East Haddam Economic Development Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
October 1, 2020

Attending: D. Bergeron; R. Casner; W. McEnery; R. Parady;

Absent: J. Albuquerque; J. Fennema; W. Melon; M. Robidoux; J. Stone

Guests: I. Haines; R. Smith; S. Wheeler

I. Call to Order - Mr. Casner called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m.

II. Attendance – Mr. Casner sat Mr. McEnery in place of Mr. Fennema.

III. Approval of Minutes

The Commissioners reviewed the minutes of the Regular meeting of July 9, 2020, the Special meeting of August 19, 2020, and the Regular meeting of September 3, 2020. For the purpose of clarity, Mr. Casner requested the following amendments be made to the September meeting minutes:

- In "Attending" change "W. Melon" to "W. Judd Melon".
- In the first sentence of the 2nd paragraph under agenda item III, change "Mr. Mellon" to Mr. Timothy Mellon".

MOTION MADE BY MR. BERGERON, SECONDED BY MR. McENERY, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR EDC MEETING OF JULY 9, 2020 AS WRITTEN. UNANIMOUS AYE.

MOTION MADE BY MR. BERGERON, SECONDED BY MR. PARADY, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL EDC MEETING OF AUGUST 19, 2020 AS WRITTEN. UNANIMOUS AYE.

MOTION MADE BY MR. BERGERON, SECONDED BY MR. McENERY, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR EDC MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 3, 2020 AS AMDENDED. UNANIMOUS AYE.

IV. Old Business

A. Status Reports

1. EDC Chairman Update

a. Goodspeed Airport Property – Mr. Casner referenced the joint EDC/P&Z/GAEC meeting of September 3rd. He reported that he had secured information regarding the recent sale of the Griswold Airport, a 45-acre parcel in Madison, for $9.5M, and Eagles Landing, a four-acre parcel with 400' of waterfront on the CT River, for $1.86M.

Mr. Casner recognized First Selectman Smith who advised that the Goodspeed Airport Evaluation Committee had completed their charge and had recommended the Board of Selectmen refer to the discussions held during the September 3rd joint meeting of its Committee, EDC, and P&Z for further action by the Town.

Mr. Smith advised that the Goodspeed Airport property is still under contract, with a November closing date, with a third party. He noted that the $9.6M comp of the Griswold Airport reflects the sale of the property to the state as open space by a NY development company and stated that a more accurate comp for parcel would be its previous sale by the Griswold family to the development company.

2. First Selectman Update – First Selectman Smith reported the following:

   - The 4H Camp property has been purchased by Getaway Cabins®, a nationwide company which expects a 95% occupancy of the 43-45 small cabins they will install on the property. Mr. Smith noted that Getaway offers reservations year-round, expects to hire 10-13 staff members for the site, and he anticipates it will be very positive for the Town. There was a brief discussion regarding whether or not Getaway is a for-profit or non-profit company and Ms. Haines confirmed it is for-profit and that it is estimated they will pay approximately $20k per year in property taxes to the Town.

   - Nutmeg is moving forward on clearing a site on William F. Palmer Road for its new pharmacy and grocery store.

   - Dollar Tree has expressed an interest in opening a store in Town.

   - COVID: Several residents at Chestelm have tested positive and the Superintendent of the Public Works Road Crew has also tested positive and is quarantining.

   - Eversource and the CT DOT are working on Town Street removing dead/diseased trees.

   - The Town's third application for a BUILD grant for a sidewalk along the swingbridge was not approved.

3. Economic Development Administrator Report - Ms. Haines reported the following:

   - The 2020 Visitor's Guides are being distributed to local businesses and she has given supplies to the Essex Steam Train for its Rail-Bike program and to the I-95 Visitors' Center. She also plans to drop off a supply to the Mystic tourism center.

   - This year's Fall Weekend will not be held. Due to COVID restrictions/impacts, CT Landmark had pulled out and she has not been able to sign-up any signature events. Ms. Haines stated she is considering other options to support local businesses. Mr. McEnery suggested developing a local "gift card" that could be purchased for use at any of the Town's restaurants and/or businesses.

4. EDC/PZC Sub-Committees – Discussion of the below two agenda items was postponed.

   1. New Business District on Town Street (Route 82)
   2. Moodus Business District

5. East Haddam Business Association – Mr. Casner reported that, due to COVID, the Business Association has no scheduled meetings at this time.

6. East Haddam Village Activities – Mr. Casner stated that an updated appraisal of the Old Town Office site should be delivered to the Town within the next week at which time the EHVRC will draft a Letter of Intent for the preferred developer.

V. New Business

A. Tax Incentive Program Application

1. Staehly Farms, Petticoat Lane – Mr. Casner reported that Staehly Farms is waiting for feedback from their attorney regarding their Tax Incentive Agreement.

2. Clark Gates, LLC, 382 Town Street – Mr. Casner stated that he has signed the Tax Incentive Agreement for Clark Gates, LLC.

Mr. Casner advised that the next steps are to send the signed Agreements to the Board of Finance for their sign-off and then to bring them to a Town Meeting for final approval.

B. Business Promotion – Discussion of this agenda item was postponed.

1. Moodus Area – Route 149 & Palmer Road
2. Shagbark Area – Routes 82 & 151

C. Business of the Month – Nominations and Vote

Ms. Haines reported that she has not been able to schedule a time with Mr. Maus for his September Business of the Month photo. She also noted that All Waste Control Inc. was nominated and approved as the October Business of the Month. The Commissioners discussed several options for the November and December nominations.

MR. CASNER MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MR. PARADY, TO APPROVE THE NOMINATIONS OF CORVO BAR & GRILL AS THE NOVEMBER BUSINESS OF THE MONTH AND CAVANAUGH PLUMBING & HEATING LLC AS THE DECEMBER BUSINESS OF THE MONTH. UNANIMOUS AYE.

VI. Public Comment

There was no public comment discussed at the meeting.

VII. Open Discussion – EDC Commissioners

Ms. Haines solicited the Commissioners' input regarding whether or not to plan a Holiday Village Stroll this year. The Commissioners' acknowledged the challenges presented by COVID restrictions; however, Mr. McEnery suggested transitioning some of the indoor events to a virtual format. Ms. Haines agreed to contact the LIONS Club to determine what their plans are for their auction and stated she would also talk to other communities and EDCs to see what they are planning.

VIII. Adjournment

THERE BEING NO ADDITIONAL BUSINESS TO DISCUSS, A MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. PARADY, SECONDED BY MR. McENERY, TO ADJOURN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MEETING. UNANIMOUS AYE.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Recorded

Respectfully Submitted,
Sharon Wheeler