

MINUTES
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
DECEMBER 3, 2015 – 4:45 P.M.
TOWN HALL ANNEX – COMMUNITY ROOM 1

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Dowling, Preka, Cote, Young, Hatcher, Obrey, Vignato, Mathanool (4:59),
Legnos (5:02)

Other:

Staff: Bronk, Post

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:51 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES November 5, 2015 meeting

MOTION: To approve the minutes of the November 5, 2015 meeting as written.

Motion made by Vignato, seconded by Preka, so voted unanimously.

III. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS- None

IV. REPORTS

1. Chairperson – Chair’s report was previously submitted by email for review. Dowling noted the annual report was completed. The suggestions provided by the commission as recommendations for 2016 were incorporated and is ready to be voted on. Once approved, it is scheduled to go to the Town Council on Dec 22nd. If the meeting is cancelled the report will be presented in January. Dowling thanked everyone for their time, effort, and support and felt they have had a successful year.

2. Strategic Planning Subcommittee – no meeting, no report.

3. Staff – Staff report was included in the agenda packet prior to the meeting for review. Bronk noted that the Economic Specialist position was now vacant but they are eager to get the position filled and asked for support from EDC. Economic Development is a priority to the community and we need as much support as we can get going into the FY 2017 budget process.

Staff has received a draft of the article from “Business In Focus”. Staff is pleased and thought the article was well written. Cote is concerned with their market base and what staff expects out of this. Staff understood and explained that while the exposure is good what will be most beneficial is getting the PDF of the piece for future marketing.

Staff stated that we should receive the draft of the Market Analysis soon and will get it out to the Focus group and EDC. Dowling requested attendance from EDC at these focus group meetings.

Staff referenced the Mystic Education Center and how Groton will market the property on behalf of the CT DECD when grant funds are provided in 2016.

Staff noted that the application for the Brownfield grant was submitted and if selected we will be interviewed in December. The Town will also be applying for state funding of electric plug-in vehicles and charging stations. It was stated this is another way we can brand Groton and create a sense of place. Staff asked for help matching businesses with locations. Information will be sent to the EDC so that they may offer ideas for locations as requested.

4. Liaisons:

Groton Business Association – The GBA report was emailed to the commission prior to the meeting for their review. The GBA's 17th Annual Holiday Lights Parade will be Saturday, December 5th at 5pm. This year is a tribute to the navy base's 100th anniversary with Capt. Carl Lahti as the Grand Marshall.

Downtown Mystic Merchants – No report was submitted

Town Council – No report was submitted

MOTION: To accept the reports presented.

Motion made by Obrey, seconded by Hatcher, so voted unanimously

V. OLD BUSINESS

1. Market Analysis and Zoning Audit Update- Next focus group meeting will be in January, as soon as staff gets the draft it will be distributed to the focus group and the EDC.

2. Strategic Planning- Another meeting will be scheduled after attending a Workshop.

Vignato left at 5:18 pm.

3. Annual Report- Annual report is completed

MOTION: To accept the annual report as presented

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

VI. NEW BUSINESS

1. Dowling reminded the commission of the invitation to the Holiday Gathering that was extended to all the commissions. The gathering will be on December 17th 2015 at 7:30p at the Seahorse Restaurant.

2. Obrey provided staff with a handout of her new office space Shoreline Office Suites, located at 500 Bridge Street. This new space houses multiple offices as well as conference space for rent at all-inclusive pricing and the flexibility of long/short term rental. It was suggested that the EDC hold the January meeting at this location.

3. Smith suggested that the EDC do more legwork for the town under the direction of staff. He said it would be beneficial to use the capabilities of people willing to serve. Staff is open to working together on tasks. Obrey suggested action items to assist staff be added on the next agenda. Hatcher suggested that the EDC go back and reread the annual report for next year and stick to the priorities they had approved for 2016. Hatcher says they need guidelines on what the initiatives are and how they can help.

Smith left at 5:46 pm.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 5:50 pm made by Obrey, seconded by Legnos, so voted unanimously

Tom Vignato, Secretary
Economic Development Commission

Prepared by Lauren Post
Office Assistant II