

**TOWN OF HADDAM
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
COMMUNITY CENTER
7 CANDLEWOOD HILL ROAD, HIGGANUM, CT 06441
WEDNESDAY, 10 AUGUST 2022
UNAPPROVED MINUTES
*Subject to Approval by the Commission***

ATTENDANCE

X	Kate Anderson, Chairman
A	Cortney Emschwiler Swokla
X	Mike Farina
X	David Law
A	Mark Lundgren
A	Robin Munster
A	John Pember
A	Doreen Staskelunas, Secretary
X	Bunny Hall Batzner, Recording Clerk

1. Call to Order

Ms. Anderson, chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:41 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

The pledge was recited.

3. Approval of Agenda

MOTION: Mike Farina motioned to approve the 10 August 2022 agenda as submitted. David Law second. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Public Comment

There was no public in attendance.

5. New Business

a. Farmers' Market Committee

Ms. Anderson reported Market traffic has been low and believes it is due to a few factors – very hot summer, COVID restrictions being lifted and people doing other activities, and the Cromwell farmers' market being held at the same time as Haddam's. A subcommittee, not related to EDC, is being formed to brainstorm and see if tasks can be divided up. Anyone interested in being a part of this subcommittee can reach out to Kristy Benson-Amarante, Market Master, for more information. **REMINDER:** The Market will be closed on the following Fridays, 27 August 2022 and 3 September 2022, and will resume on Friday, 10 September 2022.

b. Updates

Ms. Anderson reported on the following:

\$760,000 Grant – The Town will be receiving \$760,000 in state grants that will be divided up between Higganum Cove - \$480,000 and improvements to HES - \$280,000. The Board of Selectmen (BOS) met

Monday, 8 August 2022, and discussed this matter. Both items will be going before a town meeting and it will be laid out how the money will be spent.

New Roof and Intergenerational Playground at HES – The plan is to put on a whole new roof and other site improvements as well as clean up the playground.

Development of Higganum Cove – A master plan has been developed indicating where the first places to spend money will take place.

Scovil Hoe – The Town and the developer have executed the contracts. Awaiting the State of Connecticut to sign off on the documents.

Rossi Property – The Rossis and the Town each have their own engineers and both companies have developed a cost estimate on how to best remediate the site. The two firms are currently rectifying their differences. There is one particular area that's accounting for the biggest price difference. The Town's engineer believes the area should be paved over and capped and the Rossis' engineer feels additional data may show the area does not need to be paved. A town meeting should be held in early fall.

Haddam Center Sidewalk Project – Moving along with no issues.

Beaver Meadow Road Culvert Project – Project in a holding pattern as they are waiting for the utilities to be moved. Project will not be completed in time for the start of school.

Paving of Roads – Laurel Heights (drainage work also), Thayer Road (from Route 154 near Seven Falls to Thayer Road Extension; watch out for raised catch basins), and Maple Avenue East will be paved. Calliari, Parsonage, and Depot Roads are also to be done, but no time frame at this time.

HES – Lease of Gym to Basketball Camp – The Town is leasing the gym to Homefield Sports for \$2,000 a month.

Hope Wellness Center, 7 Island Dock Road – Site Plan Modifications – Received a Certificate of Need from the Dept. of Public Health (DPH). In regard to the site plan modifications, Mr. Farina stated due to financial constraints, the new owners asked P&Z to have the following items eliminated: pool, stone wall, perimeter fence, gate and pillars, tennis court, gazebo, trellis, storage, and greenhouse. P&Z approved the request.

c. Discussion on Volunteer Planning for Town Sponsored Events

Ms. Anderson reported on the following:

River Days – Saturday, 1 October 2022. Working on submitting the application to DEEP. Still need to email town organizations to see if they would like a booth. Mr. Farina stated there has been a change in leadership for the Knights of Columbus and there is interest in participating at River Days; however, the Knights will be assisting with parking at the Durham Fair and may not be able to do both events.

Fall Festival – Mr. Farina stated he spoke to Mr. Lundgren about the tractor parade and Mr. Lundgren will be going to the State of Connecticut to obtain a permit to close the road. Mr. Farina also stated St. Peter's has given permission for the use of their parking lot. Saturday, 29 October 2022 - Tractor Parade, Trunk or Treat, concert by the band Rocklanding, kids festival, as well as Grim's Haunted House (also Friday, 28 October, and Sunday, 30 October).

d. Local Business – Updates

Ms. Anderson reported on the following:

Citizens Bank – Activity has been taking place at the former Citizens Bank. Unclear what is transpiring. **Oh, Fudge!** – Still doing great! **Brewery, Saybrook Road, Higganum** – Still scheduled to move in next to Dunkin Donuts. Mr. Warner has reached out to the new tenant. **Bridge Closure, C.A.N.E.L. Local 700 Union Hall and Higganum Veterinary Clinic** – Mr. Law asked who is responsible for repairing the bridge – town or state. Mrs. Batzner stated it's a private property bridge and believes both parties will need to pay for repairs/replacement. **Merchant House** – An individual who is interested in radio controlled cars and trains will be setting up in the building. **Higgies and The Pilot House** – Unclear the circumstances for their closures; however, everyone felt these two businesses needed to be reopened and how vital they had been in the past and could be again to the town.

e. Budget and 2022/2023 Goals and Strategic Plan

Ms. Anderson stated since a new fiscal year has started, she would like the Commission to contemplate how to spend the budget and what they would like to accomplish. Item to be discussed at the September meeting when a full Commission is in attendance.

- **Seasonal Banners** – Mr. Farina asked if the Commission retained any of last year's funds for the purchase of seasonal banners or flags. Ms. Anderson stated the money was returned. Ms. Anderson also stated she received an invoice from DEEP for River Days 2021.

- **Call for Volunteers** - Ms. Anderson reported there are some openings on the Commission and will ask that another announcement be placed on the Town's website. Ms. Anderson recommends anyone who is interested in becoming a member to attend a meeting to see what the Commission is about.

- **Haddam Meadows** - Mr. Law stated Park and Rec is aware of the conversation that took place last month regarding a potential change in location for the fireworks display. Mr. Law also stated Jason Lonergan, Park and Rec, thought that Haddam should propose taking over the northern end of the Meadows (everything north of the left hand parking lot) and make it a park for Haddam (that the Town would control). Ms. Anderson stated there have been a number of complaints pertaining to noise and rowdiness at the Meadows. DEEP and the State Police have been contacted.

- **Higganum Cove at the Falls** – Receiving complaints about inappropriate behavior taking place on the falls side of the Cove. A domestic incident took place a couple of weeks ago, resulting in a woman being stabbed, and the State Police were called. Mr. Law stated the kids from town do not want to go in the area of the falls because of the character of the people using the area. A brief discussion. The resident troopers will be going through more frequently. Ms. Anderson stated with Selectman Sean Moriarty's police background she would like to know his take on how to make the area more safe/peaceful.

- **Seven Falls** – Mr. Farina asked why the park has been closed. A brief discussion followed with it being noted that this is a state park.

6. Old Business

a. Tylerville Construction Planning Updates – Continued Discussion

Ms. Anderson reported on the following: **Swing Bridge** – Although they will start doing some work, there will be no work taking place this year that will impact traffic. American Bridge will be staging on the property behind Dunkin Donuts. Still finalizing the entire construction schedule; and once finalized, it will be made public. **Rotaries/Roundabouts** – Have been delayed by at least a year as DOT is designing a parking lot for the Clark Creek Brook Falls. **Brookes Court Apartments** – Pre-leasing to begin in September; may possibly be move in ready by the end of this year or very early next year. A community manager has been hired. **Bridge Road Apartments** – No update.

b. Articles for HK News

Discussion tabled.

c. Website Updates

Discussion tabled.

7. Chairman's Report

Ms. Anderson reported on the following: **Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) Grant** – Town submitted for another grant; however, it was modified due to the \$480,000 grant the Town had already received. The request is for \$445,000 to help with the multi-generational park, sidewalks from HES down to the Center, and the purchase of a generator at HES to make it a shelter area. **Community Septic** – Bob McGarry, First Selectman, has met with DOT and DPH. DOT now agreeable to the septic lines running under Routes 154 and 81; however, the DPH still has some concerns that will need to be worked out. **Connecticut's Immunizer of the Year** – Greg McKenna, Nutmeg Pharmacy, was selected by the DPH as the Immunizer of the Year for his work on COVID. Only one person is awarded this honor each year. The award ceremony will take place at HES. Congratulations and thank you, Greg! **Health Fair** – Unclear whether this event will be held. A brief discussion followed.

8. Approval of Minutes – 12 January 2022, 8 June 2022, and 13 July 2022

Tabled.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:44 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bunny Hall Batzner

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Recording Clerk

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, 14 September 2022.