



**Town of Camden**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of the**  
**Downtown Network Board**  
**February 11, 2013**  
**3:30pm**

**PRESENT:** Co-Chair Peter Gross, Martin Cates, Deb Dodge, Dave Jackson, Robin McIntosh, Barrie Pribyl, Meg Quijano, Lowrie Sargent, Town Manager Pat Finnigan, Code Enforcement Officer Stephen Wilson and Development Director Brian Hodges.

Guests: Don White, Camden Select Board; Lorain Francis, Rockland Main Street

**ABSENT:** Erick Anderson, Rick Bates, Bernice Berger, Pete Brown, Ellis Cohn, Staci Coomer, Samantha Hill, Janis Kay, Jill Lang, Sue Michaud, Liz Valente, Oscar Verest and Kipp Wright.

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 3:30pm.

**2. Approval of Board Minutes**

Deb Dodge made a motion to accept the minutes of the January meeting. The motion was seconded by Dave Jackson. It was unanimously approved.

**3. Update on Riverwalk and Public Landing Project**

Brian Hodges told the group that 11 proposals from both in-state and out-of-state firms had been submitted for the Riverwalk and Public Landing Design projects. He said that the team had reviewed and scored the proposals and had narrowed the list down to three finalists. Interviews were being scheduled with the finalists, he said, noting that a recommendation could be made to the Select Board on February 19<sup>th</sup>. Hodges said the proposals were strong, professional, and that several included photos, indicating people from these firms had traveled to Camden to do research prior to submitting their bids.

**4. Update on the Branding / Marketing / Advertising Campaign for Camden**

Hodges told the group that both the Downtown Network Board and CEDAC had voted unanimously in favor of recommending to the Select Board that \$30,000 in TIF funds be used to fund a branding project for the Town of Camden. Hodges said it was anticipated that this recommendation would go to the Select Board for a vote on February 19<sup>th</sup>.

Hodges also showed the group a newspaper spread that had appeared the previous weekend in the *Sun Journal*, which is the main newspaper for the central/western area of Maine. He said the cover story spanning 1 ½ pages stemmed from the "coolest small town" contest.

**5. February 19th Select Board meeting - attendance**

Hodges noted that support at the February 19<sup>th</sup> Select Board meeting would be important, with the vote pending on the expenditure of TIF funds for branding as well as the bid recommendation for the Riverwalk and Public Landing projects. In addition, Hodges noted that an affordable housing item would appear on the same agenda that would also need support. He explained that this last item was a request from Camden Affordable Housing to apply for another CDBG grant to finish the workforce housing units at the Lupine Terrace subdivision. Hodges suggested that we should consider all of the projects that would be up for a vote that evening as investments in Camden's future, and he encouraged members of the Downtown Network Board to attend the meeting if at all possible.

Lowrie Sargent asked what the timeframe would be going forward if the Select Board supports the marketing and branding project. Hodges said he would guess that it would take about six months to go through the process of formulating a brand, including design of a logo and an outline for a campaign. Barrie Pribyl said she thought it would be more like a year-long process.

**6. Lorain Francis of Rockland Main Street – Next Steps for Downtown Network Board organization: Establish Subcommittees**

Hodges introduced Lorain Francis to speak more about establishing the four committees required by the Maine Downtown Center in order to maintain Camden's designation as a Downtown Network Community. He explained that in the first year it was expected that two committees would be established, the first being the Organization committee and then Promotions committee, and that in the second year the remaining two committees should be established.

Francis said that an Organization committee is a great way to pull together community members. She told the group that good candidates for the Organization committee are individuals who are well-connected and who can bring citizens in to help with various efforts such as fundraising and events. She said that an Organization committee often includes a volunteer coordinator.

Francis noted that a board needs to oversee the Organization committee, to implement structure as well as to oversee the other committees. She said that Rockland has used its Design Committee to gather public input on projects. Francis gave a brief history of how the overall Downtown Center program was established, saying it now exists in 45 states and covers 2200 communities.

Next Francis outlined the functions of the Promotions committee, saying it is primarily in charge of putting on town events. She said that Rockland makes money through these events to support Rockland Main Street's expenses.

Meg Quijano said that the Camden Downtown Business Group is in the process of choosing which town events they will be actively involved in during 2013. Francis noted that in Rockland and Belfast, the Organization committee for their programs had evolved from their downtown business groups. She added that Rockland's Promotions committee has some merchants who serve on it, but that it also includes citizens and city staff.

Donald White noted that the Downtown Master Plan effort has brought a lot of energy to our town, pulling together businesses and the municipality for the first time and creating a successful public – private partnership. White said that this is a great opportunity to pull in more residents and to create additional energy around the Town's current projects.

Francis explained that the form that Camden must submit to the Maine Downtown Center before June is a fairly simple one, and that this allows the Town to keep its Downtown Network Community designation. She told the group that the form simply lists names of the Organization committee members along with some accomplishments that have taken place during the year.

Francis talked about some of the events that are scheduled to take place in Rockland, including an employee appreciation day that has been coordinated by the Economic Restructuring Committee. She said this is a day when the employees of downtown businesses get to know each other and see how things are done in neighboring businesses. She used this as an example of the community-building function of their overall program, adding that the Employee Appreciation Day is handled by the Economic Restructuring Committee since it's primarily a business-to-business event.

Dave Jackson noted that we have a good case for establishing a Design Committee at this stage, with three important design projects currently underway in town. Since the Design Committee helps collect public input, Jackson suggested that this may be an important committee to establish at the beginning of our process. Frances said that one of the important functions of the downtown network committees is to lessen the burden of Town government, adding that this is how a nonprofit can help the town significantly.

**7. Public Comments/Questions**

There were no public comments.

**8. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Downtown Network Board will be held on March 11th at 3:30pm.

Deb Dodge made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Peter Gross seconded this motion and the board adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

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Karen Brace  
Recording Secretary