

MINUTES  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
November 2, 2017 – 4:45 P.M.  
TOWN HALL ANNEX – COMMUNITY ROOM 1

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Dowling, Preka, Melin, Young, Cote, Legnos, Brooks, Hatcher (4:55p)  
Mathanool (4:55p),

Absent:

Other: Valente, Obrey

Staff: Bronk, Eisenbeiser, Post

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:52 p.m.

Preka addressed the commission as to how the meeting would run. Preka requested that questions be held until after each report was reviewed, raise hands to be acknowledged, and that just because items are including in the agenda packet doesn't mean they need to be addressed.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

October 5, 2017

MOTION: To approve the minutes of the October 5, 2017 meeting.

Motion made by Dowling, seconded by Young; so voted unanimously.

III. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS- Young stated that the Southeastern Connecticut Cultural Coalition released a study done on the economic impact that the Arts has on the region. Young stated The Day published an article with information.

Annemarie Seifert of UConn introduced herself.  
Chair-

IV. REPORTS

1. Chairperson - Preka did not submit a formal report. He stated that he meets with many people throughout the month and asks how their business is going and always receives positive feedback.
2. Staff- Staff report was previously submitted by email and was reviewed by Bronk.

Marketing/Website – This has been a large project. Staff has an internal soft launch of the website scheduled for 11/3/17. The overview video of Groton is currently in production and may not be ready for the public launch of the site.

Aviation Day – Eisenbeiser and Bronk participated in Aviation Day. A table was set up with a variety of marketing materials with emphasis on the economic benefits of the airport.

Logo – The Groton logo was introduced to businesses at the October 19th GBA meeting. The logo was well received by attendees.

CT Next/Innovation Places – Staff continues to work closely with TRIP. David McBride was brought on as the TRIP Executive Director.

Live where you work – Staff participated in a forum with Liberty Bank. The subject was informing residents of private and public financing.

Wayfinding Signage – Meetings with the consultant are ongoing. Reiner presented the design concepts to the RTM.

TIF – The TIF policies continue to be outlined. They should be presented to the Town Council in December.

Incentive Application – Eisenbeiser developed a pre application for Staff to help better direct potential businesses to the incentives that are available. This helps staff to better understand what the needs are of the business and match them to the incentives accordingly.

Mystic ED – Staff is very close to issuing an RFP. A draft has been submitted to the state and we are awaiting comments. Repaving of the upper portion of Oral School Road will occur starting on November 7th.

Groton Heights – Staff presented a zoning amendment to the Groton City Zoning Board of Review at a public hearing. The hearing was continued until November 21st. This amendment would not only apply to Groton Heights but to all institutional properties owned by municipal and state government in the city.

517/529 Gold Star – Talks with a developer continue.

Bronk also reported that ThayarMahan held their grand opening on October 19th.

Groton made the “short list” for a large national company. Staff met with a site selector from the state and representatives from the company.

Central Hall – Plans have been submitted and they should be breaking ground in early November.

### 3. Liaisons

GBA –Valente reported that the lighted boat parade will be held on November 25<sup>th</sup>. December 5<sup>th</sup> is the date of the holiday stroll/luminaria in downtown Mystic. Valente reported that downtown businesses thrived this year. He also stated that the GBA will monitor the progress of zoning rewrite.

DMM – Valente reported that Santa will arrive by tug boat on November 25<sup>th</sup> in the afternoon followed by the tree lighting. Valente reminded everyone to spend locally.

Groton Utilities – Report was previously submitted by email for review. Brooks reported that 50% of GU's customers lost power with the October 29<sup>th</sup> storm, within 24 hours they had almost all of the power back up. Brooks stated that they were able to accomplish that while short staffed as some crews are still providing aid to the U.S. Virgin Islands. Progress continues to be made with the Water treatment plant as well as the Walker Hill water tank. The streetlight replacement project is underway. Brooks provided the commission with maps indicating the service area as discussed at last month's meeting.

Business Outreach – Dowling said she attempted her outreach but the owner wasn't available, she will try again. Preka stated that he saw CVS on the list and suggested they not include the big box stores. He felt big box stores aren't able to provide the information the commission is looking for. Melin reviewed his outreach with Barley Head Brewery. Melin suggested that before they drop the big box stores he feels that the store manager could identify how the store is doing and what the drivers are within the community. Cote reviewed his report on Cedar Nail Spa. Cote stated that there are still businesses on the original list but that they would be adding more.

## V. OLD BUSINESS

### 1. General Discussion –

Brooks shared that he attended the Economic Development forum held at the City. Brooks stated that it was informative and he will try to share the presentation.

Preka stated that he feels that the Commission is on the right track and that business outreach is going strong. Preka suggested that maybe the EDC do the follow up on the visits. Bronk stated that follow up should happen but that the commission should evaluate the process and see where they are at. Cote stated they should look at the outreach that has been submitted thus far. The subcommittee should look to do that by years end.

### 2. Annual Report – Preka stated that he would like to streamline the annual report. Preka asked that Dowling help with the annual report again this year. Dowling agreed.

### 3. 2018 Goals - Preka stated that they should come up with goals for next year. Dowling stated that last year they agreed on 3, she thought that was a good number. Legnos asked Staff what the commission can do to support them. Bronk stated that continuing with business outreach is most important. Bronk also stated the continued advocacy from the commission on the budget and with other items as needed, as well as pushing the zoning rewrite. Melin said they were looking for more concrete goals. Bronk stated its all about relationships and communication, networks, marketing, making connections, things that will drive growth in a community. Young wrote goals that she thought were synchronized with what Staff needed, business outreach, organizational liaisons, and a partnership with the City EDC. Young suggested that they select a project of some type to work on with the City EDC. Dowling said that when she visited Lee's Toys there needed to be follow up and how do we plan to not drop the ball on the information the commission receives. Bronk said we need to evaluate the data and strategize next steps. Dowling suggested maybe a follow

up letter be sent. Young feels that they should have an orientation for new members.

## VI. NEW BUSINESS

1. 2018 meeting schedule – A draft copy of the 2018 meeting schedule was provided.

There was discussion on changing dates for the January and July meetings due to holidays. It was decided to vote for the schedule as presented and they will discuss adjusting those dates closer to the meetings.

Motion: To approve the 2018 meeting schedule.

Motion made by Young, seconded by Hatcher; so voted unanimously.

2. By Laws – Preka added the By Laws to the agenda suggesting they should be reviewed each year. Melin spoke to article 5, Order of Business. He suggested the commission change the agenda allowing them more time for discussion on the meat of the agenda. Melin suggested using a consent agenda for committee reports. Young brought up Article II, section 4 – Vacancies, and Article III, section 4 – Absence of Members. Young wanted to see follow through with these items. Melin will put together wording for his suggested changes to the agenda format and bring it to the committee.

3. Slate of Officers – Preka asked for nominations from the floor, there were none. A motion was made by Dowling to accept the slate of officers as presented.

Motion: To elect Catherine Young as Chair, Craig Melin as Vice Chair, and Karen Hatcher as Secretary.

Motion made by Dowling, seconded by Cote; so voted unanimously.

Hatcher left at 6:30 pm.

Bronk confirmed November 29<sup>th</sup> for the meet and greet with the City EDC. Bronk is meeting with City Staff to finalize plans.

Cote asked where they were with the appointment of a new commissioner. Preka will send a recommendation to the Town Manager.

## V. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn at 6:38 p.m. was made by Dowling, seconded by Young; so voted unanimously.

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Dave Cote, Secretary  
Economic Development Commission

Prepared by Lauren Post  
Office Assistant II