

# Middle Smithfield Township Economic Development Committee Minutes December 9, 2013

**Attendance:** Debbie Kulick, Annette Atkinson, Mike Dwyer, Beverly Brown, Angel Santos, Carl Wilgus, Steve Van Why, Ed Regina, Bob Hetu, Tim O'Donnell, Steve Feuer

**Excused:** Carrie Wetherbee

**Call to order:** The monthly meeting of the Middle Smithfield Township Economic Development Committee was called to order by Chair Debbie Kulick at 6:35 p.m. at the township building.

**Approval of Minutes:** the minutes of the previous month's meeting were accepted with a correction to identify the 3/50 program. Motion made by Carl Wilgus and seconded by Beverly Brown. Passed.

**Public Comment:** None

**Correspondence:** A change was made to the ribbon cutting time for Pyramid Healthcare. It will now take place at 12:15 p.m. The event will still run from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**Old Business:**

- a. Mike Dwyer reported on the LERTA project: He reported that Parin Shah had sent the documents as requested and that three things would now take place on the township's part. First the township will identify a coordinator as a paid consultant to work on the project. It is thought that the project will piggy-back with the other taxing authorities involved and that this person will seek out companies to participate in the program. Second, the township solicitor suggested there be a defined area. Carl Wilgus did identify that other programs do utilize their entire commercial areas as the target area and in at least one case an entire township was identified for participation. Carl mentioned that there are now five townships with LERTA programs in place in Pike County. Further investigation will be done by the township with respect to this part. Third, the township will set a schedule for the program to be executed. The next time a meeting is held it will be to set a tax abatement schedule program over a five year term. The Board of Supervisors indicated they may come back to the EDC for help at a later date.
- b. Shop Local project: Bob Hetu worked with Annette Atkinson on the advertising of the program for this holiday season. This extended to banners, Facebook postings and Twitter use. Debbie Kulick also had done a column on the Shop Local program for the Pike and Monroe Life paper. The township is currently working on developing the You Tube promotions for a number of local businesses by having the business owners answer some prepared questions about how important shopping local is to them and our economy. Bob Hetu will make certain all these are linked to the EDC Facebook page and the township should also do so. The entire committee will be needed to continue the project and give it greater push throughout the community. Currently there were four businesses that had been interviewed.

It was also noted that the township had promoted the Shop Local program during the recent tree lighting event. The Shop Local project is a tool for next year and it will need to be

promoted several times throughout the year. Tweets also went to the Pocono Record home page and special thanks were extended to Steve and Ryan for their work on the project through the township.

- c. Online directory: Bob Hetu reported that currently we have 28 township businesses listed in the directory and that this will continue through the new year. Committee members were encouraged to continue to have local businesses participate.
- d. Budget: Beverly Brown and Mike Dwyer completed the budgeting process for the new year. The EDC will have a \$2500 budget for the township's 2014 fiscal year.
- e. Demographics: Ed Regina was kind enough to share the local demographic information he had prepared for his property. The demographics are current and cover a significant number of categories. Bob Hetu asked about publishing the information, but Ed would like to clear it with Chris Baj who prepared it for him first. Bob indicated he would identify information that would be considered important for attracting a business to Middle Smithfield Township.
- f. Brochure project; Tim O'Donnell shared another possible format, that of the Barrett Township brochure with the group. He had some pricing for 15,000 units \$3,300 and for 30,000 , \$4,000 with shipping. There is a business that makes certain brochures are in racks throughout specific resort routes, the cost of that being \$1,500 per year. There was discussion about the participants in the project paying for the ad to have it included and it was determined that there should be at least a nominal cost involved from the first time out and certainly thereafter. Carl Wilgus suggested looking into the company Forrest & Son as distributors. Tim said his research showed that the turnaround time for proofs should be about two days. Bob Hetu suggested that a target date/time be set for the mailing. The promotion of the ads would have to be done through the efforts of EDC committee members and those involved should reflect a variety of businesses.

After discussion about the project itself, it was determined that there were two markets to approach. One would be the tourist market and the other would be directed to local residents. It was felt that this way all types of businesses would be promoted. Annette Atkinson suggested that the local brochure could take the place of a township newsletter and therefore promote to local residents. Two subcommittees were created: The committee to focus on the tourist traffic included: Tim O'Donnell, Beverly Brown, Carrie Wetherbee, Angel Santos and Steve Van Why. The committee focusing on a brochure to be directed to residents of Middle Smithfield included: Steve Feuer, Ed Regina, Angel Santos and Debbie Kulick.

Tim reported that currently a brochure is good for a 13 week distribution by the company at a cost of \$429 and \$1,500 per year to be on the route. The subcommittees will bring back their information next month and then the supervisors will review the proposals for possible implementation.

- g. Survey: Annette Atkinson reported that the survey is on hold and any determination will be made in the new year on the mailing dates.
- h. Other: New business cards: new business cards will be forthcoming for the committee members, let Karen know if you need them.

#### **New Business**

- a. Social Media seminar: Will be offered in the new year. Bob Hetu will coordinate with the committee on the presentation time.
- b. Job Fair: Holding off to the new year. Discussion was to look at later in the year.

- c. Dine Around Town: Everyone agreed that this month we would go to Frank's Pizza in the Price Chopper Plaza. We will meet next Monday at 6 p.m. for dinner.
- d. Shawnee Mountain visit: Debbie Kulick reported that the EDC was invited to tour the business and that would be scheduled for February. There was discussion about making plans for a tour of the new Bushkill Group businesses when the weather gets warmer, May or June.

**Other:** The Supervisors had a few housekeeping items to review with the EDC. There are some terms expiring. Ed Regina, Steve Feuer, Parin Shah, Beverly Brown and Angel Santos. All have received notice and need to resubmit letters of interest. Also the Board of Supervisors is revamping the committee to reduce the number of actual seats on the EDC, as they are doing with other committees. There will be a total of five voting members on the committee each with two year terms. The individuals currently listed as those five members includes one vacancy left by Noreen Lowris. These are Debbie Kulick, Bob Hetu, Carrie Wetherbee and \_\_\_\_\_.

**Adjournment:** There being no further business, the meeting adjourned by consensus at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Kulick  
Acting Secretary

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