

Copake Economic Advisory Board
Minutes of Meeting
January 15, 2008

Present

Charles Dodson
Shawn McClain
Chris Quinby
Leslie Wood
Marcia Peteroy
Milbrey Zelle
Neal Klein
Morris Ordovery
Walter Kiernan
Linda Gabaccia

Excused

Absent

Public

Bob Sacks
Harvey Weber

Old Business

Minutes of the Previous Meeting

A motion was made to approve the minutes by Shawn McClain. This was seconded by Milbrey Zelle. Approved unanimously.

Internship Program for High School Students

Discussion with Mark Sposato, Superintendent and Kim Carlo, Guidance Councilor from Taconic Hills. Mark Sposato shared that the school has a grant writing opportunity through Questar III (BOCES.) Kim Carlo shared the kinds of job training and guidance the school currently offers. 87-88% of the students do go on to college, but the rest are often looking for opportunities here.

It might be possible to have businesses guarantee a job if students complete certain requirements.

There are several options: either a student could be employed by a local program much as an internship program, there could also be a program that trained students to have needed skills in connection with getting a job in a trade. The school would be responsible for vouching for the student and the CEAB would be responsible for vouching for the business. Bob Sachs also shared that he had proposed a similar program between the Town government and the school so that there could be a student on every board/committee in the Town government. There might also be opportunities to offer some internships that would give school credit to students.

Kim Carlo and a CEAB member (to be determined) will function in future as contacts between Taconic Hills Central School District and the CEAB to continue and clarify this discussion.

Election of Board Officer

Milbrey Zelley nominated Charles Dodson as chairman and Leslie Wood seconded. No other nominations. Carried unanimously. Milbrey Zelley nominated Leslie Wood and Shawn McClain seconded. No other nominations. Carried unanimously.

Interview of CEAB Candidates

Charles Dodson reported that he had contacted the local manager of both local banks. They were unable to give us time at this point, but would like to be considered in the future. They were both interested in the idea of a seminar on the local economics of the town that they could lead. Anticipating that loan-grant funds would be available in the future for Copake revitalization, Charles Dodson asked them if they would be willing to serve in advisory nature to manage these funds. They agreed.

Charles Dodson also contacted John Langdon as a possible candidate. He also tried to contact Paul Miller. Neither Leslie Wood nor Charles Dodson received any applications. Chris Quinby offered that he was aware of two candidates that had applied. The CEAB was informed that Vana Hotaling has told people that the deadline is January 21st. Due to this, interviews will be postponed until the following month. Leslie Wood will post a notice in the two local papers for the opening on the CEAB.

Business Survey

Milbrey Zelley reported that she currently has 14 surveys. She would like us to either continue to collect surveys or to stop. Charles Dodson spoke to our need to understand the business climate and that these survey's can help us figure out how to support local businesses. Several members offered to contact more businesses. Milbrey Zelley will email a list of all businesses that have completed surveys as well as blank surveys.

Reports

Grant Writers

Charles Dodson received forms for a Rural Business Enterprise Grant. He has also contacted the Office for Small Cities, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (Brownfield Grants.)

Charles Dodson reported to Art Baer, Hillsdale Supervisor and Jerry Roberta, Ancram Town Board member and recommended that a preliminary proposal be filed for a Rural Business Enterprise Grant to support the tri-town grants office.

Compilation of grant sources continues. There are literally thousands of theses. The real problem is to research where to go to do this. Perhaps the position we need is the job of compiling appropriate grants to apply for. One possibility is Upper New York State

Grant Writers Association. Leslie Wood offered to contact Berkshire Taconic Foundation to see if they might have funds to assist this.

Morris Ordovery moved that a central coordinating point be created in the town to maintain a list of grant applications currently being pursued in the town. This was seconded by Neal Klein. Carried Unanimously.

Copake Web Site

Please see attached report. The CEAB commended Charles Dodson on the amazing job he has done on the town website.

Bob Sachs asked if the website would be able to support videos of monthly Town Meetings. This can be done but problems will arise from the downloading speed of visitors to the website. Charles Dodson will be taking a course in DreamWeaver to allow the option of moving the website from Frontpage to Dream Weaver.

Marcia Peteroy asked that businesses that are not in Copake should not be listed in the website's Business Directory. Charles Dodson did take a specific business off. Three people wrote e-mails to lobby that this motel be included. Marcia Peteroy shared that there are three other motels in Hillsdale that are members of her organization. She thought it would be better to provide a link to Columbia County Lodging Association and not the Hillsdale motel. The website does post many offerings that are not in Copake. Neal Klein made a motion to have the Lodging Category of postings on the website only post listings from Copake and not other local towns. And that Columbia County Lodging will be provided as a link. Shawn McClain seconded. Carried Unanimously.

Marcia Peteroy also shared that the Rothvoss farm has been sold and Grey Fox is looking for a new home. Catamount was suggested as a possible alternative. Marcia Peteroy said she would contact them regarding this suggestion.

Copake Tour Maps

There was a small error made, this has been corrected and the Maps should be available next month.

New Business

Possible Seminar on Copake Economics

The two local bank managers and Charles Dodson are willing to do a presentation to the town on town economics. Neal Klein offered to share something on accounting and the tax implications for town businesses.

Revised Code of Ethics

Charles Dodson passed out the forms. Reginald Crowley has asked us each to sign that we will comply with the ethics. Charles Dodson raised the question about the definition of "officer and employee" in the document. Linda Gabaccia offered to discuss this with the town attorney.

Events

Copake Cleanup Day – Scheduled for Saturday May 10th
Copake Community Day will be Sat, Sun June 21-22. The first organizational meeting will be held on January 19th, 9am at the Town Hall.

Tabled

Alternate Fuels, On Request, nk
Farmer’s Assistance, On Request, nk
Business Directory, On Request, cd
Monitoring Copake’s Budget, nk
Broadband Communications, cd
Copake Comprehensive Plan, cd
Conservation Resources Advisory Committee Funds

Adjournment

Neal Klein made a motion to adjourn. This was seconded by Shawn McClain. Minutes respectfully submitted by Leslie Wood

Attachment

Report on the Copake Website.

REPORT ON COPAKE.ORG

January 15, 2008

1. Job Openings section has been opened with links to four other sources of positions in this area. Talked with county and state groups who provide such service as well as several other town and city websites. They warned against doing this because of difficulty of keeping it going: inaccurate information, lack of notification for removal, applicants' complaints. We are giving it a try.

2. Requests are increasing from area businesses and other organizations for postings and information listings.

3. Some information on use

During the last four months more different visitors (3250 different IP addresses) made fewer visits (5200) but spent more time than previously. 10.5% of visits last from 5 minutes to over an hour. Average visit is 3 minutes.

40% of visitors add copake.org to their favorites list.

People from 33 countries have visited.

<u>Gigabytes transferred by visitors</u>				<u>Percent Change</u>	
	<u>Month</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
July	0,505	0.818	4.06	63	400
Aug.	0.536	0.852	2.59	59	204
Sept.	0.495	0.682	1.85	38	171
Oct.	0.525	1.87	1.29	256	-31
Nov.	0.173	1.56	1.79	802	15
Dec.	0.419	2.31	1.82	451	-21

Most frequently visited pages: government offices, assessor rolls, minutes, events page, guestbook, job openings, business directory, recreation, directions, e-code, seniors, hiking, history, state parks.

4. Section on state parks in this area has been expanded to include everything within 30 miles.

C. Dodson