

Berlin Economic Development Council
Minutes of Meeting held December 17, 2014
5:30 Berlin Municipal Offices
Unapproved

Members: Keith Robinson, Paul Irons, Wanda Baril, Dan Cambra, and Pat McDonald, Chair. For the Town; Dana Hadley

Guest: Jeff Dooley, Vermont Tax Department

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 by the Chair, Pat McDonald

Pat McDonald introduced Jeff Dooley from the Vermont Tax Department. Jeff talked about the implementation of a 1% Local Option Tax and talked about the Act which allows towns to vote in local option taxes. Jeff advised the committee that Berlin, because it is a “gold town” can just implement a local option tax without going to the Legislature after residents vote to approve.

We talked to Jeff about the problem we heard from Rutland Town about the confusion cause when Towns don’t have a designated zip code – which of course Berlin does not. Jeff suggested that we provide the Tax Department with a list of berlin businesses and their zip codes. If the list is not too onerous, Jeff said the Tax Department might be able to calculate how much actual tax Berlin would see from implementing a local option tax on the corrected list.

Regarding implementation the Tax department does all the work collection and disseminating funds. 70% of the 1% goes to the town and 30% goes to the State to cover administration costs. There are three categories: sales, meals and alcohol and room. Tax department also does auditing and compliance. There is quarterly return to the town from the State.

Jeff encouraged the Council to look at the sales tax reported on the website and to review the handout on Sales and use Statistics he provided to us.

Pat updated the Council on a meeting that was co-hosted by BEDC and Bob Wernecke. Post Cards were sent to every business/property owners along Rte 302. Articles were put in the World, Corinne’s email, Front Porch Forum and on Facebook. There was a very small turnout of business people. Bob and Pat have decided to reach out to the Chamber, Kiwanis and Rotary. The purpose of the meeting was two-fold: talk about the road diet project and ask for input on what Berlin can do better regarding zoning, planning, and general level of service.

The Committee reviewed the text of the Brochure – All Roads Lead to Berlin. Pat offered to take care of getting proposed changes made and also getting quotes for printing.

Minutes were approved from the prior meeting and the meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm

Respectfully submitted

Pat McDonald, Chair