

BELMONT VISION 21 IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE (VIC)
MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2018
ROOM 1, TOWN HALL, 7:00 PM

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Members present: Chair Natalie Leino, Vice Chair Kevin Dorn, Jennifer Page, Erica Zidel, Juan Montoya, Gang Zhao

Members not in attendance: Doug John, Mary Power

Natalie Leino called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

I. APPROVAL OF 1/30/2018 MINUTES

The minutes to the previous meeting were approved with no additional edits.

II. REPORT ON BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING REGARDING COMMUNITY INFORMATION FAIR

Chair Natalie Leino gave an overview of the discussion with the Board of Selectmen on February 27, 2018. The Board approved the creation of a new committee that will focus on organizing the Meet Belmont Community Information Fair and other events for residents and newcomers. Patrice Garvin, the newly appointed Town Administrator, will work on the details of the establishment of the chair of committee. Natalie committed to provide Patrice with a list of candidates to be on the committee so that appointments could be made at a BOS meeting in the second half of March.

The Selectmen expressed that they wanted a broad charter for the committee, so that it could potentially organize other events in town beyond the Community Information Fair. The VIC discussed what the best structure for the new committee would be, potentially entailing five permanent members with staggered terms of three years.

III. UPDATE ON TALK OF THE TOWN

Natalie Leino provided an update on the status of planning for the Talk of the Town event to be held at the Chenery Middle School on March 20, 2018. Natalie will be interviewed by the *Belmont Journal: Weekly News* to discuss the event. There are a series of separate conference calls being led by Carol Trager to handle the details of planning for the event for those more heavily involved in the planning process.

The VIC discussed creating a single sheet "vision board" which highlights the Town Vision. This could be used at events such as Talk of the Town as well as displayed in other prominent areas such as the Town Hall. A draft vision board was created. VIC decided to re-insert a paragraph from the original Town Vision language which had been omitted in the current draft of the vision board.

IV. CONTINUED DISCUSSION REGARDING BUSINESS COMMUNITY PROJECT

Each committee member presented their findings on the surrounding town research and what they think the town of Belmont could leverage/learn from. Some highlights:

- Lexington (Juan) – created a Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) to oversee commercial real estate and interactions with business owners.
- Somerville (Erica) – created a manual for new businesses which is tied to the Town Vision. Kevin noted that Medford has a similar New Business manual.

- Watertown (Natalie) - posted a detailed master plan which outlines town plans and how the business community fits within the overall plan.
- Waltham (Gang) – created an advocacy organization for local businesses and created a strong town master plan.
- Arlington (Kevin)- currently in the process of rezoning – creating a new Zoning Guide which aligns to their town's master plan. Also have some good visualization tools regarding parking in town and budgeting.
- Medford (Kevin) – created a New Business Guide as well as an organization for promoting new business.

V. GOALS FOR NEXT MEETING

The primary goal of the next meeting is to shape the next phase of our project – the community outreach and interviews. Specific actions in preparation for the next meeting are shown below:

- 1) Jennifer to find directory of Belmont businesses, and circulate to the group. Does the list have contact information of business owners.
- 2) Juan will reach out to his contact on the EDAC to interview them about what they do, best practices that may be relevant to Belmont.
- 3) Juan to get the list from Ara of everyone that applied for a business license in Belmont within the last year (including the ones that were turned down).
- 4) Natalie to establish a VIC Dropbox including establishment of belmontvic@gmail.com (if available) or other email address and setting up folders. VIC members will then populate with relevant documents.
- 5) Erica will create two sets of draft questions one for new companies and a second for existing companies, which we will use during the community outreach / interview phase of the project.
- 6) Kevin will draft a plan for community outreach / interview phase of the project.
- 7) Mary to connect with fieldwork project coordinator at the Kennedy School
- 8) Mary to reach out to Linda Bilmes to invite her to meet with Patrice and Natalie

VI. OTHER BUSINESS

Kevin noted that Matt Haskell has now posted the link of our Meet Belmont podcasts on the Town Website at the home page of each of the committees we interviewed.

VII. ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.