

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, November 9, 2023 AT 6:30PM

Kendall  
Room/Zoom

**Present:** Jean de Bellefeuille, Lee Parker, John Scribner, Ian McConnell, Yvette Meunier

**Absent:** Wendy Rose

**Guests:** (Zoom) None

- I) Call to order/determine quorum
- II) Review/approve meeting minutes from 10/3/23 – accepted as written
- III) Add items/rearrange agenda
- IV) Old Business
  - A. Sidewalks and crosswalks updates.
    - DOT VPI LOI status update – see email from Yvette – should hear back before the end of November. Then the town has to write the planning grant. Would anticipate input from CDAC and Age-Friendly Committee during the (3) public sessions that will be required.
  - B. Overview of Waterfront Park Phase II project elements and funding sources update from Yvette – email from Yvette.
  - C. Review of Celebrate vendor feedback survey results from Yvette – see attached
  - D. Update on MCOG Strategic Plan for Artists, Artisans, and Craft People (LP)  
Review and post notes from 10/3/2023 meeting – see DRAFT survey. Lee will rework into a survey format.
  - E. Bowdoinham Amenities section of website updated and published.  
Discuss how to maintain currency.
- V) New Business
  - A. Review work plan
- VI) Determine next meeting and agenda  
  
Currently scheduled for 12/5/2023, Kendall Room, 6:30 PM.
- VII) Adjourn Meeting

## Yvette Meunier

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**From:** Yvette Meunier  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 1, 2023 5:10 PM  
**To:** Ian McConnell; Jean de Bellefeuille; John Scribner; Laleah Parker; Wendy Rose (wendelynrose@gmail.com)  
**Subject:** 11-9 meeting prep

Hello,

Here is the information I promised the group for the next meeting. Please note it is on Thursday next week instead. I am working with Jean on the agenda which is forthcoming. Also, please note that Wendy cannot make it but we look forward to seeing her in December.

### [DOT VPI Planning Grant](#)

Letter of Interest sent off on October 25 after we got permission from Selectboard on 10/24.

### [Phase II of New Waterfront Park](#)

Includes earthwork including grubbing, filling, and grading, road and parking improvements, utility installation, stormwater management, landscaping including removal of invasive species, shoreline stabilization, and planting new native trees, and installation of pedestrian pathways. 2019 consultant quoted the project at \$1,075,002.00. Below you will find a summary of the grants we are going after for this project.

#### Land and Water Conservation Grant **AWARDED** (\$420,833)

- Still waiting for DACF Commissioner to sign off on award before we can officially announce and launch this phase of the project. This grant is anticipated to cover 50% of the project, less any contingencies from our 2022 quote. It is noted that the original request was \$579,167 which included \$158,334 in contingencies. However, the program has changed in which they will not fund contingencies at the onset, but the Town can request additional funding of up to \$105,208 (25%) through an amendment process. Once the contract is signed with the state, we will begin working with the state to navigate the creation of construction documents this winter.

#### Community Resilience Partnership **AWARDED** (\$50,000)

- No -match grant that can be only used for the shoreline stabilization portion of the project which has a price tag of \$260,796

#### Broad Reach **PENDING REVIEW** (\$80,398)

- Applied in October, decision to be made by end of 2023.
- Not quite a fit for the program.
- Only covers Installation of coastal wetland restoration and shoreline stabilization treatments. Includes all materials and construction.

#### Project Canopy **ANTICIPATED** (\$10,000)

- Anticipated to apply in February 2024 for \$10,000 no-match to purchase trees for Phase II.

Thanks,

Yvette Meunier (she/her)  
Director of Planning and Development  
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[www.bowdoinham.com](http://www.bowdoinham.com)



November 8, 2023

To: CDAC

From: Lee Parker

RE: Developing a Strategic Plan for Artists/Artisans/Micro Entrepreneurs: Drafting a survey

Part 1: The Town currently offers the following supports (include a brief description/example of each) for Artists/Artisans/Micro Entrepreneurs:

- Business Listing
- Workshops
- Events (including listing in Brochures)
  - Holiday Festival
  - Open Farm & Studio Day
  - Celebrate Bowdoinham
  - Others? (Mother's Day/Spring Event, Ice & Smelt Festival, Summer Concert Series)
- What supports have you used in the past?
- What other supports would you use if they were offered?

We hear the following reasons for not participating in Events:

- There isn't enough "traffic" to these Events
- It is too much work to set up/take down for a day
- It requires too much time spent sitting at a table all day
- Handling payments is challenging

Would you be interested in exploring ways to help with the above such as the Holiday Drop In during Covid with extended periods of sales (no set up/take down), shared staffing (collecting money, managing displays)

Part 2: The Town is working on the new Waterfront Park, Merrymeeting Trail, and the Walkable Village plan. We anticipate an increase in traffic to Bowdoinham as these projects are implemented. In addition, the Town Hall Committee is working on plans to restore the Town Hall. These projects will result in possible new venues for sales of items created by Artists, Artisans and Micro Entrepreneurs.

- Pavilion with Farmer's Market
- Yellow Building (owned by the Town)
- Town Hall (once renovated)

The Walkable Village Plan will include planning for the safe conveyance of people from the Waterfront Park across Route 24 to the Boat Landing up past the FHC Building (connecting to the Trail Plan) to the intersection of Main St. and Route 24 and up the hill.

Creating a "Art Walk" from the waterfront to the Town Hall could include both permanent and changing installations (Event driven). Several locations along this route already provide venues for sales. These venues could potentially increase opportunities for sales.

- FHC Building where Merrymeeting Arts Center, Friends of Merrymeeting Bay and Watersong are located
- Cathance River Gallery (Bill Stanton)
- Merrymeeting Hall
- Town Hall (pending renovations)

Would you like more places in town to sell your products? Would you be interested in working with a group to develop these ideas?

Questions from Wendy:

- What sales opportunities have been working well for you?
- Why have you chosen those avenues?
- What have been the major roadblocks for you in getting your items to market?

## **Celebrate 2023 Overview**

### **Summary Narrative:**

The arrival of Hurricane Lee during the Celebrate weekend posed a few challenges. Watching the projected landfall, we moved the date to Sunday. Further, as a precaution we pushed the parade start time back in case there was significant road cleanup that might require staff to respond into Sunday morning. Fortunately, damage was minimal and staffing needs were still met. Two food trucks, Dr. Drew with his animals, and the magician could not make the rain date. Also, two exhibitors dropped out but we also had two last minute additional vendors join. Further, a last-minute Recreation Department BBQ helped alleviate the long food truck lines. The bands were flexible with the curtailed schedule and all the events went on except for lobster crate race, which was canceled in advance for fear of significant debris floating down the river. Further, the venue offers local organizations a chance to fundraise. Below you'll find a summary of the shared revenue with community organizations along with results of our participant survey.

### **Shared revenue with Community Organizations:**

This event offers a venue for several organizations to raise funds for many causes. As always, the community support poured into the numerous charities drives which included the Masonic Lodge and the Electa Chapter #2 Order of the Eastern Star which hosted a tag sale to benefit the Dempsy Center and ALS research. Banana Banners hosted a Jimmy Fund fundraising booth and joining us for the first time was Dogwill, the pet assistance program associated with the food pantry. Also, the Town provided parade prizes (including a \$100 prize each for the first 10 Bowdoinham-based organizations to sign up), donations to volunteer groups, allowed use of the dunk tank, and a silent auction, which helped raise the following funds for local community organizations:

**Bowdoinham Food Pantry:** The Town donated \$300 in pie contest prizes and gave them a \$100 early sign-up parade participation prize. Their Celebrate pie sales raised \$780.

**Mt. Ararat Senior Class:** The Town made a \$1,000 donation to the volunteers which ran the children's activities and rented the dunk tank for them which raised an additional \$350.

**Bowdoinham Fire and Rescue:** The Town donated \$500 for their volunteer work during the event.

Nazarene Church and Bowdoinham Republican Party also received \$100 each for their early sign-up parade participation prizes. The Bowdoinham Library was awarded \$250 for their parade contest ranking.

Recreation Department held a fundraiser BBQ that netted \$1,000.

Old Town Hall raised \$1,662 in the silent auction.

### **Participant Survey:**

The event hosted 24 exhibits with a mix of informational booth ranging from KELT, BCDI, Snowbirds, elected leaders, and several town committees and the craft showcase. Crafters included some first-time participants and many repeat vendors selling everything from beanie babies, quilts, holiday décor,

jewelry, glassware, to handmade cornhole sets. 7 participants or 22% responded to a post-event survey which included two performers, three crafters, and two food vendors.

Regarding participation trends. 6 of 7 respondents were returning participants which indicated that on average there was about the same or slightly less participation seen than in years past.

Respondents reported the numbers of visitors ranging from 15-190+. More than half reported having 50 or more, two reported between 15-20, and two others reported between 175-190. Those with the highest numbers were food vendors which were reporting the number of transactions.

When asked if their sales/engagement goals were met all but two responded affirmatively. Performers and a crafter met expectations, food vendors exceeded expectations, and two of the three craft exhibits reported to be on the low side.

When asked what did you like most about this years' event praise included:

*"It was a great day, the flexibility and thoughtfulness in planning the plan b day."*

*"Good variety of booths."*

*"Sunday seemed to have more children involved, maybe due to the lack of sports/other activities on that day."*

*"Helpful staff, diversity of vendors and entertainment, cost to attend good, beauty of the area was great."*

*"Variety of activities for the kids."; "That you had the event."*

Some areas we could improve on included:

*"More food options."*

*"Get a committee together to organize and work on making the parade longer and getting more groups involved."*

*"Face painting and animal balloons early in the day."*

*"Picnic tables near river to eat the food."*

*"As a craft vendor, I feel vendors might do better in the center of the tent area closer to the food vs on the far end by the exit to the road. I noticed far less families walking past craft vendors."*

*"Electrical upgrades for food trucks, more infrastructure planning for food trucks at the new park too."*

On a scale of 1-10 vendors ranked the communication skills of our staff for the event: 9.43/10.

There was an option to provide additional feedback which produced the following comments:

*"Great first year Yvette, can't see what you can do next year."*

*"Given the one day delay, I thought it all went very well."*

*"Yvette, you did an amazing job!! Especially since it was your first Celebrate and having to reschedule!!";*

*"Appreciated more room by the stage for fire performance. Great crowd!";*

*"It was nice meet everyone. All around friendly and fun atmosphere, great music."*

*"I am grateful for the swift decision to move the celebration to Sunday. I feel it worked out quite well for everyone despite the severe weather on Saturday."*