East Haddam Economic Development Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
May 15, 2025

Attending: R. Casner, W. McEnery, D. Merrick, R. Parady, M. Robidoux, H. Scully, R. Scully
Absent: J. Stone
Guests: Economic Development Administrator Lauren Pszczolkowski

1. Call to order - Mr. Casner called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

2. Attendance – Mr. Casner sat Mr. Scully for Ms. Stone.

3. Approval of Minutes – Special Meeting of April 23, 2025

   Mr. Casner called the Board's attention to the minutes of the Special Meeting of April 23, 2024. Mr. Robidoux and Mr. Casner noted the following typographical errors:

   - Agenda Item 4B – revise the last paragraph as follows: "…*he would like to* have *the new versions printed by July 1st*".
   - Agenda Item 4C – Old Business – Sub-Committee Reports: item b. incorrectly referenced Route 8 and should be corrected to Route 82.

   MOTION MADE BY MR. MERRICK, SECONDED BY MR. ROBIDOUX, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF APRIL 23, 2025 AS AMENDED. MR. PARADY ABSTAINED FROM THE VOTE AND THE MOTION PASSED BY A MAJORITY OF AYES.

4. Old Business

   A. EDC Chairman Update – Mr. Casner reported that the first Heritage Market went very well and had a good number of participants. He asked Mr. Robidoux to provide the Commissioners with an update on meeting he had attended.

      Mr. Robidoux reported the following:

      - He had attended the Middlesex Chamber of Commerce's May EDC meeting and there was a presentation by Advanced CT. He stated that Advanced CT is the state's redesigned Department of Economic and Community Development, is based out of New Haven, and one of its goals is to attract new businesses to the state and pair them up with available properties in CT cities and towns.

        Mr. Robidoux also stated that the presenter advised that CT had been ranked #15 on US News & Reports' list of best "Business Environment" states. He stated that First Selectwoman Haines, Mr. Casner, and he have scheduled a meeting with during the second week of June with representatives from Advanced CT and the Middlesex

Chamber of Commerce. There was a general discussion about the business environment in CT.

- He advised that the Council of Governments (COG) will be holding a round table discussion on the issue of brownfields.

Mr. Casner thanked Mr. Robidoux for his report. He advised that COG is also managing the hazard waste drop-off locations for this area. He advised that COG provides a sheet listing drop-off dates, locations, and information on what can be disposed of at the sites.

B. Economic Development Administrator Report – Ms. Pszczolkowski reported the following:

- The first East Haddam Heritage Market went very well and the theme for the June 4th market will be Kidpreneur Day & Lemonade Stand Extravaganza. She noted that, since the schools don't let out until 3pm, the hours for the June event will be changed to 4pm to 7pm.

- The Christmas stars still need to be moved and she stated it would be helpful if EDC had a shed in the Village to store Christmas decorations, etc.

- The Visitors' Guides need to be updated with better photos. Mr. Robidoux stated he had received a quote of $3,500.00 to produce 5000 guides; however, he will have to verify if that price includes design work. Mr. Casner stated that there are funds in EDC's FY2024-2025 budget to print the Guides and confirmed that, if EDC has a contract in place before the end of this fiscal year, he believes they can pay for the project out of this year's budget.

C. Sub-Committee Reports

a. EDC/PZC – Moodus Development Plan – Parking Regulations – Mr. Casner reiterated that there will be a Public Hearing scheduled for late May or early June where the contractor will present the proposed Moodus Development Plan to the public and solicit feedback.

b. Route 82 Bike Path/Zoning Uses in the Area – Mr. Casner advised that Freeman Companies has been surveying the areas for the bike path and stated that the preference, at this time, is to have the path entirely on the east side of the road.

i. Overlay Zone Regulations – Mr. Casner reported that Land Use Administrator Ventres had informed him that the Planning & Zoning Commission will be making revisions to the Zoning Regulations in the near future and recommended coordinating the inclusion of the Overly Zone Regulations for the same time.

D. Black Birch Golf Course – Mr. Casner reported that the Town expects to get information on whether there is additional property that could be included with the purchase of the golf course. He stated that the Town needs to decide if it would be worth investing in another appraisal. There was a general discussion about the current development of the property around the golf course.

5. New Business

A. Membership Appointments – Mr. Casner noted that Ryan Scully's appointment with EDC will be up for renewal on June 25th. In response to Mr. Casner's inquiry, Mr. Scully confirmed that he would like to be reappointed to the EDC.

MOTION MADE BY MR. ROBIDOUX, SECONDED BY MR. MERRICK, TO RECOMMEND TO THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN THAT RYAN SCULLY'S TERM AS AN ALTERNATE ON THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION BE RENEWED FOR ANOTHER 5-YEAR TERM. UNANIMOUS AYE.

B. Business(es) of the Month – Ms. Pszczolkowski advised that she is extremely busy with end-of-year school events at work and that Ms. Scully has volunteered to help out with the Business of the Month photos.

Mr. Merrick stated he will confirm with the owner of ALD Auto Repair in Moodus that they would like to be a recipient of the award. Ms. Scully stated she will schedule a photo session with Home Town Market. There was a general discussion about the types of Business of the Month photos to publish in the East Haddam News.

6. Public Comment

There was no public comment raised at the meeting.

7. Open Discussion – EDC Commissioners

In response to a question from Mr. McEnery, Mr. Casner advised that the increase to the Redevelopment Agency's FY2025-2025 budget is due, in part, to the need to test for and clean-up any hazardous waste on the Town's property in the Village as well as the removal of the old garage.

There was a general discussion regarding several vacant businesses in Town.

In response to questions raised by Mr. Merrick, Mr. Casner advised that any concerns about drivers' ed programs and educating new drivers about the potential hazards of risky driving should be referred to the Boards of Selectmen and Education.

8. Adjournment

MOTION MADE BY MR. ROBIDOUX, SECONDED MR. MERRICK, TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. UNANIMOUS AYE.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
/s/
Sharon Wheeler
Recording Secretary