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Economic Recovery Team

Meeting Date: 6/23/2020 10-11AM

**Public Health Update:**

Becky updates about everyone moving into the “protect your neighbor” which allows bigger groups to get together and regions to work forward together. Public Health just received new funding so they are restructuring how those funds can be best used over the next couple years. They have plenty of testing supplies at this time. There are documented cases of reinfection, despite people having antibodies. They are reevaluating the mask advisory and will continuing to go to the businesses to support safe standards. Update in Mineral County – one person went to a bar and they are contact tracing 40 people. Good reason to stay vigilant.

Contact tracing: If someone has symptoms, they are encouraged to have nasal swab asap. They should quarantine with close family members. If possible then people within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes up to 2 days prior to the symptoms and those have to quarantine for 2 weeks as well. Then if they have symptoms the process continues.

**School Update:**

Kim says they’ve been working together with community government and organizations to write grants. Raised around 200k for food and rent assistance and about 50k for testing, masks, and supplies. 100% funding is going for those specific costs. They are looking for some FEMA and long-term recovery grants.

Current programs: School food is scheduled for 16 weeks of food delivery for kids 0-18, serving about 80 bags of food a week. Continuing through the summer but asking families to opt out if they don’t need the assistance. Anticipating being able to continue food and rent assistance through the fall/winter. School cost is about 30k in food so far.

Jim Harper updates about the Emergency Food Bank working alongside the school and they are delivering once a week to families who asked to be on the list. (Anyone could be added.) They’re working with other counties and local benefactors. They will deliver through this weekend. Then the food bank will be moving to the school with the current volunteers all going back to work. Kim adds that the foodbank has been providing for 35-40 households a week and with all going back to work, they will be able to assist the few who will still need it. The foodbank also received grants and local support as well. 85k in support so far for rent and utilities has made this a very successful effort in the community. They will continue looking for additional funding for this fall/winter. They are aware for the need for consistent child-care. Summer program working, and SFLC began, but it’s hard to meet the needs for child-care with the limit on groups. They also cannot accept more children into the programing at this time.

**Short-term Eco Recovery:**

Willy explains the Governor’s order allows for Bars to open with limitations, also events can begin to operate also with their capacity limitations. Becky expands bars in a restaurant should not allow people to sit at the bar if food and drink are being prepared there.

Willy says the train will begin on 6/23 from Rockwood to Cascade and back, because of the Elk Creek bridge washout, no train is to be expected in Silverton until at least 8/15. Jim expands, the concrete culvert’s foundation was cracked, so the whole thing needs to be replaced. Originally thought 3-5 weeks, now thinking it will take 8-18 weeks to repair it.

Blair Street: Bill Walko with Blair Street Association says businesses voted not to proceed with the traffic loop idea because of the community feedback. Looking for alternative measures to bring tourists to Blair Street businesses. Some of those businesses are in critical condition and many will not make it through the summer without direct intervention.

Ideas include using the cross streets 10th-14th with signage for both north and south bound traffic getting people to go to that area. It’s a cheap option about 1k for signage. Another idea is using the billboards at the entrance of town and add additional signage on the bottom of the boards indicating stopping at the visitor center. Thought to change the name from “visitor center” to “welcome center.” Then the welcome center encourages guests to go to Blair Street. Kiosk on Greene, possibly at Harmony Park to send people to Blair.

Scott talking with Tom at the Funnel Cake, agree they need to bring the Gun Fight back, but it takes people to lead it. Suggests someone at Blair Street bring it back. Also, bring back the Historical Map Tour with Blair St, to promote more attraction to those businesses too. He agrees it’s up to the Greene St merchants to direct people to Blair as well.

Darlene says the Gun Fight has to have insurance and that’s the biggest problem and getting it covered. Town use to insure it, but now their insurance company won’t allow it. Willy expands that if the Town sponsored something SIRCA would cover it, then the insurance company changed it to only cover Town events. Jim updates that Keri Metzler said the cost of insurance kept raising and becoming difficult to fund.

Kim’s idea to spruce up the 12th/Blair etcetera intersections like picnic tables or big and visual to draw people.

Deanne updates that the Town and Chamber were both funded by the Tourism Board on Monday. Willy says the Tourism Board funded over 100k worth of advertising and marketing for proposals this year.

**Long Term Eco Recovery:**

Kim says they are working on getting fiber optic consistently into town. Also continuing to work for the rental and food support over the winter.

Deanne agrees with fiber being a huge draw. Mountain communities see the biggest real estate draw after disasters, we need the right amenities and address our weaknesses. Bill expands on getting the prospectus done to get our message across to investors that our area is an opportunity zone. Also thinks we need more workforce housing. Their business is not open because of a lack of employees.

Heather O explains about a grant available for things like signage. It does have to be COVID related but could be worked around for the Blair St projects. Town is working on getting into these funds too. Lisa expands there are grants coming available for outdoor recreation which they also will be researching.

**Resiliency Plan:**

Willy explains that we will begin the visioning process soon.

Other:

Fosters expand upon Anvil Mtn being a great growing community to promote. Laurel has been a part of a younger group of people under Julian Roberts and the Historical Society creating a new Non-Profit to stimulate building another greenhouse/growing space, composting program, developing more seasonal jobs that aren’t tied into tourist-based economy.

Heather O says larger communities are moving to smaller ones and search school districts before moving. She can help provide support data with population trends, highest job trends etcetera.

Michelle stresses the importance of getting our schools and SFLC to be able to accept more kids. Willy adds that COVID is limiting the capacity at this time, and everyone’s hoping that will get better as we go.