

East Haddam Economic Development Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
March 5, 2020

Attending: J. Albuquerque; D. Bergeron; R. Casner; J. Fennema; M. Robidoux; J. Stone
Absent: R. Parady;

Guests: I. Haines; W. McEnery; W. Melon; R. Smith

- I. Call to Order - Mr. Casner called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.
- II. Attendance – Mr. Casner sat Ms. Stone for Mr. Parady
- III. Approval of Minutes

Regular Meeting – January 2, 2020

The Commissioners reviewed the minutes of the regular meeting of January 2, 2020.

MOTION MADE BY MR. ROBIDOUX, SECONDED BY MR. FENNEMA, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF JANUARY 2, 2020 AS WRITTEN. MR. ALBUQUERQUE ABSTAINED FROM THE VOTE AND THE MOTION PASSED BY A MAJORITY OF AYES.

Regular Meeting – February 6, 2020

The Commissioners reviewed the minutes of the regular meeting of February 6, 2020.

MOTION MADE BY MR. ROBIDOUX, SECONDED BY MR. FENNEMA, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF FEBRUARY 6, 2020 AS WRITTEN. MR. ALBUQUERQUE ABSTAINED FROM THE VOTE AND THE MOTION PASSED BY A MAJORITY OF AYES.

IV. Old Business

A. Status Reports

1. EDC Chairman Update

a. Goodspeed Landing – Old Town Office Site

Mr. Casner reported that the East Haddam Revitalization Committee (EHRC) granted the preferred developer of the old Town Office Site an extension to April 29th for the submission of their proposed plan. He advised that he would provide copies to the EDC board members as soon as he can so that they can review the proposal and submit any comments, concerns, questions to the EHRC.

b. River Valley Five Town EDC

Mr. Casner asked Economic Development Administrator Haines to provide an update. She reported that the Town of Essex recently appointed a new representative to the group. She stated that they have been working with a graphic designer, who offered their services for free, to develop a logo for 5-town EDC that will be used on the Explore CT Shoreline website. In response to a question, she advised that the group's next meeting is scheduled for 8:30 p.m. on March 19th. There was a brief discussion regarding the five towns' representation on the website.

c. Moodus Center

Mr. Casner reported that a sub-committee of EDC and Planning & Zoning Commission has been established to identify potential improvements to Moodus Center. He noted environmental problems are challenging but the sub-committee will work on esthetic improvements for the area. He said he will coordinate with P&Z to schedule an initial meeting. He responded to several questions from the Commissioners and Mr. Casner reviewed the goals of the sub-committee.

d. Milone & MacBroom contract – Review cost for BOF approval

Mr. Casner reported that Ms. Haines and he attended the March 5th Board of Selectmen's meeting and provided a presentation on developing plans for a bike/walking path in the Four-Corners area. He noted that one of the Select people had not been present at the meeting so he and Ms. Haines will attend the March 19th meeting to re-do the presentation for the full Board and request a recommendation from the Board of Selectmen to request funding from the Board for Finance for the project.

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

- The Select People have spent a good deal of time working on the Town's 2020/2021 budget.
- The Johnsonville bridge improvements are moving forward.
- An updated proposal for repairs to Neptune Road came in at approximately \$600,000.00 and he expects work to begin in July.
- Planned repairs to the Hemlock Valley bridge, East Shore Drive and Mitchell Road
- The Town's 2019-2020 tree removal budget has been expended but emergency situations will be addressed. He will request the BOF reassign the surplus in the snow removal budget to tree removal.
- EDC has a balance in the 2019-2020 budget of \$1,800.00 for printing.

Mr. Smith responded to several questions from the Commissioners. He confirmed that several improvements to the Transfer Station, including re-routing traffic flow, are included in the upcoming budget proposal. He reviewed several of the planned projects as well as his discussions with the local haulers.

Mr. Smith provided additional details regarding the Town's plan and budget for removing dead/damaged trees.

3. Economic Development Administrator Report

a. Tax Incentive Plan

Mr. Casner reported that Ms. Haines looked into enhancing the Tax Incentive Plan; however, she found that no additional expansion would be allowed under the current State Statutes. He responded to questions from the Commissioners and noted that there is little awareness of the program and Ms. Stone recommended creating an attractive brochure outlining the benefits of the Plan and how to apply.

Ms. Haines reported that she is working on updating the 2020 Visitors' Guide and it should be ready to be printed soon. She responded to several questions from the Commissioners.

4. Tourism Committee

There was no new update on this agenda item.

5. EDC/PZC Sub-Committee

a. New Business District on Lower Town Street (Route 82)

This agenda item was discussed during the EDC Chairman's update and is covered in the minutes above.

6. East Haddam Business Association

Ms. Stone reported on the activities of the East Haddam Business Association and noted that the spring Celebrate East Haddam is scheduled for May 30th at Heritage Park. She stated that they hope to hold the next Business Expo in the Municipal Office Building on the last Tuesday of October.

7. Moodus Improvement Sub-Committee

This agenda item was discussed during the EDC Chairman's update and is covered in the minutes above.

B. Proposed Expansion of the industrial area in the IG zone

Mr. Casner stated that this item is currently being tabled and will be removed from future agendas.

V. New Business

A. Business of the Month – Nominations and Vote

Mr. Casner advised that EMP Apparel has closed their shop in Moodus and is transitioning to a home business. The Commissioners discussed several businesses and nominated Maus and Son as the April Business of the Month to replace EMP Apparel until that business is settled as a home business.

MOTION MADE BY MS. STONE, SECONDED BY MR. ALBUQUERQUE, TO PRESENT THE "APRIL 2020 BUSINESS OF THE MONTH" AWARD TO MAUS & SON, INC. UNANIMOUS AYE.

B. Chatham Health District review

Mr. Casner advised that he has received input that the Town has not had consistent representation from Chatham Health and that there has been some problems with personal interactions. Mr. Smith advised that a new agent was recently assigned to East Haddam. Mr. Casner stated he would invite the Chatham Health District Director and the Town's new agent to a future meeting.

Mr. Smith stated that CHD is doing an excellent job regarding keeping the Town administrators advised regarding COVID-19.

C. Transfer Station update

This agenda item was discussed earlier in the meeting during the Selectman's update and is reported on in the minutes above.

D. EDC Budget Request – Engineering fees for infrastructure in the commercial zones, water/sewer, South Town Street improvements

Mr. Smith advised that EDC's request for engineering fees was removed from the budget because the sewer issue has been studied several times and new studies would be under the purview of the Water Pollution Control Authority. Mr. Casner stated a good amount of the requested funds were for the proposed bike/walking path project. Mr. Smith advised him the request could be re-presented to the Board of Finance.

E. Swingbridge Walkway Grant – EDC's shovel-ready sidewalk projects in the Village & Four Corners

In response to a question from Mr. Casner, Mr. Smith advised that Haddam may submit the BUILD grant for the Swingbridge walkway with assistance from East Haddam.

F. Membership

Mr. Casner introduced two individuals who have expressed an interest in serving on the Economic Development Commission.

Messrs. William McEnery and Wilson Melon provided information on their backgrounds and interest in serving on EDC. They responded to several questions from the Commissioners.

MOTION MADE BY MR. BERGERON, SECONDED BY MR. ROBIDOUX, TO RECOMMEND TO THE BOARD OF SELECT PEOPLE THAT JESS STONE'S MEMBERSHIP ON THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION BE CHANGED FROM ALTERNATE TO REGULAR. UNANIMOUS AYE.

MOTION MADE BY MR. FENNEMA, SECONDED BY MS. STONE, TO RECOMMEND TO THE BOARD OF SELECT PEOPLE THAT MR. WILLIAM MCENERY AND MR. WILSON MELON, BE APPOINTED AS ALTERNATE MEMBERS OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION. UNANIMOUS AYE.

VI. Public Comment

There was no public comment discussed at the meeting.

VII. Open Discussion – EDC Commissioners

There was no additional discussion by the Commissioners.

VIII. Adjournment

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:36 pm.

Recorded

Respectfully Submitted,
Sharon Wheeler