

**TOWN OF HADDAM
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
FORMER HADDAM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM
272 SAYBROOK ROAD, HIGGANUM, CT 06441
SPECIAL MEETING
WEDNESDAY, 4 OCTOBER 2023
UNAPPROVED MINUTES
*Subject to Approval by the Commission***

ATTENDANCE

X	Kate Anderson, Chairman
A	Kristy Benson Amarante
X	Curtis Browne (EDC and Subcommittee Member)
A	Cortney Emshwiller Swokla
X	Mike Farina (EDC and Subcommittee Member)
A	Mike Karam
X	David Law
X	John Pember (EDC and Subcommittee Member)
X	Doreen Staskelunas, Secretary
X	Bill Warner, AICP, Town Planner
X	Bunny Hall Batzner, Recording Clerk

1. Call to Order

Ms. Anderson, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Tabled.

3. Approval of Agenda

Ms. Anderson stated as this was a special meeting, the agenda could not be changed.

MOTION: Mike Farina motioned to approve the 4 October 2023 special meeting agenda as submitted. Doreen Staskelunas second. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Public Comment

There was no public in attendance.

5. Approval of Subcommittee Recommendations for Tylerville Business Interruption Loan Program Applications

Ms. Anderson thanked everyone for accommodating the meeting and recognizing that the Commission is moving quickly along to help the Tylerville businesses.

Ms. Anderson stated the subcommittee had met under executive session to review the applications thoroughly and to allow all confidential information to remain so. The subcommittee's recommendations for approval were reviewed.

Mr. Warner distributed a list of the motions made by the subcommittee after they came out of executive session to approve the different businesses requests. Mr. Warner noted that this matter will be referred to the Board of Selectmen (BOS). Ms. Anderson noted due to the holiday, the BOS will not meet until Tuesday, 10 October 2023

After reading the motion pertaining to Oh Fudge, Mr. Browne noted that the collateral has been approved. Prior to the vote, Mr. Warner stated the applicant is eligible for \$5,000 a month and their loss in three months has exceeded \$15,000. Mr. Law asked if the loan agreement is the Town's collateral. Mr. Warner stated the Town Attorney will provide an agreement that will outline the funds provided by the Town and what the applicant needs to do in return.

MOTION: Curtis Browne motioned to approve business interruption grant application submitted by Oh Fudge, 1588 Saybrook Road, in the amount of \$15,000 for the months of June, July, and August with the condition: 1. Execution of a loan agreement prepared by the Town Attorney with collateral as deemed sufficient. Doreen Staskelunas second. Motion carried unanimously.

Prior to the vote on the motion for Syed Sami/Ayesha Gas Station, Mrs. Staskelunas asked what information the subcommittee/Town would be waiting for. Mr. Warner stated no type of collateral was proposed, the application was incomplete, and it has been indicated that there are no additional business locations; however, there is significant information to the contrary and further discussion with the applicant is required. Mr. Law asked if there's a time limit, such as 30 days, to table a decision. Mr. Warner stated the applicant will be contacted tomorrow (Thursday, 5 October 2023). Mr. Warner advised the Commission that they and the subcommittee will have to come back again for the September and October losses. Mrs. Staskelunas asked if this applicant would be receiving any funding at this time. Mr. Warner stated no.

MOTION: Curtis Browne motioned to table business interruption grant application submitted by Syed Sami/Ayesha Gas Station, 1627 Saybrook Road, awaiting further information. Doreen Staskelunas second. Motion carried unanimously.

There was no discussion regarding the Subway/JK Bridge Group LLC application.

MOTION: Curtis Browne motioned to approve business interruption grant application submitted by Subway/JK Bridge Group LLC, 106 Bridge Road, in the amount of \$13,586 for the months of June, July, and August with the conditions: 1. Sales tax reports be submitted and 2. A loan agreement prepared by the Town Attorney is executed with collateral as deemed sufficient. Kate Anderson second. Motion carried unanimously.

Prior to the vote on Rivers Edge Home Center/J&L Milardo, LLC, Ms. Anderson asked if they did not want to apply for June. Mr. Warner stated their accountant did not submit a request for June and Mrs. Milardo has been contacted regarding the matter (she will be contacting her accountant). Mr. Warner stated Mrs. Milardo can include June, if needed, when she applies for September and October.

MOTION: Curtis Browne motioned to approve business interruption grant application submitted by Rivers Edge Home Center/J&L Milardo, LLC, 100 Bridge Road, in the amount of \$9,889 for the months of July and August with the condition: 1. A loan agreement prepared by the Town Attorney is executed with collateral as deemed sufficient. Mike Farina second. Motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Staskelunas asked what Middlesex County Revitalization Commission's award was. Mr. Warner stated they have not heard what the formal award was, noting that Bob McGarry, First Selectmen, is on that committee, but the maximum amount is \$25,000 and the Town is giving \$20,000. Therefore, if the applicant received \$20,000 from Middlesex County, the Town would not provide them with a loan unless they have losses exceeding \$25,000 then the Town would make up the difference.

MOTION: Curtis Browne motioned to approve a business interruption grant application submitted by Tony's Package Store, 95 Bridge Road, in the amount of \$15,000 for the months of June, July and August with the conditions: 1. A letter is submitted from accountant certifying the losses, 2. Execution of a loan agreement prepared by the Town Attorney with collateral as deemed sufficient, and 3. Adjustment of loan amount based on award from the Middlesex County Revitalization Commission as necessary. John Pember second. Motion carried unanimously.

Prior to the vote on River Valley Provisions, Mr. Law noted that the explanation is the same as the previous matter. There was no further discussion.

MOTION: Curtis Browne motioned to approve a business interruption grant application submitted by River Valley Provisions, 95 Bridge Road, in the amount of \$15,000 for the months of June, July and August with the conditions: 1. A letter is submitted from accountant certifying the losses, 2. Execution of a loan agreement prepared by the Town Attorney with collateral as deemed sufficient, and 3. Adjustment of loan amount based on award from the Middlesex County Revitalization Commission as necessary. John Pember second. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Browne read a motion of the subcommittee – *“Motion to refer business interruption grant application submitted by Town and Country, 1036 Saybrook Road, to the full Economic Development Committee for a waiver in accordance with Part 1 C of the Business Interruption Guidelines”* - asking EDC to consider providing a waiver to Town and Country.

Mr. Warner stated although Town and Country is outside the Tylerville Village District Zone, they applied for funding. Mr. Warner also stated the guidelines allow for the full EDC to grant a waiver if an applicant can prove that their losses are because of the bridge closure. Mr. Warner stated after the executive session, the subcommittee discussed the potential slippery slope of letting businesses in that are not within the Tylerville District; however, the guidelines do allow an applicant an opportunity to specifically show that they have lost funding due to the bridge closure.

Mr. Pember asked if the Commission could discuss what Town and Country may receive. Mr. Warner stated it would be best not to; and if the Commission were to approve the waiver, then the subcommittee would hold another executive session and vote on an application at that time.

For clarification, Ms. Anderson asked if the subcommittee's motion is asking EDC to approve a waiver for Town and Country as their application hasn't been reviewed at this time. Mr. Warner stated the motion is whether the Commission agrees to waive the guidelines for a business that is not within the Tylerville Village District.

Mr. Law stated the slippery slope is how many other businesses could be affected and apply. Mr. Pember stated anyone else outside of the district cannot apply because the deadline has passed. Mr. Farina stated the subcommittee did discuss this matter at length. Mrs. Staskelunas asked if there were any other businesses south of Bridge Road. A brief discussion followed.

Mr. Browne stated one of the notes on the application was the number of deliveries to clients on the East Haddam side. Ms. Anderson asked if the waiver had been drafted yet, what it would specifically say. Mr. Warner stated that EDC has the ability to waive the regulations to allow businesses outside of the Tylerville Village District to apply if they can demonstrate a loss due to the bridge closure. Mr. Warner clarified that the motion Mr. Browne read was a motion made by the subcommittee to EDC; and that a separate motion to waive the guidelines should be made by the Commission.

MOTION: David Law motioned to provide a waiver in accordance with Part 1C of the Tylerville Business Interruption Loan Program to Town and Country, 1036 Saybrook Road. Doreen Staskelunas second. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Browne referred the following motion made by the subcommittee – “*Motion to refer late submission of business interruption grant application submitted by Citgo, 1598 Saybrook Road, to the full Economic Development Committee and the Board of Selectman for a waiver in accordance with Part 2 C Waiver of Policy of the Business Interruption Guidelines*” - to the Commission for a vote.

Mr. Warner stated the policy outlines that applications would only be accepted during the month of September and this application came in late (received 2 October 2023). Mr. Warner noted that 29 September 2023 was a Friday and the office closed at noon; however, the applicant did not say he tried to submit on Friday only that he did not get the numbers on time. Mr. Warner stated the question is not whether the application was received on time, it is whether the Commission wants to entertain it or not.

Mr. Warner asked if the subcommittee members had any input. Mr. Browne stated the application was received beyond the deadline and that is why there are rules. Mr. Law asked when the applicant knew the process was available to him. Mr. Warner stated the application was hand delivered and he signed off on it on 25 August 2023. Mr. Pember stated there are approximately other 15 businesses that did not apply or did not make the deadline; therefore, if the Commission were to allow this application, it would potentially be opening the process up to the other businesses. Ms. Anderson stated a deadline is a deadline. Mr. Farina agreed noting that too much goodwill can backfire. Mr. Farina also noted that there are a core of businesses/people in Tylerville who communicate quite well

Ms. Anderson asked which gas station this was. Mr. Warner stated the business is located at the corner of Saybrook Road and Bridge Road (currently Gulf). A brief discussion followed regarding whether to make a motion regarding this matter. Mr. Warner recommended the Commission make a motion whether to accept or not to accept the application.

MOTION: Doreen Staskelunas motioned to not accept the application submitted by Citgo, 1598 Saybrook Road as it was submitted after the deadline. David Law second. Motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Anderson again thanked the subcommittee for their work, to the Commissioners who attended, and to Mr. Warner who spearheaded the program and helping EDC to assist the businesses along the way.

Mr. Warner stated the losses to the businesses are very significant; it's amazing how much the bridge closures have affected the businesses.

6. Adjournment

MOTION: Doreen Staskelunas motioned to adjourn. John Pember second. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Bunny Hall Batzner
Bunny Hall Batzner
Recording Clerk

**The next regular meeting is Wednesday, 11 October 2023,
at the Community Center, 7 Candlewood Hill Road, Higganum, CT.**