

**Economic Development Commission
Meeting Minutes
December 4, 2014**

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

Mr. Casner called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Minutes – The minutes of the November 6, 2014 meeting were reviewed.

MS. MATHIASEN MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MR. PARADY, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 4, 2014 MEETING AS WRITTEN. UNANIMOUS AYE.

Ms. Mathiasen advised that the 2015 EDC meeting schedule would continue to be the first Thursday of every month at 7:00 p.m. She noted that there are no holidays that conflict with the 2015 scheduled dates. The Commissioners approved the 2015 EDC meeting schedule.

OLD BUSINESS

Status Reports:

Economic Development Coordinator – Mr. Simmons presented his December 4, 2014 report, a copy of which is attached to and made part of these minutes.

Review of Dutch Oil Tax Incentive Program Application – Mr. Simmons provided an overview of the Dutch Oil Tax Incentive Program application. There was a general discussion regarding Dutch Oil's planned propane storage facility. Mr. Simmons stated that the Dutch Oil project has not yet started and he recommended the Commissioners consider giving them the benefit of the updated Tax Incentive Program if it is approved by the Town. The Commissioners supported his proposal and agreed to inform the Boards of Selectmen and Finance of his recommendation.

MR. WEISSBACH MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MR. PARADY, TO RECOMMEND DUTCH OIL'S TAX INCENTIVE APPLICATION TO THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN AND BOARD OF FINANCE. UNANIMOUS AYE.

First Selectman Update – Mr. Walter distributed copies of a STEAP grant application for improvements at the Transfer Station that the Town has submitted to the state. He advised that the improvements include construction of a roof over the bulky waste containers to bring the area into compliance with current regulations and a back-up solid waste hopper for residents to use if the main hopper goes down. He stated that the back-up hopper would not be available for commercial use but would allow the commercial haulers to continue to use the Transfer Station without jeopardizing the public's use if the main hopper gets jammed. He further advised that he has asked the Public Works Director and staff to develop a set of protocols for commercial use of the Transfer Station.

In response to a question from Mr. Weissbach, Mr. Staehly provided information, presented at the December 3, 2014 Board of Selectmen meeting, on the status of the Community Center for Agriculture and the related grants. Mr. Weissbach expressed his concern about the impact of changing the parameters of the approved grant on future grants for which the Town applies. In response to a request from Ms. Mathiasen, Mr. Walter agreed to provide EDC with a copy of the draft of the revised application to review prior to submitting it to the state.

Mr. Casner asked if Mr. Walter would support sending a letter to the CT DEEP requesting the Town be allowed to evaluate use of the Sunrise Resort by appropriate commercial enterprises. He noted that DEEP would have to issue the request for interest by such enterprises. Mr. Walter agreed to participate in composing a joint letter to DEEP from EDC and his office requesting same.

There was a general discussion regarding the status of the purchase of the Johnsonville property.

EDC Chairman Update – Mr. Casner reported on the status of several EDC committees as noted in the minutes below.

P&Z/EDC Waste Water Joint Committee – Moodus & Rt. 82/151 – Mr. Casner reported that the sub-committee prepared

estimates to run the sewer lines up to the 4-corners area and the sub-committee is now researching whether or not the current flow capacity of the existing plant will be able to accommodate the potential increased flow. He stated the sub-committee's next meeting is scheduled in January.

Goodspeed Landing Committee – Mr. Casner reported that the committee discussed the potential for a hotel on the Town Office site and they plan to solicit input on the idea from the Goodspeed Opera House. Mr. Weissbach suggested reaching out to abutting property owners to discuss their interest in selling their properties to improve the marketing prospects for the site. The Commissioners agreed with his suggestion and Mr. Weissbach agreed to reach out to his contacts to gauge their interest in such discussions.

Tourism Committee – Ms. Mathiasen stated there was no new update on the activities of this committee. Mr. Walter advised that the River Council of Governments is applying for a grant to conduct a Tourism Study and develop a Marketing Plan for the area.

East Haddam Business Association – Mr. Casner noted that the Board of Selectmen will be meeting with the Business Association on January 21st and inquired as to the goals for the meeting. Mr. Simmons advised that the discussions will focus on the challenges to opening/re-locating a business in East Haddam. There was a general discussion about the expense to comply with state and local regulations. Mr. Casner stated that he hoped some common areas of specific concerns could be identified at the meeting so that EDC and the Town could focus their efforts on improvements to those items.

Mr. Casner stated that individuals often get bogged down in the bureaucracy of opening/re-locating a business and get discouraged from following through with their plans. The Commissioners agreed that Town staff should be educated and encouraged to direct such individuals to reach out to the EDC Coordinator and/or the Business Association at the beginning of their efforts to help them through the process. Mr. Walter also noted the importance of the Commissioners' attendance at Town Meetings to represent the businesses' interest.

NEW BUSINESS

Food Cart Use – Mr. Simmons reported that he had drafted revisions to the Town's existing food cart use regulations and submitted them to the Planning and Zoning Commission for their approval.

Review Draft "Doing Business In East Haddam" Flier - Mr. Simmons distributed copies of his draft content for the Doing Business In East Haddam flier as well as a copy of a draft document Ms. Mathiasen had created using his content. He stated that he would like to bring a final version to the January 21st Business Association/Board of Selectmen meeting. Ms. Mathiasen asked the Commissioners to review the materials and provide her with their feedback.

Mail Received – Ms. Mathiasen reported that she had received a request from the Finance Office to provide EDC's 2015-16 budget request no later than January 9th. She stated that she and Mr. Casner will work on the draft budget and present it to the Commissioners, for their approval, at EDC's January 8th meeting.

Public Comment/Other/EDC Ordinance Review – Ms. Rubenbauer circulated a copy of a picture of a swing bridge with lights and encouraged the Commissioners to consider a similar project for the East Haddam swing bridge.

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

The regular meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

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