

**TOWN OF HADDAM
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
7 CANDLEWOOD HILL ROAD, HIGGANUM, CT 06441
WEDNESDAY, 14 OCTOBER 2020
APPROVED MINUTES
*Approved as Submitted at the 10 February 2021 Meeting***

ATTENDANCE

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| X | Prem Aithal, Vice Chairman – Called in |
| X | Kate Anderson, Chairman – In-person |
| A | Cortney Emschwiller Swokla |
| X | Mike Farina – In-person |
| X | David Law – In-person |
| A | Mark Lundgren |
| A | Cindy MacNeil Sola |
| X | Robin Munster – Called in |
| X | John Pember – Called in |
| X | Doreen Staskelunas, Secretary – In-person |
| A | Bob McGarry, First Selectman |
| A | Kristy Benson, Market Master, Higganum Farmers' Market |
| X | Bunny Hall Batzner, Recording Clerk – In-person |

THIS MEETING WAS HELD BOTH IN-PERSON AND VIA GOTOMEETING.

1. Call to Order

Ms. Anderson, chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m.

Ms. Anderson thanked everyone for their patience and apologized for the technical difficulties pertaining to the GoToMeeting connection for those Commissioners who still felt uncomfortable attending in-person.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

The pledge was recited.

3. Approval of Agenda

MOTION: Doreen Staskelunas motioned to approve the 14 October 2020 agenda as submitted. Mike Farina second. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Public Comment

There was no one from the public in attendance either in-person or online.

5. Old Business

a. Higganum Farmers' Market – Update

Mr. Aithal reported the last market for the 2020 season was held on Friday, 9 October 2020. If it's assumed that the market averaged 250 people per market it would be close to 4,000 attendees for the year. Mr. Aithal gave a special shout out to Kristy Benson, Market Master, because without her this wouldn't have been possible.

The market had awesome food trucks and vendors and there were vendors that came on mid-year who decided to remain throughout the season. This was something Haddam needed. Thank you to everyone who volunteered! Mrs. Staskelunas stated it was a tremendous weekly effort and was very pleased with the market.

Ms. Anderson stated given the circumstances (the pandemic), Ms. Benson was thrilled by the output received and enjoyed doing the event. It appears as long as Ms. Benson is here she will be the Market Master! Ms. Anderson gave a shout out to Prem Aithal, Doreen Staskelunas, Cindy Sola, David Law, Mike Farina, and John Pember. Ms. Anderson stated more volunteers are needed for next year especially during set up and break down times plus picking up signs and cleaning up.

Holiday Market – Saturday, 5 December 2020 – Ms. Anderson reported the tree lighting ceremony, as discussed at the September meeting, has evolved. Ms. Benson and a vendor are working on conducting an outdoor holiday market. Ms. Anderson stated the reason for this is due to the cancellation of the middle school craft fair and how many of these vendors count on their holiday sales. Ms. Anderson reported Ms. Benson will take care of the vendors and she and Mrs. Sola will take care of the fun side of the market.

Ms. Anderson stated it is unclear at this time if the Carlson family, who takes care of lighting the large Christmas tree on the green, will be receptive to lighting the tree on Saturday, 5 December 2020, as they traditionally light the tree on Thanksgiving night. Ms. Anderson also stated that Mrs. Sola suggested not focusing on the tree lighting but rather bringing some holiday cheer to the holiday market – Mr. and Mrs. Claus, a Santa's Mailbox (Haddam Jr. Women's Club), Blue Fire Stage has offered to sing, light refreshments, etc. Ms. Anderson stated anyone who is interested in assisting with this event will be welcome as this is not to be an EDC run event. Mr. Law suggested lighting of the gazebo on that day and let it be the focal point.

Mr. Law talked about some of the difficulties that occurred with decorating the gazebo last year and correcting those things from happening again such as preventing the small artificial Christmas tree within the gazebo from blowing over. Mr. Farina stated he may have a heavier tree stand that might help. A brief discussion followed in regard to funding if additional supplies are needed.

Mr. Farina asked if the holiday market would be held inside in the event of inclement weather. Ms. Anderson stated it would be cancelled noting that the farmers' market vendors had voiced concern over the potential use of HES during inclement weather. Mr. Law asked if the Scovil buildings, given their size, could be used by having people walk through end to end and opening the big overhead doors for ventilation. Ms. Anderson stated no, as the State of Connecticut DOT owns the buildings not the Town.

b. Mucket

Ms. Anderson reported the large statues have been paid for and will be shipped when ready. Ms. Anderson also reported she is still awaiting a quote on the mini statues; and although they are not yet ready, they will be available for the spring event.

c. Holiday Decorations

Ms. Anderson reported she approached Bob McGarry, First Selectman, in regard to Public Works assisting in the decorating of the light poles in Higganum Center and Mr. McGarry has agreed. EDC will be responsible for decorating the gazebo.

Ms. Anderson informed Mr. Law that he and his family will not be alone in decorating the gazebo and garland and bows are available. Mr. Law stated there are two areas to decorate: 1) the tree area in the gazebo and 2) the railing. Mr. Farina asked if there were sufficient electrical outlets. Mr. Law stated yes, and that there is room to accommodate a couple of additional items.

Mrs. Staskelunas noted that Mrs. Sola also wanted EDC to adopt HES. Ms. Anderson stated there are no outdoor outlets. Mr. Law suggested red bows along the fence line creating a gauntlet of Christmas!

Decorating Date: Sunday, 22 November 2020, 9:00 a.m. and Sunday, 29 November 2020 (secondary and/or backup date).

d. Goals/Tasks for 2020-2021

Merchants; Association - Mr. Aithal stated the inception of a merchants' association should be a primary goal. Ms. Anderson agreed. Ms. Anderson reviewed her comments from the September meeting and the need for the Commission to get back on track with the charrette recommendations. **Connecticut Main Street** - Ms. Anderson stated she believes Kim Parsons-Whitaker, Connecticut Main Street, has been in touch with Bill Warner, Town Planner, and Mr. McGarry and she will speak to them in regard to where EDC stands. **Scovil Hoe Buildings** - Ms. Anderson touched on the Scovil Hoe Buildings (covered under the Chairman's Report). **Bike Racks** - Mr. Law suggested the purchase of bike racks to promote bicycle riding and stopping at businesses. Mrs. Batzner reported the Conservation Commission had purchased bike racks in the past and they should be located on the Higganum Green, between Teri's Package Store and Village Market, and possibly one by Hi-Way Package Store or Nutmeg Pharmacy. Mrs. Batzner will check Conservation's minutes. **Blue-Green Trail and Swan Hill Trails** - People are working directly with Mr. Warner. **Community Calendar** - Ms. Anderson stated she would like groups to help prompt each other when holding events. **EDC Website** - Ms. Anderson stated she now has access to the town's website to make updates which are needed.

6. New Business

a. 2021 Meeting Schedule – Distributed

Mrs. Batzner distributed copies of the 2021 meeting schedule to those in attendance (copy emailed to all Commissioners on 15 October 2020; copy on file in the Town Clerk's Office as well as with the minutes.)

Mr. Aithal asked in light of the COVID numbers increasing, will there still be the option of virtual meetings. Ms. Anderson stated yes, full virtual meetings will resume in November until further notice. Mr. Law stated safety first over the next couple of months should be a priority.

7. Chairman's Report

Ms. Anderson reported on the following: **Scovil Hoe Buildings (former State Garage), 11 Candlewood Hill** - Tighe and Bond has been working on their testing. Mr. Warner has been posting updates of their activity on Facebook. All seems to be going well. Mrs. Staskelunas asked where the updates are being posted noting that not all use Facebook. A brief discussion followed. **Rossi Property** - A commercial appraisal has been conducted and has been received. This document is confidential. The Board of Selectmen (BOS) authorized Mr. McGarry to move forward with due diligence (site investigation, research, etc.) related to buying the Rossi property. Discussion followed at length. **HES** - Adelbrook is still interested in the building. **The Truck Bar** - This new business has opened. Congratulations, Merle McKenzie. **Daycare Center, Tylerville, and Women's' Wellness Center, Haddam Center** - These proposals are still moving forward. **True Value Hardware** - To go into the former HK Fitness space. **Citizens Bank** - Mrs. Munster asked if there was an update. Nothing new at this time. **Fork in the Road, 310 Saybrook Road** - Their food vendor may have gone out of business. Unclear what direction this will lead them. **The Nook, 1610 Saybrook Road (Swing Bridge Plaza)** - Has gone out of business due to the COVID pandemic. **Steady Habit Brewing Company, 201 Saybrook Road** - All their equipment is still in place at the new location and there has been activity. They did hold a crowd source fund raiser. **Road Runner Pub, (former Hutch), 12 Killingworth Road** - Is almost ready to open. **Hi-Way Package Store, 18 Killingworth Road** - Addition to go on the back of the property. **Community Septic** - Design work; shovel ready for the spring. **Tylerville Sidewalks** - Ready for spring work. **Bridge Grant - Walk-way** - Haddam did not receive the grant. **DOT Roundabouts, Tylerville** - DOT has begun discussion in regard to the installation of two rotaries at the intersections of Route 154/Saybrook Road and Route 82/Bridge Road and Route 154/Saybrook Road and Route 82 Connector/Exit 7. Mr. McGarry

has concerns over the impact to the Tylerville area with the back to back projects of the water main, side-walks, the bridge project, and the rotaries. **Water Project, Tylerville** – Is almost complete. Last of the hooks up are being done as well as the paving. **Town Paving Projects** – Paving will be closing up soon as the asphalt plants are closing. A lot of roads need work and Public Works is chipping away at it. Dublin Hill still needs to have drainage work done before it can be paved.

8. Approval of Minutes

Correction to the 9 September 2020 minutes: page 3, #6a. Holiday Decorations, second paragraph, fourth line – change “Terri’s” to “Teri’s”.

MOTION: David Law motioned to approve the 9 September 2020 minutes as amended. Doreen Staskelunas second. Motion carried unanimously.

9. Adjournment

MOTION: Prem Aithal motioned to adjourn. David Law second. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:39 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bunny Hall Batzner

Bunny Hall Batzner
Recording Clerk

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, 11 November 2020.