

**Economic Development Commission
Meeting Minutes
May 1, 2014**

Attending: D. Bergeron; R. Casner; D. Mathiasen; R. Parady; P. Rubenbauer; P. Simmons (Economic Development Coordinator); F. Weissbach
Absent: J. Albuquerque; G. Rucker
Guests: S. Wheeler

Mr. Casner called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. He sat Mr. Bergeron for Mr. Albuquerque.

Minutes – The Commissioners reviewed the minutes from the April 3, 2014 meeting and the March 12, 2014 and March 19, 2014 Goodspeed Landing Committee meetings.

MR. WEISSBACH MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MS. MATHIASEN, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR APRIL 3, 2014 MEETING AS WRITTEN. UNANIMOUS AYE.

MR. WEISSBACH MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MR. PARADY, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 12, 2014 GOODSPEED LANDING COMMITTEE MEETING AS WRITTEN. UNANIMOUS AYE.

MR. WEISSBACH MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MS. RUBENBAUER, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 19, 2014 GOODSPEED LANDING COMMITTEE MEETING AS WRITTEN. UNANIMOUS AYE.

OLD BUSINESS

Status Reports:

Economic Development Coordinator – Mr. Simmons reviewed his May 1, 2014 report, a copy of which is attached to and made part of these minutes. He and the Commissioners discussed the benefits and limitations of the current tax incentive program.

Mr. Simmons advised that the Department of Agriculture had paid out the \$20k grant funding for the fencing at the Harris property and responded to several questions from Mr. Weissbach about the Community Agriculture project.

First Selectman Update – Mr. Walter was not in attendance at the meeting and there was no update on the topics listed under this agenda item.

EDC Chairman Update – Mr. Casner reported on the following:

- He is reviewing the economic development narratives in several other towns' Plans of Conservation & Development. He advised that the Planning and Zoning Commissioners appear to be receptive to EDC's proposed changes.
- Improved directional signage to the business districts for the Route 82 closures should be installed next week.

P&Z/EDC Waste Water Joint Committee – Moodus & Rt. 82/151 – Mr. Casner advised that he is continuing to work with the Planning & Zoning Commission on the waste water project. He stated that Mr. Ventres has researched septic usage in the Moodus and 4-corners sections and that his findings will be reviewed at the committee's May 7th meeting.

Goodspeed Landing Committee – Mr. Casner stated that he and Mr. Walter discussed asking the Goodspeed Opera House to assign a regular representative to the Goodspeed Landing Committee. He also reported that Mr. Simmons is working on a project to demolish the old garages from the Town Office site. He stated the project has the dual goals of increasing parking in the Village and preparing for a future Village development project. Mr. Simmons stated that there are electrical and water issues that must be addressed if the garages are demolished and he getting estimates for the work. He further advised that he is researching potential grants for the project. The Commissioners agreed that EDC should draw on funds from its Consulting Work budget line for the project.

There was a general discussion about the Goodspeed's plans for a new theatre and the potential conversion of the Old Middle School for Town offices and Mr. Weissbach recommended EDC develop a strategic plan that is neutral to the outcome of either of those projects.

Tourism Committee – Ms. Mathiasen reported on the following:

- She attended the State’s Tourism Conference and she reviewed several of the State’s planned marketing programs. She advised that the use of technology to market tourism was a big topic at the conference and she plans to add a scanning logo to the East Haddam tourism brochures.
- As part of a statewide DEDC project, a consulting firm conducted a customer survey last year at Gillette Castle State Park and she has been trying to get East Haddam specific information; however, the consultants who conducted the survey have told her there is a fee for the information. Mr. Simmons stated he would provide Ms. Mathiasen with a contact at DEDC who should be able to help her get the information.

Ms. Mathiasen advised that she will be updating the Town’s Tourism brochures and stated she would like to allocate \$1500.00 for printing.

MR. PARADY MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MS. RUBENBAUER, TO APPROVE THE EXPENDITURE OF \$1,500.00 FOR PRINING OF THE EAST HADDAM TOURISM BROCHURES. UNANIMOUS AYE.

East Haddam Business Association – Ms. Mathiasen reported that ten restaurants and approximately 30 other businesses had signed up for the May 3rd Taste of East Haddam/Business Expo.

Other Business

Directory Signs – Mr. Parady discussed plans to replace the business directory at the Route 82/151 intersection with a “Welcome to East Haddam” sign.

NEW BUSINESS

Review/Discuss Draft EDC Response to Transfer Station Report – The Commissioners reviewed EDC’s draft letter to the Board of Selectmen in response to the Transfer Station Report. Mr. Casner agreed to make several recommended edits.

Mail Received – Ms. Mathiasen stated that EDC had received a membership renewal request from CEDAS. She advised that EDC had not been able to take advantage of the conferences offered by CEDAS last year but she still feels the membership is beneficial for the Town.

MOTION MADE BY MR. WEISSBACH, SECONDED BY MS. MATHIASEN, TO APPROVE THE EXPENDITURE OF \$150.00 TO RENEW EDC’S MEMBERSHIP IN CEDAS. UNANANIMOUS AYE.

Ms. Mathiasen also reported that EDC had received an email from I-Park inviting the Commissioners to a Wine & Cheese sponsor thank you event scheduled for May 15th. She noted that she and Mr. Casner will attend and Mr. Weissbach stated he might also attend the event. Ms. Mathiasen stated that she is trying to coordinate a site visit at I-Park for the Commissioners.

Public Comment/Other/EDC Ordinance Review – There was no public comment at the meeting and no additional topics were discussed. There was no update on the EDC Ordinance Revision at this meeting.

THERE BEING NO ADDITIONAL BUSINESS TO DISCUSS, MR. WEISSBACH A MOTION, SECONDED BY MR. PARADY TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. UNANIMOUS AYE.

The regular meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
/s/ Sharon R. Wheeler
Recording Secretary