

**TOWN OF HADDAM
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
ONLINE VIA GOTOMEETING
WEDNESDAY, 10 JUNE 2020
APPROVED MINUTES
*Approved as Submitted at the 9 September 2020 Meeting***

ATTENDANCE

X	Prem Aithal, Vice Chairman
X	Kate Anderson, Chairman
A	Cortney Emschwiller Swokla
X	Mike Farina
X	David Law
X	Mark Lundgren
A	Cindy MacNeil Sola
A	Robin Munster
A	John Pember
A	Doreen Staskelunas, Secretary
X	Bob McGarry, First Selectman
X	Bunny Hall Batzner, Recording Clerk

1. Call to Order

Ms. Anderson, chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

The pledge was recited.

3. Approval of Agenda

Add: Guest Speaker – Kristy Benson as part of Higganum Farmers’ Market – Update.

MOTION: Mike Farina motioned to approve the 10 June 2020 agenda as amended. David Law second. Motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Anderson reminded everyone to state their name prior to speaking.

4. Public Comment

Ms. Anderson stated there has been no email correspondence and other than Ms. Benson and First Selectman Bob McGarry it didn’t appear that there was anyone else to comment.

5. Old Business

a. Higganum Farmers’ Market – Update – Guest Speaker – Kristy Benson

Mr. Aithal introduced Kristy Benson, Bittersweet Farm, Higganum, who has agreed to be the new Market Master for the Higganum Farmers’ Market. Mr. Aithal thanked Ms. Benson for serving in this capacity. Ms. Benson stated she’s excited about the upcoming market and that she has already phoned vendors.

The following items were discussed: **1) Start Date** - Market to tentatively start on Friday, 17 July 2020. Mr. Aithal has sent the date to the State with the possibility of opening a few weeks before as a soft opening depending on farm availability, safety aspects, etc.

2) Location - Best location for the market would be the Haddam Elementary School (HES) parking lot due to visibility and plenty of space for physical distancing as spacing is already laid out. Mr. Aithal asked Ms. Anderson the status of HES and if this option was viable. Ms. Anderson stated since the lease negotiation with Adelbrook has fallen through, she did not see a problem with using the property; and asked Mr. McGarry his opinion. Mr. McGarry stated there is no conflict at this time; and asked for details regarding traffic flow, parking, placement of vendors, etc. A rough draft sketch map was shown. Ms. Benson explained there would be 21 - 10 feet by 10 feet vendor spot with 6 feet distance along the front facing Route 154, bus lane - food trucks or foot traffic, parking in lower right hand lot, and potentially blocking off one of the exits to control vehicular traffic. Discussion followed in regard to trash cans, hand sanitizer being available, masks, and signup sheet.

3) Food Trucks and Health District – Mr. McGarry stated a food truck would need a health permit and would need to go through the Connecticut River Area Health District (CRAHD) if they do not have a permit. Ms. Benson asked about a vendor who sells a product that cannot be consumed as soon as it's purchased such as a bottle of olive oil. Mr. McGarry stated he doesn't believe the health inspector would need to be involved if people are purchasing a food that will be taken off the site; however, if it's a prepared food whether by a vendor or food truck that's intended to be eaten on site, a permit would be required. Ms. Benson spoke in regard to holding a wholesale food manufacturing license from the State of Connecticut, inspected through the State once a year, and that she doesn't need a health permit to operate in any district so long as she's selling bagged tea; however, if samples are offered, then a health permit for every district is required. Mr. McGarry recommended that any vendor that may fall within a gray area to contact the health district for clarification. Ms. Benson stated she did contact the health district but has yet to hear back. Mr. McGarry stated if there is no response within a reasonable amount of time, to contact him and he will reach out to the health district. The Town does not have an issue with food trucks being at the market.

4) Insurance - Every vendor has to have general liability or general and product liability insurance depending upon their product. Ms. Benson asked who would be listed as the Additionally Insured and who would be the contact. Mr. McGarry stated it would be the Town of Haddam. Ms. Anderson volunteered to be the contact if it needs to be someone from the Town. Mr. Law asked about an email account. Discussion followed in regard to using the HiggFarmersMarket@gmail.com. Mr. McGarry suggested the email not go to the Town as there may be questions that the Town could not answer and the Market is the one who needs to know that vendors have the appropriate insurance.

5) Use of HES – Inside Access – Ms. Benson asked how she can gain access to the building for the use of bathrooms, trash cans, etc. Ms. Anderson stated there is no way to cordon off portions of the school and stated the Community Center across the street may be a viable option. Mr. McGarry agreed with Ms. Anderson in regard to HES not being suitable for use and that the Community Center could be used, but didn't believe it had been used in the past. Discussion followed in regard to past use of the Community Center; rental of port-o-lets (Community Center may be the best option, but will need to look into it a bit more); the need to sanitize the bathrooms after each use; health, safety, and liability concerns; reducing market hours (not an option, not worth it to the vendors); reviewing guidelines for sanitation for public events; and pricing for port-o-lets.

6) Soliciting Volunteers and Email – Mr. Aithal asked about soliciting volunteers via email and not wanting to break protocol (unauthorized meeting). Ms. Anderson stated Mr. Aithal and Mrs. Swokla are a sub-committee of EDC and emailing between the two of them would not constitute a quorum of EDC. Mr. Aithal will discuss this topic with Mrs. Swokla and Ms. Benson next Monday, 15 June 2020. Ms. Anderson noted that Tim Teran has expressed interested in volunteering. Ms. Benson stated she believes only a handful of volunteers will be needed.

7) Marking Out Vendor Spaces – Ms. Benson asked the best option for marking out vendor spaces. Mr. McGarry stated if the markings are temporary – tape or chalk on pavement or tape or line marking paint on grass – he was o.k. with it, but nothing permanent such as paint on the pavement/other hard surfaces.

8) Advertising – Ms. Benson volunteered to put up signage and fliers. Ms. Anderson stated she can print out 8.5 inch by 11 inch fliers and there are change out lettering signs available. Mr. Aithal stated he believes he has some market signs as well. Ms. Anderson suggested a write up in the local newspapers and will do the write up. Ms. Anderson asked if there will be weekly Facebook posts outlining vendors. Ms. Benson stated yes, and asked if she could begin posting on the Facebook page. Ms. Anderson stated yes.

9) Local Businesses v. Outside Businesses - Mr. Law asked if there was a position on conflict with outside businesses coming into town v. local businesses and whether local businesses are being asked to participate in the market. Ms. Anderson stated it's only one night a week. Discussion followed in regard to businesses being mobile in order to work at the market.

10) Crossing Guard – A brief discussion followed in regard to whether a crossing guard will be needed to assist people in getting safely across the street.

11) Higgies Reopening – Mr. Law stated he saw a posting indicating Higgies would be reopening. Ms. Anderson stated she also saw it; and asked Mr. McGarry if he had information. Mr. McGarry stated he too saw the post, but had no additional information. Mr. McGarry recommended that Higgies be contacted about the market noting that it would not be a good idea to encourage people to walk up and down Route 154. Mr. McGarry suggested the health regulations should be reviewed to see if a stationary business can be mobile (will the stationary permit cover mobility). Mr. McGarry stated he and his wife, Vivienne, - Cold Goat Farm - will be happy to participate in the market.

12) Vendor Contact Information - Ms. Benson asked about two vendors – honey and bread - and how to contact them. A brief discussion followed and contact information provided.

13) Opening Date – Discussion followed in regard to possibly having an early opening of the market - Friday, 3 July 2020. Mr. Aithal noted he had already notified the State with an opening date of 17 July 2020 with the potential of one or two markets prior (no response from the State on the two earlier dates). Ms. Anderson asked about the holiday weekend and the potential for a lack of people. Ms. Benson stated in speaking to the vendors it was thought more people would be home. Mr. Lundgren stated Sycamore Farm would probably love to sell steaks. Mr. Aithal suggested the 3 July date not be advertised until it's clear from a safety standpoint that everything is in place. Everyone required to wear a mask and hand sanitizer needs to be available. Ms. Benson will provide a list of items needed.

14) Mowing of HES and Crossing Guard – Mr. McGarry stated Public Works should be on site to mow either this week or next week and then it will be the contracted landscaping firm's responsibility to maintain the lawn. Mr. McGarry recommended that Trooper D'Angelo be contacted in regard to the potential of placing a crossing guard on Route 154.

Ms. Anderson thanked Ms. Benson for all she has done thus far.

b. Mucket

Ms. Anderson reported due to the fiscal year ending at the end of the month, a purchase order would be needed in order to acquire the Mucket statues. A full size statue costs \$440 each plus shipping (based on quantity ordered).

Mr. Lundgren asked how many full size statues can be purchased at this time. Ms. Anderson stated she was thinking \$1,000 for two (2) statues plus shipping. Mr. Lundgren stated he was o.k. with that. A brief discussion followed in regard to what the EDC budget looks like and which line item the funding will come from (Mr. Law suggested the Marketing line item as it would be a promotional expense) and where the statues will go (one to the Nutmeg Pharmacy as Greg McKenna, owner, provided substantial seed money to get this project going and one on a town owned property, possibly the Higganum Green or the TOB).

MOTION: Mike Farina motioned to approve the requisition of a Purchase Order in the amount of \$1,000 for the purchase of two (2) full size Mucket statues plus shipping. Prem Aithal second. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. McGarry recommended the P.O. request be submitted quickly and the vendor will need to invoice quickly too.

Mr. Farina asked if the EDC Coordinator's position had been financed in the 2020-2021 budget. Ms. Anderson stated no, but EDC should have a healthy budget of about \$7,000.

c. COVID Support

Ms. Anderson reported that Mr. McGarry and Bill Warner, Town Planner, have been working with the local businesses. Ms. Anderson stated Pat's Dry Cleaner has closed. Mr. McGarry reported that Massage Therapy has also closed.

6. New Business

There was no new business to discuss at this time.

7. Chairman's Report

Ms. Anderson reported on the following: **Higgies** – Facebook posting indicating Higgies will be opening. It will make a lot of people happy if it does! **Family Fun Center** – To open in the other half of HK Fitness. **Bar/Restaurant, Former Hutch** – Facebook page indicates they are looking for bar and cook staff. **2020-2021 Budget** – The Board of Finance (BOF) held a public hearing on Tuesday, 9 June 2020, to finalize the budget. Happy to report there should be no mil increase. Grand List grew slightly. **Town Office Building (TOB), Reopening** – The TOB is slowly reopening. Dog licenses and Transfer Station passes can be purchased via mail.

8. Approval of Minutes

12 February 2020, 11 March 2020, 8 April 2020, and 13 May 2020 Minutes – The Commission agreed to table the approval of the minutes.

9. Adjournment

MOTION: Prem Aithal motioned to adjourn. Mark Lundgren second. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bunny Hall Batzner

Bunny Hall Batzner
Recording Clerk

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, 8 July 2020.