

**November 3, 2022**  
**8:00 AM Zoom and in the Town Office**  
**Stonington Economic and Community Development Committee**  
**Minutes**

**Participants:** Chelsea K., Chelsea Brown, Carla, Kathleen, Andy, Phil, Chris Ross, John McVeigh.  
Special guest Allen Kratz.

**Beginning in December, SEDC meetings will be every month, the first TUESDAY of the month at 8:00 am to better facilitate the increased participation we need for all of the SEDC activity.**  
**Please mark your calendars!**

1. [Minutes from October 4 meeting](#) (also attached as PDF) – not enough quorum to approve, approve at December meeting
2. **New members**
  - a. Welcome to John McVeigh, J. McVeigh Jewelry, West Main Street, and board of Opera House Arts
  - b. Other pending suggestions, invitations still in process, feel free to make suggestions:
    - i. Dean Haskell, Chamber of Commerce
    - ii. New owners of Pilgrims Inn? Al.
    - iii. Morgan Witham, DI-S Adult Education?
    - iv. Morgan Eaton, Julia Zell have expressed interest and been invited
    - v. Logan Eaton or Sarah Larrabee from Camden National, Julie Ciomei
    - vi. Becca Emerson, Bar Harbor Bank and Trust
    - vii. Members of Chambers young group? Or other Chamber representation
3. **Special Guest: Allen Kratz, Community Resilience Partnership**
  - a. 3 Steps necessary to qualify for potential funding from the Governor’s Office of Policy Innovation and the Future for projects including: water quality and availability, transportation, stream crossings (Oceanville?), storm water

management pinch points, etc. This grant funding can also be used as local match for federal funds because it is state and not federal funding.

- i. [Maine Climate Action Plan, “Maine Won’t Wait”](#) – Climate Resilience Partnership is part of this plan. Legislature appropriated 4.2 million to implement the Plan via the Office for Policy and Innovation for the Future. It is only 2 years so this is final grant round.
  1. 72 actions we can apply for funding for: Energy efficiency, vulnerability assessments, food security (Brooksville, farming and use of farming), etc.
  2. Aligned with economic development: another way to fund some of our initiatives
  3. Municipal Requirements: a short evaluation of what Stonington has already done to address climate change – wild fires, sea level rise, energy efficiency.
    - a. **ACTION: Subcommittee to do this: Chelsea K., Chris, Carla**
  4. THEN: Identify the priorities from the State list. Will conduct this step with entire SEDC at December meeting. Here is the list.
  5. FINAL: Town adopts resolution of how we will proceed
  6. Next and final grant round of 2-year Community Action Grant program opens early 2023. Maximum is \$50K per Town or \$125 for collaborations but Deer Isle has already proceeded independently.
- ii. Climate resilience is closely tied to economic development in terms of the fishery as well as transportation and sea level rise

## **Public Initiative and Meeting Updates**

### **1. Fishing Industry Rally on pier raised more than \$4,000 toward legal fees**

- iii. DMR now has whale modeling tool and is focused mostly in Zone A which is where the most hazards are for the whales and may be subject to seasonal closures. Using this tool, no scenario where you have more than 400 traps. If fishermen know this – more open to CDL and other training?
- iv. Dynamic management for whale tracking and taking charge of whale monitoring

- v. Short term: huge crunch in terms of seasonal closures and trap reductions. Don't want coastal communities to lose access to fishery or to have it go corporate.
- vi. Demographic hole in workforce

## **2. Health Care Task Force News**

- vii. Two focuses, short and long term:
  - 1. Short term: nursing home assets. Meeting with INH board Nov 9
  - 2. Long term: creating local access to continuum of care for all our residents – where do we invest, how do we grow local labor pool, how do we attract and retain local health care labor, etc.?
- viii. Northern Light won't allow student apprentices. Project Launch ELO is having to take students all the way to Bucksport Regional Health Center for these opportunities.
  - 1. Does Husson's nursing program offer any opportunities? They have just opened up a new building to provide their own clinical hours. Northern Light works closely with UMO.
  - 2. Create MOU with UMO? As they are struggling for student recruitment and retention?
  - 3. **ACTION: Town will talk with IHWF and see how we can work our way up the corporate food chain**

## **3. Short-Term Rentals Task Force News**

- ix. A crisis that has exploded now; we didn't get ahead of it fast enough to deal with it
- x. News coverage of Oct 4 Selectmen's decisions on proposals was very poor and confusing – need to clarify and calm the waters to move forward
- xi. State's Emergency Rental program funding stopped last month. This will force demand on GA for the Towns as people start to spread out from the south.
- xii. Maine Municipal working hard to change the assessments on short-term rentals: they are no longer residential but commercial spaces that need to be dealing with life safety codes, occupancy limits, etc.

- xiii. Developers are continuing to buy up property despite increases in interest rates
- xiv. How to talk about gentrification as we have “climate refugees”

#### 4. **Economic Impact Study Next Steps**

- a. 3 additional data gathering groups held October 24-25, 22 participants
- b. Jim Damicus back on site Dec 6 - 7 with draft for group review and input
  - i. Josh Stoll at UMO – creation of food hubs focused on seafood, new species, processing, marketing, etc. Local Catch Network.
  - ii. Backup on delivery of propane due to lack of CDL drivers. \$12K investment to send someone for 3 months to get CDL license. Is there a way to encourage this?
  - iii. **Action: Other Interview Ideas?**
- c. Final report expected in January 2023

#### 5. **New Initiatives**

- a. **Transportation Subcommittee – to facilitate consistent follow up on causeway/bridge initiatives**
  - i. Phil McFarland (confirmed) + Harry Caldwell (awaiting confirmation)
  - ii. Carl Wilson, chief scientist DMR, has raised the issue of MCCF leading a monitoring and pre-planning effort on the causeway. The question of raising the causeway or building a new bridge – ecological, fishery, funding impacts.
    - 1. Both State and Federal Stream Crossing both might be available for this, and both grant rounds coming up shortly. MCCF is working with NOAA’s Habitat program and we should coordinate. 5 years of working regionally with municipalities and communities.
  - iii. **Action: LN to send Phil all the minutes and info from work already done on the causeway/bridge**
- b. Main Street Subcommittee – as required by our membership in the [Maine Downtown Center](#) Affiliate program and the [Main Street America 4-Point Approach](#)

- i. John McVeigh is interested in this area, especially in reinvigorating some community programs, such as a community calendar, and other ways to promote Stonington both to local residents for year round foot traffic and the type of visitors we WANT to attract
  - 1. Destination and cultural heritage tourism – MCCF’s Discovery Wharf (new ED); Granite Museum; Odd Fellows Hall
  - 2. How to preserve first floor commercial/retail. Kathleen has been working on regarding shoreland zone. Also reviewing ordinances – do not currently even need to apply for a demolition permit
  - 3. Shoulder seasons
  - 4. Wayfaring signage
- ii. Develop strategic partnerships between local businesses
- iii. Align with the Chamber of Commerce
- iv. **ACTION: subcommittee members: Andy, Chelsea K., Carla, Chris**

**6. Upcoming pending a date:**

- a. Workforce Housing Development public meeting in conjunction with Island Workforce Housing and IHT: set form and date
- b. Recruit other people for working subgroups
  - i. **ACTION: Please feel free to nominate/identify individuals!**

**7. Final Thoughts**

- a. Changes coming with food service all over the country (Andy): potential for tough times/recession...?