

**TOWN OF HADDAM
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
VIA GOTOMEETING
TUESDAY, 11 MAY 2021
UNAPPROVED MINUTES
*Subject to Approval by the Commission***

ATTENDANCE

X	Prem Aithal, Vice Chairman
X	Kate Anderson, Chairman
A	Cortney Emshwiller Swokla
X	Mike Farina
X	David Law (Left at 7:41 p.m.)
A	Mark Lundgren
A	Cindy MacNeil Sola
X	Robin Munster (Left 7:26 p.m.)
X	John Pember (Arrived 6:41 p.m.)
X	Doreen Staskelunas, Secretary (Arrived 6:43 p.m.)
X	Bunny Hall Batzner, Recording Clerk

Recording Clerk's Note: Due to a conflict between the EDC's regularly scheduled meeting of Wednesday, 12 May 2021, and the Annual Budget Public Hearing, EDC rescheduled their meeting to Tuesday, 11 May 2021.

1. Call to Order

Ms. Anderson, chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

The pledge was recited.

3. Approval of Agenda

Ms. Anderson asked that Item #6 - Old Business – Farmers' Market be moved to Item #5.

MOTION: Prem Aithal motioned to approve the 11 May 2021 agenda as amended. Mike Farina second. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Public Comment

Pop Up Market – Janet Verney reported there are a group of local crafters who did the Holiday Pop Up Market and would like to do it again at the Haddam Elementary School (HES), if possible; however, the primary movers, she and Teri Everett who handled the financial end of things, will not be able to do so this year and have been unable to find a replacement (s). Ms. Verney stated the Market grossed close to \$12,000 in a one month time frame and explained how she and Mrs. Everett handled the financials. Ms. Verney asked EDC for their help by conducting the market for a long weekend (November-December time frame) rather than an entire month and handling the financials. Ms. Verney explained that it is easier to have one check out point for all vendors and then money appropriated to each vendor; however it may have to be that each vendor is responsible for their own booth. Noted that not all vendors could be available when the Market was open and it made it easier on the shopper to have one central check out point.

Ms. Anderson stated she would put this on the June agenda for further discussion, but explained that EDC is unable to receive funds. Ms. Anderson and Ms. Verney will speak further about this matter prior to the June meeting.

Mr. Aithal asked that as much detail as possible be provided prior to the June meeting in order to potentially solicit volunteers, time frame of event, how it's been handled in the past, etc. Ms. Anderson stated the Pop Up Market could be tied in with a bigger event such as the tree and/or Center lighting.

Ms. Verney left the meeting at 6:44 p.m.

5. Old Business

a. Farmers' Market – Volunteer Sign Up

Kristy Benson, Market Master, Higganum Farmers' Market, was present.

Mr. Aithal reported he had sent an email containing a volunteer signup sheet for the farmers' market through *SignUpGenius* and noted that some weeks may need more coverage than others. Ms. Benson noted that there will be four dates (theme days) where extra volunteers will be needed - the first date is 18 June, Pet Day and Costume Contest. Remaining dates for extra help are further in the season. Ms. Anderson asked Ms. Benson how many volunteers will be needed with Ms. Benson stating a few extra hands for the 18th. Volunteer coverage should be fine for the first two markets as there are no themes for them. Mrs. Staskelunas asked about other civic groups/high schoolers volunteering. Ms. Benson will put out a plea. Discussion followed at length in regard to volunteers; identifying market volunteers (buttons, lanyards); identifying all the vendors participating on a particular market day (chalkboard with vendor names, map); signage (updating dates regularly, placement – suggested the area of the Transfer Station, missing bags of letters for sign boards, purchase of yard signs), and Facebook (900 followers, also shared on other groups pages).

Opening Day: Friday, 4 June 2021, 3:30 p.m. (23 days away). The Market will run every Friday at HES, taking a break in August, and then resuming for a fall market in September.

Ms. Benson left the meeting at 7:09 p.m.

6. New Business

a. 1564 Saybrook Road Apartments

Ms. Anderson reported she had provided the Commission with an updated packet regarding the proposal and asked the Commission if they would like to provide a letter of support similar to what was done for Goodspeed Tattoo. Discussion followed at length in regard to the presentation by the developer to the Commission in April; the updated proposal that will be going before P&Z (Thursday, 20 May 2021, Town Hall, 21 Field Park Drive, 7:00 p.m.); P&Z's ideas for developing Tylerville; proposal being beneficial to both Haddam and East Haddam (people who will patronize area businesses); traffic (access to project off of Brookes Court); and construction projects in Tylerville (sidewalks, roundabouts, and apartments).

Ms. Anderson will generate a letter of support. Mr. Farina and Mrs. Munster, although in support of the proposal, will abstain from signing the letter as they sit on P&Z and ZBA, respectively.

b. Budget – Holiday Decorations

Ms. Anderson reported she received a quote regarding the holiday decorations – snowflakes, garland, and bows. The Commission had previously discussed purchasing items and splitting the invoicing between the two fiscal years. Ms. Anderson reported that it may be best to hold off on ordering decorations at this time as the sidewalk project in Tylerville is not completely finished and the light pole count may change (plus/minus). Ms. Anderson stated an order could be placed for new bows for Higganum Center and noted that storage containers are difficult to obtain. At the end of this fiscal year (30 June 2021) there would be approximately \$4,000 remaining.

Signage for Higganum Cove – Ms. Anderson stated that in talking with Bill Warner, Town Planner, he suggested signage for the Cove. Ms. Anderson stated this would be a great opportunity to get something down at the Cove and perhaps EDC can work with Park and Rec on this as well. Ms. Anderson stated the Gateway Commission has templates to show what's been used before. Mr. Aithal stated this would be beneficial to create awareness of the property. Discussion followed in regard to the Friends of Higganum Cove; the need for coordinating the various groups that would like to work on the Cove; and ideas for the use of the Cove. Mr. Farina stated Mr. Warner has also come before the Gateway Commission for funding (no decision has been made to date). Mrs. Staskelunas asked about the potential for vandalism to the signs. A brief discussion followed. The Commission will vote at the June meeting as to what the final expenditure will be.

Leverett Spencer House - Ms. Anderson stated at last night's Board of Selectmen's (BOS) meeting the Friends of the Cove issued a draft Memo of Understanding (MOU) to the BOS. Ms. Anderson stated the Leverett Spencer House on Dublin Hill Road is proposed to be demolished (P&Z approved demolition permit with the condition that it would not take place until 1 September 2021); however, there is a plan to relocate the house to the Cove. Ms. Anderson also stated the Friends of the Cove have come before the BOS looking for financial assistance (\$170,000 to move and renovate) with the BOS agreeing the idea is unique but needs to be vetted much more thoroughly before a decision can be made. Ms. Anderson stated the Friends of the Cove are also responsible for raising a significant amount of money and the owner of the house has offered \$25,000.

c. Reappointments

Ms. Anderson reported that Mrs. Sola will not be seeking reappointment to the Commission and thanked her for her time on the Commission. All other members – Mr. Aithal, Ms. Anderson, Mrs. Emshwiller Swokla, Mr. Farina, Mr. Law, and Mrs. Staskelunas – are seeking reappointment. A letter will be sent to the BOS. Ms. Anderson stated if anyone is interesting in filling Mrs. Sola's position to please come to a meeting to see what EDC is all about and to express your interest.

7. Chairman's Report

Ms. Anderson reported on the following: **Town Planner's Report** - Asked the Commission to review Mr. Warner's report that was sent out prior to the meeting. Noted that updated comments are in red. (Copy on file in the Town Clerk's Office with the minutes). **Day Care Center, Brookes Court** – Project has fallen through as the developer and the property owner could not settle on a purchase price. The day care would have gone on the other side of the Tyler House. **105 Bridge Road** – Property has sold. Although not official, the potential for apartments to be constructed on the site is a possibility. Noted that parcel is zoned for apartments. **Town Budget** – Public Hearing (virtual) is scheduled for Wednesday, 12 May 2021. Town Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, 05.26.2021. **Board of Education Budget (BOE)** – Mr. Aithal reported the school budget passed. **Shredding Event and Tag Sale** – Mr. Farina reported that there will be a shredding event held at St. Peter's Church on Saturday, 22 May 2021, from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. The cost is \$4 per box. St. Peter's will also be hold a tag sale, in conjunction with the Junior Women's Club Town Wide Tag Sale, on Friday thru Sunday, 21-23 May 2021 and again on Friday thru Sunday, 28-30 May 2021. **Building Next to Dunkin Donuts, Higganum** – Mrs. Staskelunas asked for an update on the buildings use. Ms. Anderson stated Steady Habit Brewing appears to have moved out and the building is empty at this time. **Higganum Wine and Spirits Shop** – They have relocated to Tylerville and are in the building next to the Cooking Company. **Swing Bridge Renovations/Construction of Roundabouts/Sidewalks - Tylerville** – All projects are moving along and they are trying to coordinate the projects. **Haddam Elementary School (HES)** – Bob McGarry, First Selectman, is looking into a brokerage lease for HES as the Adelbrook deal has fallen through. Will be looking at a sale or lease of the building. Ms. Benson is aware of this matter.

8. Approval of Minutes

Approval of the 10 March 2021 and 14 April 2021 minutes was tabled.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bunny Hall Batzner

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Recording Clerk

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, 9 June 2021.