



## Town of Burlington

November 12, 2015

### **Ad Hoc Marketing Committee Regular Meeting Minutes**

**Call Meeting to Order:** Meeting is called to order at 6:34pm in the First Selectman's Conference Room in Town Hall. Everyone is present from the committee as well as the Economic Development Commission Secretary William Walluk, Burlington Bell Community Fund Chair Janet Schwartz and Burlington Bell Community Fun Secretary Jon Schwartz.

**Review/Accept Minutes of October 1, 2015 Special Meeting:** Meeting minutes were unanimously accepted.

**Citizen Comment:** No citizen comment.

**Reports of Officers, Boards or Committees:** No reports.

**Burlington Bell:** Janet and Jon Schwartz introduced the Burlington Bell Community Fund as a fund organized to enhance the town and assist those who may need it within the town of Burlington.

About the Burlington Bell Community Fund:

- Bob Merriman was the original owner of the Burlington Bell and founded the organization
- The bell currently lives at the Burlington Town Hall
- Despite the name of the organization, the bell is not in need of restoration and the money raised goes directly back into the community
- Donations have been made to the food bank, the town parks and recreation, the library and town commissions to name a few
- Funds come as donations directly from individuals and businesses within the town of Burlington
- They organize a calendar of events going on in the area to which difficulties include:

Reaching Burlington at large has been found to be difficult due to a lack of an established form of communication that reaches everyone. Schools have potential opportunities for communication for those who have children in the school system through the RSS Feed, the School Bell Newspaper, and the PTO, although there is often difficulty coordinating and many times events aren't deemed relevant to the schools. Targeting schools also excludes a large audience of those without children. Healing Trails has been a great resource to get information out to residents as the owner sends out newsletters that include local events.



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**Website and Event Calendars:** The town currently lacks an established form of exclusive communication making it difficult to reach residents. There are many Facebook pages that offer event opportunities (Burlington/Harwinton Unite, Region 10, Tavern Day, Landtrust, Burlington Bell Community Fund, Historical Society, Library Association, Burlington Library, First Selectman, Congregational Church ), but none that offer a “one-stop-shop” where you can see all events in the area. Another difficulty is having the event coordinators send the information for their event to these sites so they can be shared. The website should link to each of the websites that offer event calendars (potentially with imbedded pages images) to make it easier to navigate. Currently, the information on the website is often not up to date either lacking in information or having the wrong information. A suggestion came up to have a part-time reporter to connect with a blog to collect information from all of the different established calendars in town and post them on one page. Ideally the town would hire someone to maintain the website and update the content for town events, town news, volunteer opportunities, highlight businesses and sell why Burlington is a great place to have a business. This will need to be discussed in depth in regards to legality issues and how to most efficiently set up such a system; may need two websites, a commercial website and a municipal website. May also be opportunity to send out a quarterly town wide newsletter like Canton whose is crowd-funded. One issue that was discussed was the issue that Burlington is surrounded by so many towns that have shopping areas that are closer to residents (Bristol, Farmington, Torrington) that Burlington really needs to find something to set it apart from these towns and make it a destination where people can gather. Mixed use buildings, office and affordable housing, was discussed and it was mentioned that having a full time position for a Town Planner would be helpful. Potential for another survey to be sent out to town residents; if this was opted for, there would be a need to ensure questions aren't repeated from prior years.

**Lampposts:** A suggestion was made to talk to the Garden Club about options and ideas for hanging baskets for the lampposts. For this season, something simple like a snowflake to maximize our time to have the flags hanging, along with Welcome to Burlington. Lights, hanging baskets and flags were suggested for the winter season, the flags being estimated at ~\$100 a pole. A committee member suggested we approach it the same way as Simsbury: local businesses pay for the banner and at the bottom they in turn get their logo printed as advertisement. This way the flags will be self-sustaining.

**Project Plan:** Moving forward, we as a committee would like to see a town website be kept up to date with events, volunteer opportunities, information on local businesses and town news, ideally by someone hired through the town to make sure that events within the town and information on the website is current so citizens



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can have access to the information they need. This would have direct positive implications both for residents and business owners. If the town would be able to hire such a person, this committee would like to support and work directly with the individual to help get them started. We may want to contact Valley Press to discuss potential opportunities for printed option.

The lampposts will need to be addressed ASAP in order to get them set up in time for the holiday season. The Economic Development Commission will be meeting Monday at 7pm at the Senior Center in the Town Hall and this will be discussed then for anyone who would like to attend.

Members should take a look at Karen's photographs of the town to see if there are any suggestions for where else she may take photographs of the town.

**New Business:** Strategic Project Plan Proposal was passed out to be reviewed for next months meeting.

**Adjourn:** Meeting is adjourned at 8:04pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Katie Lydecker  
Secretary