

MINUTES  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
February 1, 2018 – 4:45 P.M.  
TOWN HALL ANNEX – COMMUNITY ROOM 1

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Dowling, Young, Cote, Brooks, Melin, Legnos, Groves, Mathanool (5:00p)  
Absent: Hatcher, Preka,  
Other: Valente, Franco, Obrey, Wright  
Staff: Bronk, Eisenbeiser, Post

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:47 p.m.

II. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS - None

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

January 11, 2018

MOTION: To approve the minutes of the January 11, 2018 special meeting.

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

IV. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

1. Economic Development Collaboration Subcommittee- Melin discussed the idea of creating a subcommittee for collaboration with other entities. Melin discussed what the groupings might be and suggested asking those areas what the top goals for their area are. Melin suggested starting with those areas on the river (New London, City of Groton, Town of Groton, and maybe Norwich). Bronk suggested contacting seCTer as their role is to provide a regional economic development resource. Bronk suggested using or reviewing the CEDS document. Brooks and Groves volunteered to work with Melin on the subcommittee for collaboration.

2. Approval of Standing Committees for Business Outreach and Economic Assistance Fund.

Motion: To have the Business Outreach subcommittee as a standing committee.

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

Motion: To have the Economic Assistance Fund Committee as a standing committee.

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

V. REPORT OF CHAIR AND STANDING COMMITTEES

Chairperson - Chair report was previously submitted by email for review – In addition to the report submitted Young reported on the Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (SCCOG) meeting on January 17th. The SCCOG conducted a shared services opportunity study, this study was initiated through a grant and identifies opportunities for sharing amongst the SCCOG members.

Business Outreach - Cote reviewed the business outreach program. At their most recent meeting they discussed developing a standard outreach follow up. OPDS staff will draft language. Cotes stated that they would like to do at least 5 visits each month. Cote said he will provide the minutes to their February meeting. Valente stated that the Greater Mystic Chamber of Commerce will be holding a mini membership drive to solicit businesses to attend meetings and become members of the chamber. Valente offered to talk about the EDC and to hand out the brochure when they go out.

Economic Assistance Fund – Bronk reported that this is an active program. The program and its history were reviewed. Bronk stated there is one application that will be brought forward to the committee.

## VI. REPORT OF STAFF

Staff report was previously submitted by email and was reviewed by Bronk.

Marketing/Website – The first newsletter was released on 1/31/18, interested parties can sign up through the ED website. In 2015 Groton was featured in a Business in Focus magazine article. The town is going to participate in a follow up promotional article. It should run in the April issue.

TRIP – Funding was secured for quarter two and the COW approved the agreement between Groton and UConn. This will allow the disbursement of funds to UConn. They are looking to hire a Consortium Manager.

CT Ports Authority – Staff gained approval from the COW for the accepting of funds from the CT Ports Authority and for gifting funds to the U.S. Navy. The Navy will be implementing the project.

TIF – TIF is moving forward, it gained support from the COW. A public hearing will be scheduled. Staff will make the EDC aware of the date and time of the public hearing.

Incentives – Staff is utilizing the pre application form. It makes it easier to understand what people are doing so they can be directed to the best incentive.

Wayfinding Sign Plan – This project is moving forward some funding has been requested in the CIP for 2019 for some implementation. It is unclear if any funding will be allocated.

Mystic Education Center – RFP has been issued, there has been a tremendous interest. Staff has been giving tours and has been out at the site multiple times just this week.

Groton Heights – There have been increased showings. The RFP will be modified for Groton Heights and released this spring.

Gold Star Highway – Staff will be going back to the council to address details of this property within the next month or so.

Seely School – Staff continues to meet with interested developers for the property. The goal is to get the interest of a mixed use developer.

## VII. RPORT OF LIAISONS

Groton Utilities - Brooks reported that all projects are moving forward.

Navy – White spoke about the Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) that was done. This may fall in line with what Melin is trying to do with the collaboration. The full study can be found on the SCCOG website.

Town Council – Obrey and Franco reported that they are organizing themselves as a new town council as there is a lot to learn. They are interested in learning more about TIF. This will be a difficult budget season and they hope that people watch the meetings on TV to stay informed. Council suggested members from the Business Outreach and the new Collaboration Committee could come to council and give updates on the progress of their efforts.

Greater Mystic Chamber – Valente reported on the merger between the GBA and The Greater Mystic Chamber of Commerce. Valente stated it would increase the foot print of the Chamber from the Thames River to Pawcatuck. Their major initiative is unification within the area. They are looking to beef up the welcome center attracting visitors to the area and send them to businesses. They are also looking to switch from paper mystic dollars to an electronic gift card. The next meeting is at 7:30 am on February 15<sup>th</sup> at Chelsea Groton, Center Groton Branch.

Brooks left at 6:34

## VIII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Later start time – The commission discussed options for a later start time.

Motion: To permanently change the start time of the Economic Development Commission meetings to 5:30 pm.

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

New meeting time will be effective March 1, 2018.

2. Town of Groton growth areas - Bronk reported that there are a lot of potential growth areas within Groton that people aren't aware of. Bronk offered a bus tour of Groton lasting approximately two hours to get a real visual of these growth areas. May 3<sup>rd</sup> at 3 pm is the tentative time for this tour.
3. Incentives and Tax Increment Financing (TIF) - Bronk stated that we need a bundle of incentives to attract businesses. TIF is the most important incentive. A TIF policy is being developed to set a guideline as to how TIF will work in Groton. Bronk reviewed what TIF is. The next step is the public hearing which staff requests EDC to attend. Staff will provide informational materials.

Cote suggested for the next meeting to discuss what the objectives to achieve the goals of 2018 should be.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn at 6:59 p.m. was made by Legnos, seconded by Cote; so voted unanimously.

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Karen Hatcher, Secretary  
Economic Development Commission

Prepared by Lauren Post  
Office Assistant II