

**TOWN OF HADDAM
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
COMMUNITY CENTER
7 CANDLEWOOD HILL ROAD, HIGGANUM, CT 06441
WEDNESDAY, 10 FEBRUARY 2016
UNAPPROVED MINUTES
*Subject to Approval by the Commission***

ATTENDANCE

X	Kate Anderson
X	Stephen Bayley
X	Joe Bergin
A	Dan Dachelet
X	Mike Farina
X	Mike Fortuna, Chairman
X	Lori Maggi
X	Cindy McNeil Sola
X	Ed Vynalek
X	Lizz Milardo, First Selectman
X	Liz West Glidden, Town Planner
X	Bunny Hall Batzner, Recording Clerk

1. Call to Order

Mr. Fortuna called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

2. Attendance

Attendance was taken.

3. Approval of Agenda

Approved as submitted.

4. Public Comment

None.

5. Old Business

a. Bridge Replacement Project – Higganum Center

Mr. Fortuna reported that the project appears to be status quo, Depot Road is open, that he hasn't heard of any complaints, and that temporary flex rail has been installed to protect the new bridge abutments. Mr. Farina asked why pressed concrete was used rather than stone. Mr. Fortuna stated DOT doesn't use stone.

Ms. Anderson asked if the "No Right on Red" sign was still posted at the intersection noting that she was nearly hit by someone turning right from Route 154 onto Route 81. Mr. Fortuna stated the sign is still posted.

b. C-PACE – Follow Up

Mrs. Milardo reported that she spoke to the C-PACE representative; and that Alice Zanelli, Assistant to the First Selectman, has not seen the document. Mr. Fortuna stated that the contract needs to be signed; and that he will provide another copy of the document prior to Wednesday, 17 February 2016.

c. Local Bidder Preference – Follow Up

Mr. Fortuna reported that it's unclear if this matter had been voted on by the Board of Selectmen (BOS). Mr. Fortuna will provide a copy of the document to Mrs. Milardo. Mrs. Glidden stated that Attorney Mike Wells, former town counsel, did review, but didn't endorse the document; and that it didn't go before the BOS. Mrs. Milardo reported that Mrs. Zanelli research the BOS minutes and there was nothing within the minutes concerning this matter.

d. Budget

Mr. Fortuna reported that the budget for the upcoming fiscal year is set. Mrs. Milardo stated that she believes there is \$2,000 for marketing and \$500 for a business meet and greet.

6. New Business

a. Welcome New Members – Kate Anderson and Lori Maggi

Mr. Fortuna welcomed Ms. Anderson and Mrs. Maggi to the Commission. Mrs. Maggi and Ms. Anderson introduced themselves.

b. Discuss Joint Meeting with East Haddam EDC and Haddam EDC held on 4 February 2016

Mr. Fortuna reported that the meeting was very well attended – a lot of business owners, Essex Stream Train, Goodspeed, Nine Town Transit, Middlesex Chamber of Commerce, and River COG. Mr. Fortuna also reported that the general tenor in the room was very nice in that there's a benefit in working together as opposed to individually in terms of developing Tylerville and East Haddam Village. Mr. Fortuna stated that River COG introduced trends in economic development which relates to what's currently being discussed.

Mr. Fortuna reported that the Essex Stream Train will be running the train up to Tylerville on a fairly regular schedule which will open up opportunities for tourism and business development. Mrs. Maggi stated the dinner train currently comes up to Tylerville. Mr. Bergin stated that more locomotives have been added to their fleet and they want to bring more trains up. A brief discussion followed in regard to the need for water for the engines to run.

Mr. Fortuna reported that five subcommittees have been set up – 1) tourism, 2) infrastructure, 3) planning, 4) grants and funding, and 5) communications – and that five, but no more than nine people should be on each subcommittee. Mr. Fortuna stated that a part of the subcommittees' duties will be to research what has been done in the past. Current subcommittee members: Tourism – Mrs. Sola, Mr. Farina, Maryan and Jeff Muthersbaugh, owners of the Nehemiah Brainerd House Bed and Breakfast, as well as some folks from East Haddam. Planning – Mr. Bergin. Communication – Mr. Bayley. Mr. Fortuna stated that the goal of the communication committee is to make sure people are aware of the meetings and to also disseminate information, such as minutes, subcommittee reports, concepts, etc., as it becomes available to both EDCs.

Mr. Vynalek asked if the minutes from 10-15 years ago when Keith Ainsworth, former First Selectman, was in office, could be reviewed as there was a lot of activity towards tourism at that time. Mr. Fortuna stated meeting minutes should be available. Mrs. Batzner stated that she will look in the Town Clerk's Office. Mrs. Milardo stated that Ann Huffstetler, former Town Clerk, shredded a number of old minutes.

Mrs. Maggi asked how the meeting was publicized as she was unaware of it until that night. Mr. Fortuna stated that the meeting came together quickly and notice was posted.

Mr. Fortuna stated that the grants and funding subcommittee will need one someone who knows the ins and outs of crowd sourcing, state grants, private funding, etc. Discussion followed in what private monies may help with and the need for infrastructure for both towns. Mrs. Maggi asked why Haddam didn't do their part with the (STEAP) funding. Mrs. Glidden stated that Chester brought the water line up to Denlar Drive (covered by STEAP funds), but that Haddam's efforts were stalled as the previous administration was looking for additional reports to identify a responsible party (report was inconclusive). Mrs. Glidden explained that the \$500,000 was only a portion of a \$4-5 million water project. Mrs. Maggi stated that the money will now be used for something else and questioned if there wasn't something the money can be used for in Tylerville. Mrs. Milardo stated that due to the funds having not been used, the state will take them back; however, the funds were reallocated for a shovel ready project such as the proposed realignment of Candlewood Hill Road and the Higganum Green, a shovel ready project. Mrs. Milardo noted that due to having not used the funds, this also prevented the town from obtaining additional STEAP funds. Mrs. Milardo stated that she intends to reapply for funding for water in Tylerville.

Mr. Farina asked about recent federal funds that Durham received. Mrs. Milardo stated that Durham qualified federally for a super fund and that she has been meeting with bond counsel and financial advisors to figure out the best way to pay for this. Mrs. Milardo stated that East Haddam's need for water is a positive. Mrs. Milardo explained that she is meeting with various departments to figure out how to rectify the matter and that it will need to go to referendum. Mr. Fortuna stated cost sharing will assist. Mrs. Milardo stated that Mark Walter, First Selectman, Town of East Haddam, is very interested in the project. Mr. Bayley noted that East Haddam's sewer system is underutilized. Discussion followed.

Mrs. Milardo gave an overview of the bonding process and the options available. Mrs. Milardo stated that some research needs to be done as well as discussions among the interested parties. Mrs. Maggi asked what the obstacles may be at the town meeting. Mrs. Milardo stated people don't want their taxes raised. Mrs. Milardo also stated that the state can make (force) the town clear up the water; therefore, the town can either do the work or it could be a unilateral decision. Discussion followed in regard to the need to educate the residents.

Mr. Farina asked if Tylerville and Higganum Center could be bundled together in terms of funding for water and sewer. Mrs. Milardo discussed the bundling of several projects – water/sewer/roads – which would require a town meeting and then a referendum. Mrs. Milardo also discussed road issues that can be handled in house rather than bonding. Mr. Bayley stated this would be a good time to pave due to the lower cost of oil and low interest rates. Mr. Fortuna stated that in 1999 a study was done in regard to the feasibility of coupling Tylerville and Higganum and the costs associated with it and water rights – Higganum is not a part of CT Water Co.

Discussion followed in regard to educating the town's residents of the importance/benefits of infrastructure and the need for better communication. Mrs. Glidden noted that it was never Chester's intent to extend the water line up to the Haddam town line. Mr. Fortuna noted that Chester helped Haddam by getting the grant and extending the water line as far as they did.

Mr. Fortuna stated that over the next month there will be a review of the subcommittees to make sure there are enough people on them. Anyone interested in signing up for any of the subcommittees, let Mr. Fortuna know and he'll work with Bob Casner, Chairman, East Haddam EDC, in putting the list together.

c. Discuss Joint Meeting with East Haddam EDC and Haddam EDC Tourism Subcommittee held on 9 February 2016

Mrs. Sola reported that the set up for Spring and Fall Weekend events were discussed with dates needing to be selected by a specific date in February in order to be included in the CT Visitors Guide. Spring Weekend – 30 April and 1 May 2016 (same weekend as Haddam's town wide tag sale and the Taste of East Haddam) and Fall Weekend – 1 and 2 October 2016. Mrs. Sola explained the purpose of

the Visitors Guide. Mr. Bergin asked if the event will be organized as one event for two towns with Mrs. Sola responding yes. Mrs. Sola reviewed a letter to businesses pertaining to a brochure. Ms. Anderson stated the letter is overwhelming. A brief discussion followed in regard to obtaining business emails with Mrs. Milardo stating that Haddam has an intern who can assist with this matter. Mrs. Sola stated that an East Haddam/Haddam brochure needs to be printed with discussion following in regard to cost and number to be printed. Mrs. Maggi asked if there's a cost to the businesses if they want to place an ad. Mrs. Sola stated she did not believe so as nothing was mentioned to that affect. Mr. Bayley asked if Deb Mathiasen, East Haddam EDC, could clarify. Discussion followed in regard to what would be required to include Haddam within the brochure – photos, key person from the Haddam EDC to communicate with the tourism subcommittee in terms of Haddam approval. Mrs. Sola will clarify.

Mrs. Sola reported that the tourism committee will meet again on Monday, 29 February 2016, 7:00 p.m., at the Nehemiah Brainerd House Bed and Breakfast, 988 Saybrook Road, Haddam. Mrs. Milardo and Ms. Anderson both volunteered assistance in regard to the printing.

Discussion returned to the business letter containing too much information, the need for following up with the businesses, and the time to roll out the Haddams logo. Ms. Anderson stated she has a connection that may be able to assist with the logo.

Discussion followed in regard to what type of events will be taking place during these weekends. Mrs. Milardo asked about having the kite flying contest on one of these dates. Mrs. Sola stated perhaps some of the businesses will do a wine and/or beer tasting. Discussion followed in regard to food trucks, working with the stream train and water taxiing the people up to the Meadows for the kite flying event, a car show, and hot air balloons event.

Mr. Vynalek asked if there has been any discussion pertaining to Johnsonville, East Haddam. Mr. Fortuna stated there has been nothing during the recent meetings.

Discussion followed at length in regard to an official town email and how Mrs. Sola would retrieve them.

7. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: Steve Bayley moved to approve the 13 January 2016 minutes as submitted. Mike Fortuna second. Motion carried unanimously.

8. Adjournment

MOTION: Steve Bayley moved to adjourn. Lori Maggi second. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:37 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bunny Hall Batzner

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Recording Clerk

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, 9 March 2016.