

11/17/2025 Minutes Town of Otis Revitalization Hybrid* Committee Meeting
Otis Town Hall
November 17th, 10:00 AM

Members present: Celeste (Zoom), Cynthia, Hal, Jackie, Stacey, Susan, & Tim

Members absent: Glenn

Guests: Ross Knowles, Sue Brofman, Melissa Kleinman, Jeanne Randorf, & Diane Dyer

1. **Call to Order:** Stacey called the meeting to order at 10:02
2. **October minutes & subcommittee minutes** were tabled.
3. **Public Comment** – Jeanne said the Cultural Council approved the funds to hire Bobby Sweet
4. **MA Economic Development Real Estate Technical Assistance Grant update** – The state has rules about when and how to publicize the grant. Stacey said the selectboard will sign a *Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)* at their 11/25 or 12/9 regular meeting.
5. **Review of Working Document** – SMART working streams, first presented and approved in April 2024. Committee members were asked to review the highlighted items in the document and be prepared to discuss at the 12/10 meeting at 6:30.
6. A motion was made to accept the third quarterly report as amended by Susan, seconded by Tim. The motion was unanimously approved.
7. **Abridged updates from working groups**
 - a. Needs Assessment Survey – About 675 respondents. The survey is still open.
 - b. Promotion & Community Events or Quick Wins – TOR will support the town cleanup organized by Katy Utenis in the spring. Cynthia, Jackie, and Melissa Kleinman will form a three-person subcommittee to explore creating and putting together a “Welcome Wagon” packet that would introduce the new residents to the community. The Otis Woodlands has done this type of program for years and it has been well received. The subcommittee will work with the selectboard and Lyn for input. It was suggested and accepted to repost the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) flyer that provides 0% interest, deferred, forgivable loans for essential home repairs for those who qualify.
 - c. Business, Culture & Recreation – The BCR subcommittee met on 10/28 and 11/4 via Zoom. The subcommittee will meet with Ben Lamb from 1 Berkshire on 12/18 to discuss how to get businesses to discover Otis. The subcommittee is exploring ways to collaborate with the Historical Commission as well as the school regarding the 250th anniversary of Henry Knox’s journey through both Otis and Sandisfield.
 - d. Downtown – Cynthia reported that Vlad’s Pizza could not do a “bricks and mortar” at this time.
 - e. Infrastructure – Last summer, Stacey spoke with two EMT’S to see if there was any interest in learning more about the topic of Community Paramedicine. They confirmed interest. Stacey, Cynthia, Tim, and Melissa Kleinman (Volunteer) began to investigate and found an online conference. After attending this conference, the information was shared

via email with stakeholders. A meeting was requested after the EMS/Fire Transfer to the town is complete. A grant for a feasibility study has been identified should the stakeholders wish to learn more about this program, Both the fire department/EMT squad and selectboard members are reluctant to pursue this issue. The selectboard asked the subcommittee to refrain from pursuing exploring this issue at this time. Tim is working with Leigh Davis on Rural Health Initiatives.

f. Services & Population Retention/Growth – Stacey reported that “Habitat for Humanity” was open to attending the January meeting. Stacey talked to Brandi about a Water Grant through BCRP. Brandi noted the grant was regional and would be offered as a co-op option rather than at the municipal level. Diane asked why this should be looked at this time and Stacey noted that contaminated wells downtown could impact potential businesses. Susan reported that an active group of parents had been meeting with Supt. Tim Lee concerning before and after school care at the FRRS. He and school committee member Kate Meierdiercks have developed a survey to gain insight from parents who live in the member towns or are in the school-by-school choice. The School Committee has hosted two businesses for a presentation and Q & A, who could potentially deliver these services to discuss potential options.

8. Any items not anticipated – Reminder about the holiday dinner on 12/12 at the Knox Trail. Tim inquired about the status of the letters and was told they were approved by the select board and mailed out.

9. Susan made a motion that was seconded by Jackie to **adjourn** the meeting at 11:49. The motion was unanimously approved.

Next meeting: December 10th, **Town Hall***, 6:30 PM

Future Meetings: January 26, 2026, 10:00 AM

Respectfully Submitted,
Susan Ebitz, TOR Secretary