East Haddam Economic Development Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
September 1, 2022

Attending: R. Casner; W. McEnery; R. Parady; M. Robidoux
Absent: D. Bergeron; R. Davis; E. Glidden; J. Stone
Guests: D. Merrick; Lauren Pszczolkowski (EDC Coordinator); J. Ventres; S. Wheeler

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

II. Attendance – Mr. Casner noted all members in attendance were regular members.

III. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Casner called the Commissioners' attention to the June 2nd meeting minutes and Ms. Wheeler noted that the name of the Business of the Month in the June 2nd minutes had been mis-spelled and would be corrected.

MOTION MADE BY MR. ROBIDOUX, SECONDED BY MR. PARADY, TO APPROVE THE JUNE 2, 2022 MINUTES, AS AMENDED. UNANIMOUS AYE.

IV. Old Business

A. Status Reports

1. EDC Chairman Update – Mr. Casner advised that the Airport Festival had been a great success and thanked Mr. McEnery for sponsoring the event. Ms. Pszczolkowski noted that approximately 6,000 people had attended.

2. First Selectwoman's Update – The First Selectwoman was not in attendance; consequently, discussion of this agenda item was postponed. Mr. Casner stated that he would ask Ms. Haines to provide a brief written update for future EDC meetings, if she is unable to attend in person.

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

- She is finalizing a thank you ad listing the Airport Festival sponsors and volunteers which will run in the East Haddam News. Mr. Casner confirmed that, due to size constraints, it would not be possible to include the logos for all of the sponsors. Mr. McEnery requested Eddie's Auto be given special prominence since they had gone above and beyond with their donation and had also volunteered for clean-up duty.
- Build-A-Scarecrow supplies for the scarecrow competition at the Fall Weekend in the Village will be made available at Shagbark on October 21. The event will run concurrent with the Rathbun Library's fairy houses display and she is encouraging other Town businesses to participate in the event with giveaways and/or special offers.
- The Santa fly-in at the Goodspeed Airport is scheduled for December 6th.
- The updated Visitor's Guides are expected next week and she will begin to distribute them.

Ms. Pszczolkowski advised that she had met with the manager of Getaway and learned that guests register virtually and have little to no need to visit the office, therefore the only way to get them access to the Visitors' Guide is via a UPC. She stated that she will look into creating a UPC for the Guide.

There was a general discussion regarding the availability of a comprehensive list of local businesses.

4. EDC/PZC Sub-Committees

   a. CT Landmarks/EDC – Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program - Mr. Casner provided an update on this project and noted that Chester will be designing the trail's route through its town.

   b. EDC/PZC – Moodus Development Plan – Parking Regulations – Mr. Casner stated that the sub-committee feels that, to move forward, an engineering study of the Moodus business district must be done to determine what kind of parking, within state guidelines, would be possible. He stated that he will ask Ms. Haines to request that COG investigate the possibility of a state grant to fund the study. Mr. Casner responded to several questions from the Commissioners.

   c. Route 82 Bike Path / Zoning Uses in the Area – Mr. Casner reiterated that delegates from the Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance group, CT Landmarks, and the River Cog, had previously held a meeting with representatives from East Haddam and Chester to discuss the walking/bike path project. He stated that members of the National Parks Service's Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance program will host a presentation of the proposed trail in the Palmer Warner barn during the Fall Weekend event.

5. East Haddam Business Association (EHBA) – Mr. Robidoux reported the following:

   - EHBA had recently updated its webpage.
   - A networking/mixer is scheduled for September 28th at a facility ibn East Hampton and he encouraged EDC members and local business owners to attend.

6. Goodspeed Landing – Swingbridge Project – Mr. Casner reported that the initial work on the Swingbridge repairs has started and noted that closures, including alternate one-lane traffic schedules, are being posted on Facebook. He noted that, to date, communications and traffic movement havw been well managed.

7. PZC request for comments – Does the Town need more RV sites – Mr. Casner reported that P&Z has taken the lead on this issue and the agenda item was tabled; it will be removed from future EDC agendas.

V. New Business

A. Membership – Appointment - Mr. Casner introduced Mr. David Merrick and stated that he has expressed an interest in serving on the Economic Development Commission. He recognized Mr. Merrick who stated that he is the owner of Easland Enterprises which does demolition work, as well as excavation, rigging and hauling. He stated that he moved to East Haddam approximately 7 years ago, enjoys living here, and want to do something to support the Town. Mr. Merrick responded to several questions from the Commissioners.

Mr. Casner stated Mr. Merrick will fill out a Volunteer application for a position on EDC and the Board can vote on recommending him as an alternate member at their next meeting.

B. Sustainability Committee Presentation – Mr. Casner advised that the representative from the Sustainability Committee was not able to make tonight's meeting but he expects her to attend EDC's next meeting.

C. Open Space Purchase – Mr. Casner recognized Mr. Ventres. Mr. Ventres distributed materials related to the potential purchase of the Kronberg Property on North Moodus Road. He advised that the parcel is 95 +/- acres and that the Open Space Commission has proposed the Town purchase the entire parcel, designating 74 acres as Open Space and setting aside 21 acres across the street from the Middle School for future municipal use. Mr. Ventres described the current uses of the Kronberg parcel as well as that of the surrounding properties. He responded to several questions from the Commissioners and advised that the Open Space Commission would like EDC's endorsement to pursue a state grant for the property.

MOTION MADE BY MR. McENERY, SECONDED BY MR. PARADY TO SEND A LETTER SUPPORTING THE OPEN SPACE COMMISSION'S PLAN TO SUBMIT A GRANT APPLICATION TO THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT FOR THE PURCHASE OF THE KRONBERG PARCEL AS OPEN SPACE. UNANIMOUS AYE.

D. P&Z request for business use of farm – BoHo Farm – Mr. Casner reported that BoHo farm had submitted an application to the Planning & Zoning Commission to be designated a small business and that he had participated in a site visit to the farm.

Mr. Ventres noted that BoHo is a small 4+ acre farm that would like to cater occasional small public events. He and Mr. Casner noted that the property is very well maintained and they feel it is an asset to the community. There was a general discussion about the farm and its proposed public events and it was the consensus of the Commissioners to support BoHo Farm's small business application.

E. Discussion – Develop a list of local businesses to make available for business purposes – Mr. Casner noted the need for a comprehensive list of Town businesses. Ms. Pszczolkowski stated that she is working on a list for the EDC website and there was a general discussion about categorizing the comprehensive list by sub-categories such as Bricks & Mortar, Services, Home Businesses, etc.

Ms. Pszczolkowski stated she would reach out to the High School to solicit student volunteers to help with the project for community service credit. Mr. Parady noted that Mr. Davis had also been working on compiling a list of Town businesses and Ms. Pszczolkowski agreed to follow-up with him.

F. Business of the Month – Ms. Pszczolkowski confirmed that the Businesses of the Month through November have been identified. There was a general discussion regarding several other potential businesses for nomination.

Mr. Casner suggested a representative from the East Haddam Business Association would like to participate in the Business of the Month photos. It was agreed that, as president of the EHBA, Jess Stone would be first choice for photos; however, given her tight schedule, Mr. Robidoux agreed to identify an alternate representative.

VI. Public Comment

There was no public comment discussed at the meeting.

VII. Open Discussion – EDC Commissioners

Mr. Parady reported that the New Library Building Committee would like to compile a list of Town-owned properties as potential sites for a new library. He provided some background on why the project is being considered and reviewed several possible locations the Committee has identified. He asked the Commissioners to consider the Committee's request and provide him with any suggestions.

VIII. Adjournment

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:43 pm.

Recorded

Respectfully Submitted,
Sharon Wheeler