



Board Meeting Notes

November 16, 2021 | 8AM

Location: Virtual Meeting | [Zoom Meeting Link](#)

Present: Nikki Hindman, Tammy Landon, Jen Usher, Tiffany Walker, Michael Talbott, Katye Munger, Eileen Coughlin, Rebecca Langer,

Absent: Janelle Howard, Eddie Ryan, Shannon Poole, Jessi Travers-Moulton, Ray Lamoria, John Zawitoski

Meeting called to order at **8:08am**.

Approval of the October board meeting minutes: *No Quorum*

- Motion:
- Second:

Review of the October Treasurer's reports:

- Notes: Treasurer Eddie Ryan was absent.

Committee Reports

Streetscape: Nikki

- LaFaso Electric hung the snowflakes above Center Street and Merchants Row last week.
- We helped the Rutland Garden Club clean out their flower boxes last month, and they have since been filled with festive greenery.
- Martin is picking up the hanging baskets this week from the Rec Department.
- The Center Street Scoping Study's survey has concluded, and we have an upcoming meeting this week to discuss new possible street models.
- LAZ installed new equipment in the West Street Parking Garage that is more user-friendly, with new payment options for visitors.

Marketing: Katye

- The 2021 Downtown Rutland Gift Guide is live on our website with 26 participating businesses this year. 10 of those businesses partnered with the DRP and Rutland Herald for a co-op ad in promoting the gift guide Winter edition of Explore Magazine and the Holiday Lifestyles and Gift Ideas guide, which will be published this month. We commissioned 17 new gift photos for 2021 to mix with existing photos from 2020.
- We are mailing a direct mail postcard to 6,400 homes in the Rutland County to promote holiday happenings and the gift guide.
- New trash can inserts with holiday happenings will be distributed this week.
- Nikki submitted brand ads for the winter editions of Rutland Magazine and Explore Magazine, promoting general holiday happenings and activities.
- We were once again approved to be Neighborhood Champions for Small Business Saturday.
- We are planning on getting gift cards from downtown retailers, restaurants, and activities to place in bags provided by AmEx for Small Business Saturday. Each retailer will get two bags to give away during the Holiday Stroll.
- Our website is up-to-date with new pages for the Holiday Stroll, Tree Lighting, and Window contest. The Shop, Dine, and Services pages have also been updated with new sorting features to better highlight individual offerings.
- Bent MediaWorks is sending new drafts of their proposed Downtown Rutland commercials the first week of December.

Events: Nikki

- The Downtown Rutland Holiday Stroll will be held Saturday, November 27th, 2021.
 - We are up to 20 participating businesses in the Holiday Stroll. There are a few still pending responses with commitments to participate.
 - We hired Keith Hier to be our Santa at Wonderfeet Kids' Museum from 2 to 5pm. Families must sign up in advance for half hour blocks and will be required to wear masks.
 - I spoke with Rinck Advertising, who represents Dunkin Vermont, about a possible partnership during the Holiday Stroll. She's hoping to give away free samples and products in Depot Park in the late morning/early afternoon.
 - The Holiday Stroll is being advertised on Facebook, Instagram, digital newsletters, Catamount Radio, Google Ads, screens at regional Price Chopper Supermarkets, and print ads in the Rutland Herald and Mountain Times.
- The Tree Lighting will be held on Friday, December 3rd, 2021.
 - Tom Joyce is our Santa at this event. He will ride the fire truck down Center Street and do a short performance. The Mayor will speak, Mission City will hand out free hot chocolate, and volunteers will hand out holiday specs and candy canes. Green Mountain Music will lead the group in holiday songs and carols.
 - The Tree Lighting is being advertised on Facebook, Instagram, digital newsletters, Catamount Radio, Google Ads, screens at regional Price Chopper Supermarkets, and print ads in the Rutland Herald.

- The Holiday Window Decorating Contest will be held November 27th through December 17th. In addition to the People's Choice award, new categories this year are:
 - Best Winter Wonderland, Most Classic or Nostalgic, Most Creative, Most Colorful, Most Festive, Best Use of Lights, and Most Eclectic
- We collaborated with CEDRR to provide a flyer of restaurants open after 8pm for Rutland Recreation to post at the Community Center and hand out to the Semi-Pro Basketball Team at games.
- Nikki continues to meet with the Winterfest planning committee to discuss 2022 events. We have another check-in this week to finalize the dates for next year.
- Keeping an eye on Covid updates as cases start to rise again in Rutland County.

Business Development: Nikki

- No new grant applications to review at this time.

Executive Director Update: Nikki

- Nikki is helping to create a website for the newly formed Vermont Downtown Coalition.
- Interviewed a Stafford Technical Center student last week for a potential video internship next semester at the DRP.
- We contributed a letter of support for CEDDR's grant request through the Tourism and Economic Recovery Marketing Grants for funding of a Real Rutland Young Professionals Weekend to take place throughout Rutland County.
- Approached by a potential investor and the manager of FGB Theatres about the possibility of opening a new theatre in the vacant Flagship Cinemas space. They have been connected with Brixmor with hopes that they will tour the space soon.
- Attended the monthly Executive Directors meeting to discuss news in Rutland City with CEDRR, the RRA, and the Planning and Zoning Administrator.
- A local couple purchased 85 State Street with plans to renovate the facade and turn it into a cafe and coffee shop.
- Four Seasons Sothebys is moving their offices downtown this month. They leased both 116 West Street and 122 West Street.
- Wild Kind Toys is planning to open at 31 Center Street.

New Business

- Indian restaurant still planning on moving into space in old Clem's. Some delays in getting the remaining equipment.
- Dominos will be moving to the old Stewarts on South Main.
- New Thrift Shop in old Aaron's under Gymnasium is up and running and is full. Taking things by donation only.

Old Business:

- None

Liaison updates

- **Board of Aldermen**
 - TIF contract completed by attorney. Will get back soon.
 - Project to repair railroad
 - Paramount expansion
 - New city website - 85% done (funds will be partly from ARPA funds)
 - Digitizing some land records.
 - 90-110,000 to upgrade chambers to virtual meeting space.
 - City owned properties committees - trying to sell some.
 - Parking needs to be reviewed.
 - Cannabis to be put on March ballot.
 - Budget is being reviewed.
- **Rutland Redevelopment Authority**
 - BROC fridge/freezer is having an unveiling.
 - RRA sent out a partner survey to 30 partners - got 8 back. Trying to decide what to do next with the information.
- **Parking Garage**
 - No liaison present

The meeting adjourned at 8:44am.

Next meeting: December 21, 2021