

MINUTES  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
March 1, 2018 – 5:30 P.M.  
TOWN HALL ANNEX – COMMUNITY ROOM 1

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Young, Cote, Brooks, Melin, Legnos, Groves, Mathanool, Hatcher, Preka  
Absent: Dowling  
Other: Valente, Obrey, Wright, Gianacoplas, Whitehouse, Franco  
Staff: Bronk, Eisenbeiser, Post

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

II. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS - None

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

February 1, 2018

MOTION: To approve the minutes of the February 1, 2018 meeting as amended.

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

IV. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

1. Town of Groton Growth Areas Tour – Bronk reported that the tour will be on Thursday, May 3<sup>rd</sup> at 3p (before the regular meeting at 5:30P) and last about two hours. Bronk reviewed the tentative itinerary for the tour.

2. TIF – Bronk reported that TIF was recommended for resolution at the February 27<sup>th</sup> COW meeting and it will go to vote on March 6<sup>th</sup>. The next steps will be to develop a master plan.

3. Town and City Collaboration – Preka reported that he did meet with Cheryl Auerbach and Jewel Jones regarding an app focusing on local attractions. Using the Thames River Heritage Park website was discussed but Preka would like to try to find someone to build an actual app. Developing an app can cost anywhere from five to ten thousand dollars, they discussed sponsorship from different businesses to fund the project. This will require a lot of work and effort. Whitehouse stated that he may know someone willing to help and will pass the information along to Preka. Preka will keep the commission informed.

4. Economic Development Collaboration Sub Committee – Melin stated they have scheduled a meeting for March.

V. REPORT OF CHAIR AND STANDING COMMITTEES

Chairperson - Chair report was previously submitted via email for review. Young mentioned that SCCOG did begin the implementation of their shared services study. The Executive Director of SCCOG will be in touch with each municipality as next

steps. The EDC has a CEDAS membership. Each member should sign up individually with CEDAS if interested

Economic Assistance Fund – Bronk reported that Eisenbeiser and Bronk are reviewing three applications at this time. Bronk reviewed the application process and the program. Mathanool, Preka, Cote, and Legnos are on the EDC committee. Staff will schedule a meeting for the Economic Assistance Fund Subcommittee to review the applications when appropriate.

Business Outreach – The minutes for the last subcommittee meeting were included in the packet. Cote also noted that the pie chart was revised and included in the packet for review. Groves provided outreach reports and stated from his outreach experience it is important just to get out there and conversations will happen organically. Cote reviewed his outreach and encouraged others to participate with the outreach. Michael Whitehouse stated that he could help with outreach as he meets with business monthly.

Brooks left at 6:34

## VI. REPORT OF STAFF

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

Marketing/Website – Groton will be featured again in Business in Focus magazine. A phone interview was conducted with Bronk, Eisenbeiser, and Valente. The magazine goes to fortune 500 companies; Staff will get the article in PDF form and can use it in different formats. Staff also published the March Economic Development newsletter. This is emailed monthly to subscribers; they can sign up on [www.exploremoregroton.com](http://www.exploremoregroton.com).

TRIP – Regrading the Undersea Supply Chain Consortium Project, the Manager position was posted on the UConn website. The manager will be located at the Avery Point campus. Staff has begun preparing for year two with CT NEXT funding.

CT Ports Authority – There has been ongoing work coordinating with the Navy.

Wayfinding Sign Plan – A meeting is scheduled for next week, staff has made a request for some funding for implementation in Capital Improvements for FY2019.

Economic Development Strategic Plan – Staff is in the process of developing a scope of work for an Economic Development Strategic Plan. This will include all work to date. The last strategic plan was done in 2006.

Mystic Education Center – The RFP closed on February 15<sup>th</sup>. Numerous proposals were received.

Groton Heights – An RFP will be released this spring. There are already numerous interested developers.

Gold Star Highway – Staff will be going back to the council to address details specific to a proposal.

Seely School – Staff continues to have meetings with interested developers for this property.

## VII. REPORT OF LIAISONS

Mystic Chamber of Commerce – Valente reported that the Chamber is always putting on events. Next week is restaurant week, on March 11<sup>th</sup> there is a Craft beer tour, Business after hours is March 7<sup>th</sup> at Masonicare (this is a collaboration hosted by the Eastern Chamber and Greater Mystic Chamber). In May they will have their annual business update meeting, Joe Courtney will attend.

Valente listed some of the goals of the Chamber, better business advocacy, strong government affairs committee, supporting TIF, monitoring the airport development and supporting bringing in a potential regional carrier, advocate for hotel tax to bring some of the money back to support tourism, public/private collaborative with Bank Street Books for kiosk, youth workforce development working with Grasso, Fitch, Stonington on soft skills etc.

DMMA - Gianacoplos reported a changeover with the board and committee. They are looking for new eyes and defining a mission statement. The newest initiative in downtown Mystic is First Friday's. This is where restaurants and businesses stay open later and offer specials. There are currently a handful of stores that are participating now.

Groton Utilities – Brooks stated there was nothing new to report

US Navy – White introduced himself and his role with the Navy. White reviewed the JLUS, and the impact aid problem. White explained the base can't do anything but there are resources in the back of the document to assist. DEEP grant was awarded to fund part of the micro grid, the power generated will be used on and off base.

Town Council – Obrey and Franco reported that the council is 100% behind TIF, OPDS keeps the council informed on all projects and they are comfortable when things come in. The council had to postpone the vote on Merritt property exchange, they are hopeful it is resolved. Franco brought up the Bloomberg Grant, a \$500,000 grant that uses art to address issues in communities. The application is due in April, she wasn't sure that there was time to submit but would like to.

Preka left at 7:12p

RTM – Whitehouse reported that 2/3 of the RTM representatives are new this year. They seem very active, more willing to ask questions, and are engaged.

Legnos left at 7:17p

## VIII. NEW BUSINESS

1. EDC Brochure Revision – Bronk asks that the EDC takes a look at the brochure, read through it to make sure it is how they want themselves represented and what the EDC is about. He asked that they email any suggested changes and they will be compiled for the next meeting.

2. Objectives for 2018 – Cote suggested the commission discuss setting objectives to achieve the goals for 2018. For their goal of expanding the outreach program Cote made a motion for the EDC to accept the recommendation made by the subcommittee for outreach objectives. Hatcher seconded; so voted unanimously.

Cote asked that the 2018 EDC Goals that were compiled and included in the agenda packet be reviewed. He asked that the EDC be ready to discuss at the next meeting so that they can set objectives for the goal of supporting OPDS. Melin asked that Staff let them know what is needed for support. Young stated that there has been an agreement in place that Staff updates the EDC monthly and Staff does ask for whatever support is needed. Young feels this has been working well. Bronk stated he could put together what Staff's top items are. Cote offered to communicate with him on this prior to the next meeting.

3. Future Guest Speakers – Young asked the EDC if they would like anyone to come and speak at any of the future meetings to please email Young/Bronk so they can bring it to the commission and make decisions on whom/when they will have speakers.

#### IX. ADJOURNMENT

Hatcher left at 7:31

Meeting was adjourned at 7:32.

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Karen Hatcher, Secretary  
Economic Development Commission

Prepared by Lauren Post  
Office Assistant II