

**East Haddam Economic Development Commission  
East Haddam Business Association  
Special Meeting Minutes  
May 31, 2018**

Attending:; D. Bergeron; R. Casner; J. Fennema; I. Haines; R. Parady; S. Smith;

Absent: J. Albuquerque; K. Staehly; F. Weissbach

Guests: J. Banta; Z. Belcher; V. Bergeron; E. Blaschik; J. Dubai; F. Hunt; J. Leonardo; E. Lyman; L. McLean; A. Meyers; J. Paradis; J. Stone; M. Thiede; S. Wheeler

Mr. Casner called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. Ms. Stone, President of the East Haddam Business Association (EHBA), offered the opening remarks noting that the purpose of the joint meeting was to open up a dialogue among the EHBA, EDC and the Town and discuss ways to partner to support existing businesses and encourage new businesses to come to the Town. The members of EDC and the public introduced themselves.

Ms. Smith described EDC's role and goals and Mr. Casner provided several examples of what has worked in surrounding towns to support existing and encourage new businesses. Mr. Casner stated that the Planning & Zoning Commission (P&Z) is currently working on updating the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development. He recommended the EHBA members review the document and provide P&Z with pertinent input.

Mr. Lyman provided an overview of the Board of Selectmen's role. He stated that he has been attending the Middlesex County Revitalization Commission (MCRC) meetings and noted that the MCRC has been very active in providing loans to local businesses, including non-traditional start-ups.

Ms. Stone reiterated the need for on-going communication among EHBA, EDC and the Board of Selectmen. There was a general discussion about attracting new businesses and planning for the future. The participants also discussed the benefits of businesses supporting one another.

(Judy) noted that there is a lack of information about materials/services offered locally and Ms. Haines suggested creating a list of the materials/services that businesses need. An initial list included: office supplies, specialized field equipment, lab work, business education courses. There was a general discussion regarding conducting a survey to identify businesses, business profiles, and business needs. It was suggested that the survey could be publicized in the East Haddam News.

Mr. Casner stated that EDC could manage the list of businesses in Town and post it on the Town's website. It was noted that the instructions for opening a new business that are posted on the Town's website are geared toward bricks and mortar businesses and are not particularly helpful for home-based businesses. There was a brief discussion regarding groups and conferences that offer business education as well as ideas for innovation and technology development.

Mr. Bergeron suggested focusing their efforts on building bridges between local businesses and the Town's boards and commissions and providing direction on how to navigate those boards/commissions when starting up a new business in Town.

Mr. Casner advised that EDC is also working with the EDC's of Haddam, Chester and Deep River and discussing potential areas of regional cooperation. There was a brief discussion regarding the effects of the Swing Bridge on local businesses.

Ms. Haines recommended identifying goals and creating sub-committees at the next EDC/EHBA joint meeting. The participants agreed to meet again on July 11<sup>th</sup>. Agenda items will include: updating EDC's business list, developing a set of instructions for setting up a home-based business in Town, identifying top priorities for each group.

**THERE BEING NO ADDITIONAL BUSINESS TO DISCUSS, MR BERGERON MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MS. HAINES, TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. UNANIMOUS AYE.**

The regular meeting adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
/s/ Sharon R. Wheeler

Recording Secretary