Meeting Notes

Bremen Town Center Project Committee Meeting with Wendy Pieh, Select Board Chair

Attendees: Mary Voskian, Jane Carroll, Joe Vitti, and Wendy Pieh

Friday, February 8, 2019

Mary, Jane, and Joe met with Wendy Pieh to discuss the seeking of funding for the BTCP. The issue relates to funding for a municipality, Town of Bremen, versus funding to a 501(c) (3).

Wendy said that the town is a non-profit municipality and can accept grants.

Jane said it is her understanding that it is not a 501 (c) (3) and most private charities and individuals require that designation. A definition:

Section **501**(**c**) (**3**) is the portion of the US Internal Revenue Code that allows for federal tax exemption of nonprofit organizations, specifically those that are considered public charities, private foundations or private operating foundations

For example, Jane said that in order to apply to the Stephen King Foundation, the Bremen Library must provide the certificate showing the library is a 501(c) (3) in order to be eligible for the grant. Jane also gave the example of Mt. Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge (she worked on fund raising at Mt Auburn) that formed a separate organization, “The Friends of Mount Auburn,” as a 501(c) (3) to raise funds. The monies would then be transferred to the Cemetery. Public universities function in much the same way.

Two examples of municipalities being assisted by 501(c) (3) organizations acting as fiscal agents for their fund raising were discussed. Donations for the Damariscotta parking lot plan were made to the Twin City Alliance and donations for the Lupine Field in Round Pond were made to Medomak Valley Land Trust. In each case the 501(c) (3) organization provided this service for collection of funds so that donors could apply for a tax break.

Wendy pointed out that the town has accepted money from foundations.

Jane pointed out that charitable foundations can only give to 501(c) (3) by law (see IRS code).

Wendy said that the Town mostly gets state grants. Municipality grants are not from private foundations.

Libra Foundation (Noyes Family), for example, states in the guidelines:

No application will be considered from an organization unless it has been determined to be tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue code and "not a private foundation" under Section 509(a) of the Code. The Foundation will need evidence of this for its files at the time of application for a grant.

Wendy will contact the Maine Municipal Association to find out what we need to do to apply for 501(c) (3) status. She will also inquire about what avenues municipalities are using if they apply for funding from foundations that only donate to 501(c) (3) organizations.

Jane pointed out that 90% of giving is by individuals. There was a discussion of seeking donations from individuals.

Jane asked, “If the committee has a structure built on town property, does the town own the structure?” Wendy answered, “Yes.”

A question about insurance was raised by Joe. Wendy said the town has insurance.

The state has grants for municipalities. We need to find out how to access these funds!

In looking at an overall plan for fund raising, it was felt that first funding would be sought from foundations, then donations from individuals, followed by donations from the public.

The first order of business following this meeting is:

1. Mary will contact Travis to ask for his assessment of a reasonable budget for a play/recreation area and pavilion that would include the following:

\*Hiring a planner for this phase of the project

\*Taking into account an emphasis on it being a more natural area with some swings and climbing structures

\*Being mindful that the surface is safe and environmentally friendly

\*Assuming that the pavilion and portions of the play area could be completed by volunteers

2. Following the reply from Travis, Mary will contact Lincoln County Planner Megan McLaughlin at the Lincoln County Regional Planning Commission. Mary will explain that we are looking for funding sources, give the estimation from Travis as an approximation of the cost of this phase of the project, and ask what grants might be available from the county and/or the state.

Mary will share the information received from Travis and the County Planner with committee members and Wendy. After receiving this information, Wendy will be able to contact the Maine Municipal Association for information on funding.