East Haddam Economic Development Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
November 4, 2021

Attending: R. Casner; R. Davis; W. McEnery; R. Parady; M. Robidoux; J. Stone
Absent: J. Albuquerque; D. Bergeron; W. Melon
Guests: I. Haines; S. Wheeler

I. Call to Order - Mr. Casner called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

II. Attendance – Mr. Casner noted that a majority of regular members were in attendance.

III. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Casner noted minor revisions to the August 5th and October 6th minutes.

MOTION MADE BY MR. ROBIDOUX, SECONDED BY MR. McENERY, TO APPROVE THE AUGUST 5, 2021 MINUTES, AS AMENDED. UNANIMOUS AYE.

MOTION MADE BY MR. DAVIS, SECONDED BY MR. ROBIDOUX, TO APPROVE THE OCTOBER 6, 2021 MINUTES, AS AMENDED. UNANIMOUS AYE.

IV. Old Business

A. Status Reports

1. EDC Chairman Update – Mr. Casner reported the following:

- He would like to begin drafting EDC's 2021-2022 budget for recommendation to the Board of Selectmen. He noted that the Planning & Zoning Commission has added $30k to their budget for Engineering work to support the new zoning regulations in the Moodus area and stated he would like to add $20k to EDC's budget for Professional fees. There was a general discussion regarding Mr. Casner's recommendation and the consensus was to support Mr. Casner's suggestion.

  Mr. Casner stated he would draft EDC's 2021-2022 budget and circulate it to the Commissioners for their review.

- He advised that the Economic Development Administrator position is currently vacant and the Commissioners agreed that the job should be posted.

- He reviewed attendance at regular EDC Meetings and noted that he is aware of individuals who would like to join EDC. The Commissioners agreed with his recommendation to ask the Board of Selectmen to review the Town's Boards/Commissions attendance policy and determine whether or not to request the resignation of any members who have not attended meetings in more than 12 months.

2. First Selectwoman's Update – Ms. Haines reported the following:

   - Since the Town is currently listed in the Grey risk category for positive COVID tests, she has lifted the mask mandate for Municipal Office buildings. She noted that unvaccinated individuals; however, are encouraged to wear masks in Town buildings.

   - At the November 3rd Board of Selectmen's meeting, it was agreed to move the referendum on the Centerbridge proposal for the 1 & 7 Main Street property up to December 14th. She noted that a Town Redevelopment Agency is still being considered.

   - Scott Jezek has declined to serve on the Board of Selectmen and, consequently, Theresa Govert was sworn in as the Town's 3rd Selectman.

   Ms. Haines expressed her strong support for the Economic Development Commission and asked the Commissioners to feel free to reach out to her to discuss any ideas they may have on how to grow the Commission's impact. She also recommended the Board review the job description for the Economic Development Administrator with an eye toward strengthening the role to encourage increased collaboration with Town Departments and Board/Commissions that have an impact on economic development issues.

3. Economic Development Administrator Report

   Discussion of this agenda item was postponed.

4. EDC/PZC Sub-Committees

   a. CT Landmarks EDC – Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program – Mr. Casner reported that this group met recently and walked the property for the proposed walking/bike path. He noted that the Nature Conservancy also attended the meeting.

5. East Haddam Business Association (EHBA) –

   a. Welcome Wagon initiative – Ms. Stone reported that the East Haddam Business Association has agreed to distribute Welcome Wagon packets to new business and it is her understanding that the Commission on Aging will coordinate distribution of the packets to new residents.

      Mr. Robidoux reiterated that he is researching the Neighbor-to-Neighbor program to facility the program.

6. Goodspeed Landing – Swingbridge Project – This agenda item was discussed earlier in the meeting under the First Selectman's report.

V. New Business

A. Business of the Month – Mr. Robidoux nominated Scott Energy for the January Business of the Month.

MOTION MADE BY MR. PARADY, SECONDED BY MR. ROBIDOUX, TO APPROVE THE NOMINATION OF SCOTT ENERGY AS THE BUSINESS OF THE MONTH FOR JANUARY 2022. UNANIMOUS AYE.

VI. Public Comment

There was no public comment discussed at the meeting.

VII. Open Discussion – EDC Commissioners

Mr. McEnery advised that he had been contacted by one of his neighbors who inquired about a holiday tree lighting in the Village. Mr. Casner noted that the evergreen tree on the Nathan Hale Green had been removed several years ago and there was a general discussion about planting a new tree. It was agreed to mark a location on the green for a new tree and Mr. Casner stated he would request the Town contact "Call Before You Dig" so they can move forward.

Ms. Stone advised that the Farmers' Market and the Business Association are planning a Holiday Market at the Grange on November 26th. She also reviewed a list of events that were held, pre-COVID, in conjunction with the Village Tree Lighting ceremony. Mr. McEnery stated that the airport is considering a Santa fly-in event this holiday season.

VIII. Adjournment

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:12 pm.

Recorded

Respectfully Submitted,
Sharon Wheeler