

April 2022 Monthly Report
Economic Development Specialist - Brian Doyle

1. Business Retention/Attraction

Business Retention:

Doug's Seafood: Met with owner Doug Anderson to discuss some idea he has on bringing more people to Thomaston. Mr. Anderson seeks to hold events on the property located behind his restaurant. Indicated I'd share these ideas with Code Enforcement Officer Mandy Everett as these ideas are unique and require her attention. Mr. Anderson also requested assistance with getting two businesses signs in Warren that would direct customers to his Rt 1 restaurant. Learned from Maine Department of Transportation officials that only signs that require a turn from a road can be installed. Mr. Anderson would not be able to secure a sign on US Rt 1 so he declined to pursue the other sign.

Station 118:

Sent an email to owners Scott and Emily about a preferred date for them to provide food at a Music Behind The Block concert.

Thomaston Auction Galleries: Reconnected to owner Kaja Veilleux and learned he is interested in speaking with Maine SBDC Business Advisor Anne Lancaster. Suggested one of his staff register for him. Ms. Lancaster has extensive experience providing this type of guidance to senior management and business owners. Mr. Veilleux will be traveling for some time out of state. I'll follow up with another reminder in May.

Cornhole Connection: Stopped by the Main Street store and spoke with co-owner Penny Dostie about marketing ideas to pursue. Provided feedback to a postcard marketing piece co-owner Cameo Sampson had created to send to local businesses. Provided addresses to these local businesses as well. Repeated my offer to provide them lists of local children's camps and hotels in the area so they can introduce themselves as a supplier of cornhole products. Their store inventory has increased so their showroom is stocked well and is displayed nicely. Reminded them to consider walking around the downtown and introduce themselves to other merchants.

1. Business Attraction:

Confidential Site Searches:

Opportunity 1: No progress with receiving a response from a business seeking a space that addresses their expansion needs. Will stop by their current location and meet with ownership at an agreed upon time.

Opportunity 2: A second entrepreneur still has not made a decision on where he intends to relocate.

2. Watts Block

Improvement in HVAC system:

Invested substantial hours into creating, editing and submitted three applications for federal funds available via the Senate Congressional Direct Spending (CDS) and House Community Project Funding (CPF) programs. The application will be focused on pursuing funds to make safety improvements in the HVAC and air purification needs for the facility that will allow Watts Hall to begin hosting larger events once again. Provided feedback on the applications by Bill and Daryl Hahn and Diane Giese. Created draft letters of support for businesses to submit on behalf of the project. Had multiple follow up conversations and emails with Senator Collins' staff member Molly Ryan about the application. Had follow up conversations and answers for Congresswoman Pingree's staff member Sarah Lawrence about questions she had on our application. Thanked all of the congressional staff for their support throughout the process.

3 Enhance the Downtown Thomaston Experience

Thomaston Main Street (TMS): Facilitated a meeting in April that focused on making programming decisions for the summer and fall. Attendance was low so will invest time into recruiting more participants to the May meeting. Recruited 9 merchants via emails and visits to participate in an Ester Egg event that was successful. Merchants had positive feedback and wish to repeat the event next year.

Teacher Appreciation Week: Contacted by the local Middle and Grade schools seeking support from merchants to recognize Teacher Appreciation Week with discounts at their businesses. Was able to recruit 7 merchants to participate.

Survey: Created a survey seeking to determine what residents' interest are for events this 2022-2023. Sent it to the downtown merchants and posted it in the monthly e-newsletter. Response has been slow. Will send it again over social media platforms.

FaceBook page: With the Assistance from new member John Usher, was able to secure Necole Janzcura and Missy Poulin as new Admin support for the FB page

Music Behind The Block: Successfully received donations from Lyman-Morse, Epifanes NA. The First and Doug's Seafood. Lindsey Pinkham has offered to contact local food trucks to see if they will support these shows. Have a commitment from one Main Street business to serve food and another is considering it. Will begin booking shortly. Beaver Stinson has agreed to provide the stage for the series again this year.

3.Enhance the Downtown Thomaston Experience: (continued)

Community discussion on Art in Thomaston: Hosted an initial Zoom meeting attended by seven people on Wednesday, April 27 at 6:30pm to discuss ways to integrate art into Thomaston. Discussed ideas ranging from murals, crosswalk art, sculptures, window art for Main Street businesses and an annual “en plein air” event. Select Board member Zel Bowman-Lebargé agreed to ask the Select Board to recommend locations in town where public art would be welcomed. A follow up meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday, May 25 at 6:30pm

Business Visits: Stopped by the following locations and met with owners/staff to listen to their feedback and needs and to discuss plans/ideas for the downtown.

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|-----------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| Dance N’ Art Studio | Thomaston Grocery | Coastal Mountain Chiro | Coastal Cards |
| Camden National Bank | Blueberry Moose | Station 118 | Downeast Maritime |
| Athen’s Pizza | Flipside Coffee | 150 Main Salon | Strong Insurance |
| Cornhole Connection | Flaura Flowers & Wine | Ross Levitt Antiques | |
| Thomaston Auction Galleries | | | |

4. Market Economic Development Specialist role and CCFC resources- Identify CCFC Technical Assistance resources that are available to the community

Thomaston Harbor Dredging: Informed by Senator Susan Collins’ staff that the Army Corp of Engineers would support an earmark of \$425,000 be included in the 2023 budget to support the dredging project in Thomaston Harbor. I contacted the following entities to secure letters of support for this earmark: Town of Thomaston, Lyman-Morse and Jeff’s Marine. These letters were sent to Senator Collins’ staff.

Surveying of Thomaston Harbor this Summer: Requested a meeting with Army Corp of Engineers to review steps that will be taken this summer to survey the harbor. Lyman-Morse will be performing a separate survey of areas outside of the channel they wish to have dredged. Will arrange a time for this call to occur to ensure a coordinated plan is established.

Annual 4th of July Celebration: Followed up on tasks Brooks Stevens asked for assistance with. Provided Mr. Stevens with a large, printed map of the area used by the 4th of July events. Encouraged Brooks to identify any requests he has for changes to the traditional format with municipal officials. Continue to refer inquiries I receive from interested parties seeking to participate in the festivities to Brooks directly.

4. Market Economic Development Specialist role and CCFC resources- Identify CCFC Technical Assistance resources that are available to the community (continued)

American Legion William Brazier Post:

Sent a follow up email to Jeremy Miller inquiring if he had been contacted by Internet Service Provider Great Works Internet (GWI) to see if GWI can address their needs for an affordable broadband provider. Requested Mr. Miller offer times and dates that he and his American Legion officers can meet with local police, fire and EMS officials to ensure the Legion is referenced to any Veteran needing support. Also asked if a conversation has occurred with 4th of July celebration Chair Brooks Stevens to ensure Mr. Stevens is aware the Legion wishes to participate this year.

Shoreland Planning Grant: Provided follow up information to Maine Department of Marine Resources Melissa Britsch on the impact of various high tides to the Kiln parcel. Ms. Britsch connected me to a website that can project what the impacts will be and I sent each of these images to her for the committee's review.

Lyman-Morse: Sent a follow up email to Matt Graham, Lyman Morse COO and learned the company will be pursuing a grant I encouraged them to from Maine Technology Institute. Also recommended a conversation be started regarding expectations about the dredging project and that a follow up Zoom call with Army Corp officials be scheduled soon

Multi business visit: He identified Tuesday, May 24 as the date to visit Brooks Trapp Mill, Lyman-Morse Boatbuilding and Dragon Cement. All state, federal and municipal attendees are locked in on this date.

Shepard Toyota:

Sent a follow up note to General Manager Susan Shepard to determine if she has had any success with connecting with the following entities: 1. Midcoast School of Technology (MST) about speaking with students at MST about full time careers at her family's dealerships. 2. CareerCenter staff about recruiting and training their workforce through programs offered by the Maine Department of Labor. 3 Speaking with Brooks Stevens about participating in the annual 4th of July parade.

Jeff's Marine Facilitated a Zoom call General Manager Thomas Turansky and Alex Thibodeau of Creative Composite Group of Augusta and explored a plan to manufacture a small skiff for Jeff's Marine to sell. Mr. Thibodeau expressed some interest and agreed to research costs involved. Brian Doyle agreed to identify funding sources to support this proposed development project

5. Provide the town with information on best practices involving use of social media and website.

6. TIF Program.

Slow progress continues to be made on the follow up questions raised by Maine Department of Economic and Community Development Officer Tina Mullins. We expect the TIF will be approved in May.

7.Meeting Attendance

Weekly call with Community Concepts Finance Corp Supervisor Mia Purcell
Biweekly meeting with Kara George
Bi-Weekly meeting with Nate Libby and Mia Purcell
Bi-weekly Thomaston Select Board
Monthly Thomaston Economic Development Committee
Monthly Watts Block Trustees
Monthly Saco Main Street -Board of Trustees
Monthly Harbor Committee Meeting

8.Represent town at various events in the region

Monthly Midcoast Council of Governments (MCOG) meeting (Formerly Mid-Coast Economic Development District meeting)
Monthly Knox County Workforce Development Coalition
MCOG By-Laws Ad Hoc Committee.

9.Connectivity

Consolidated Communications: Sent a third email to Sarah Davis, Director of Legislative and Regulatory Affairs requesting a Zoom call with Kara George and I to educate us about Consolidated's plans for Thomaston. Looking for a different contact within Consolidated to assist with scheduling this call.

10.ARPAs Funds

11.Housing