media. Fogle will attend the Council meeting on 1/16 to start the process of planning the March event. Planning on the rest of the year's events will continue at the next meeting.

The second of two Zoom meetings was concluding. McCormick moved to adjourn, and McKinnon seconded. The chair adjourned the meeting at 8:13 p.m.

Next meeting is scheduled for January 25, 7 p.m., in the Town Hall first-floor conference room.

INCOMPLETE DRAFT for EDC meeting 12-28-23

**FY24 Public Art Across Maryland
New Artworks Planning Grant**

1. Describe the planning process including:

a. Goals for the proposed project.

To encourage tourism and increase civic engagement, the Town of Smithsburg is planning the installation of murals along their Main Street downtown corridor. The Town of Smithsburg in Washington County sits along the South Mountain Corridor just west of the Catoctin National Forest. According to a 2019 BAE survey, Smithsburg is a town of approximately 3,000 residents in 1,000 households, with a growing number of commuters from Hagerstown and Frederick County moving to the town and wider area. The town is bordered by rolling farmland and orchards and has a rich history including Civil War skirmishes connecting it to both Gettysburg and Antietam battles.

b. Goals for engaging the community and how engagement will take place.

Community engagement at all levels is a key goal of the mural project. The community will be engaged in selection of the themes for the murals and the artists to be invited to submit concept drawings. The town's Economic Development Commission will reach out to organizations such as the Smithsburg Historical Association, the Lions Club, the Smithsburg branch of the Washington County Library system, the Smithsburg Arts and Culture Association and Smithsburg Tractor Society to gather their input. Residents will be invited to comment through town hall meetings and online surveys regarding the overall process and the selection of artists for up to three murals. Invitation postcards to attend meetings and/or submit comments online will be mailed to resident households. EDC Business Development subcommittee members will meet with the owners of potential mural sites to seek input and permission to install and maintain the murals. Once themes and artist concept proposals are received, a comment and community voting process will take place online or by written ballot in a box at Town Hall.

c. If the artist is to be selected, a description of the artist selection process

Working with a consultant familiar with Maryland mural artists and processes and in collaboration with the community, three to five artists will be selected based on their experience, portfolio, and style. These artists will be invited, and paid an honorarium if they accept, to submit a concept drawing based on the theme and content selected by the community and the building owner. Once approved, these concept drawings will conclude the planning process and be prepared for the seeking of project funding.

2. A detailed schedule with dates and activities/tasks for the planning process described in Question 1.

Schedule:

1. Hire a consultant to assist with planning process (late March 2024)
 - o Prepare online presence, postcard, and survey (both online and printed) (April)

Attachment 1

2. Engage the wider community in the planning process for content, style and artists (April-July)
 - Online survey live (April 1)
 - Printed surveys available at Town Hall and area businesses
 - Post card mailing to residents/businesses inviting comment (April 5)
 - Meeting with community organization leaders (April 10)
 - Community event with breakout sessions for theme, content, and artistic style for consideration (May 10)
 - Mural content/style voting completed-online and paper (July 30)
 - Artists selected for invitation to submit concept drawings from a vetted pool of ten (August 1)
2. Downtown building business owner individual meetings (June-August)
 - Location
 - Content/style
3. Artist selection (July-October)
 - Invitation to selected artists (August 1)
4. Town/State or other approvals (June-August)
 - Maintenance commitment

3. Detailed budget expenses and income applicable to the planning process outlines in Question 1.

<i>Budget Expenses</i>	<i>Cost per</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Total</i>
Consultant	\$3,000	1	\$3,000
Post card printing	\$0.11	2000	\$220
Post card mailing	\$0.51	1500	\$765
Survey/Ballot printing (two sides)	\$0.40	500	\$200
Food and set up for community events (can they be held in Town Hall?)	\$400	2	\$800
Artist Honorarium	\$1000	5	\$5,000
Expenses Total			\$9,985
Income PAAM New Artwork Planning Grant			\$10,000

FY24 Public Art Across Maryland New Artworks Planning Grant Rubric			
Excellent to outstanding	Good to very good	Satisfactory	Fair to Marginal
1. Describe the planning process including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goals for the proposed project • Goals for engaging the community and how engagement will take place • If the artist is to be selected, a description of the artist selection process 			
Clear, specific, and detailed description of the planning process, project goals, and artist selection process demonstrating strong community engagement.	Description of the planning process, project goals, and artist selection process demonstrating community engagement.	Minimal description of the planning process, project goals and artist selection process demonstrating some community engagement.	Unclear description of the planning process, project goals, and artist selection process demonstrating community engagement.
21-30	11-20	6-10	1-5
2. A detailed schedule with dates and activities/tasks for the planning process described in Question 1.			
Clear, specific, and realistic planning schedule including dates and activities/tasks in strong alignment with the planning process outlined in Question 1.	Realistic planning schedule including dates and activities /tasks in alignment with the planning process in Question 1.	Unclear and unrealistic planning schedule not in alignment with the planning process outlined in Question 1.	
11-15	6-10	1-5	
3. Detailed budget expenses and income applicable to the planning process outlined in Question 1.			
Clear, specific, and realistic planning expenses and income in strong alignment with the planning process in Question 1.	Realistic project expenses and income in alignment with the planning process in Question 1.	Unclear and unrealistic expenses and income not in alignment with the planning process outlined in Question 1.	
11-15	6-10	1-5	