

Town of Mount Desert  
Economic Development Committee Meeting  
July 14, 2021  
Minutes\*

*\*See Number 6 (below)*

**Attending:** Megan Bailey, Jamie Blaine, Martha Dudman, Matt Hart, Durlin Lunt, Dan McKay, Kathy Miller, Kerri Sands, Seth Singleton, Rick Wheeler, Averel Wilson

**Absent:** Don Graves, Nancy Ho, Heather Jones, Stephanie Reece, Tony Smith, Micki Sumpter

**Also in Attendance:** Gordon Beck

All attendees attended in person.

Dan McKay convened the meeting at 4:01 p.m. (at which point Durlin began recording the proceedings)

1. Gordon Beck of the town's Sustainability Committee presented an idea for this committee's consideration: the upgrading of the town's EV capability to a fast-charging station, which would greatly improve the range and lower the charging time for electric vehicles, which are present in ever-growing numbers. The installation costs are substantial (Gordon estimated well over \$200,000, which includes major voltage and infrastructure upgrades). Once installed, however, the operational costs should be minimal, if not zero. The committee expressed a good deal of interest in the idea and will continue conversations with Gordon.
2. **Minutes:** Kathy moved that the minutes of the April 14<sup>th</sup> be approved, Rick seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.
3. **Election of officers for FY 2022:** In what we hope has become an annual ritual, Dan announced that he will serve as chair for "one more year." The committee also elected Megan as vice chair and the undersigned as secretary. Moved by Averel, seconded by Rick, and approved by all.
4. **Updates:** Due to the absence of Tony Smith, the updates on the Main Street project and the parking issue were postponed. Martha reported that the traffic committee was evolving, with some members leaving and some non-members expressing interest in joining. There has also been discussion of combining this group with a similar committee recently launched in Seal Harbor. The selectmen continue to believe that Jim Willis and Tony can resolve the parking issues. Kathy said she is keeping daily track of available spaces in the Gray Cow parking lot between noon and 1 pm.
5. **Broadband:** Reporting for the Broadband Committee, Kathy described a good deal of activity, enthusiasm and progress. The Island Institute, which "has done a ton of work in this area" now has as broadband expert attend the monthly meetings. In addition, VETRO

Cares for Maine reached out to the town and has already provided a good deal of assistance, including an auto design aimed at identifying every home and business in the town. The Broadband Committee also included a survey that went out with the tax bills and has had a good response to date. Recent estimates now peg the price of covering the entire town at between \$6 and \$10 million. Because the state is more interested in a regional than a town-by-town approach, the committee has reached out to surrounding towns, and all but Southwest Harbor have expressed interest. Finally the committee has designed a series of seven public meetings with the National Digital Equity Center, with the first scheduled for July 27<sup>th</sup>. Dan noted that there will soon be a good deal of federal money available, and we need to be ready in advance.

6. **Discussion of Brainstorming Subgroup memo.** Because of time constraints, we only started to dig into the memo, which the committee felt warranted a meeting of its own. At Averel's suggestion, we agreed to pause today's meeting and continue it in two weeks, at a date and time to be determined by a survey monkey that Dan will send out.
7. **Homework:** Committee members are asked to drill down on Recommendation #5 of the memo, "Develop a Vision of appropriate and Sustainable Development," and come to the resumed meeting prepared to hammer out such a vision. A copy of the memo is attached.

The meeting was "paused" at 5 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jamie Blaine  
Secretary