

East Haddam Economic Development Commission
East Haddam Business Association
Special Meeting Minutes
July 11, 2018

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

Absent: J. Albuquerque; D. Bergeron; R. Parady; K. Staehly; F. Weissbach

Guests: J. Stone; D. Sanders; M. Robly; J. Divine;

I. Call To Order - Mr. Casner called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

Ms. Smith recapped interactions with the East Haddam Business Association (EHBA) since the last joint meeting and noted that EDC and EHBA are collaborating on several projects including updating of EDC's business directory. She reported that they also discussed plans for the Fall weekend event and will continue meeting in informal work sessions on these and other projects.

II. Attendance – Mr. Casner seated Mr. Fennema in place of Mr. Bergeron.

III. Open Discussion with East Haddam Business Association (EHBA) –

Ms. Stone advised that she and Ms. Smith identified the Fall Celebration Weekend, Business Expo, and Shop Local campaign as projects that the EHBA and EDC could collaborate on. She advised that they would like to form committees for each project with representation from both Boards.

In response to a question from Ms. Haines, Mr. Casner advised that he believes that EDC should make the Fall Celebration Weekend a top priority at this time. The group also discussed the Shop Local and Holiday Doors projects. Ms. Haines and Ms. Stone provided additional background regarding plans for both events.

Ms. Smith and Mr. Casner reported that EDC has also been meeting with representatives from the EDCs of Essex, Chester, Deep River, and Haddam and discussing regionalized events and campaigns. They noted that events and opportunities in East Haddam were well represented at those joint EDC meetings.

Ms. Stone stated that she wants to be sure that the results of the Shop Local campaign are tracked. She noted it would be imperative to have the businesses cooperation in this effort. There was a general discussion regarding strategies the businesses could use to track the level of traffic during specific events.

The group also discussed opportunities to ensure that all of the Town's business areas are included in the special events and campaigns. Ms. Stone noted that they have discussed creating teams to represent each of the three business areas in Town and each team would be responsible for reaching out to their area's businesses to ensure inclusiveness.

In response to a question from Mr. Casner regarding next steps, Ms. Stone advised that the EHBA is coordinating a Business Expo at the Town Hall for October 30th. She stated that they are currently planning to schedule several workshops/breakout sessions during which subject matter experts will share their knowledge and provide feedback to the attendees. Some of the topics being considered for the breakout sessions are marketing, social media, business financing, etc. The group discussed opportunities for getting the word out on the Business Expo and how to encourage feedback from the participants.

There was a general discussion regarding the idea of subsidizing business registration(s) during the day of the Business Expo to motivate attendance. The group also brainstormed ideas for showcasing business growth in town

Ms. Smith recommended scheduling a planning meeting for the Fall Celebration Weekend and solicited members for the committee. Several EDC and EHBA members volunteered to work on the committee and a meeting date of August 6th was set. Mr. Fennema noted that a number of excellent ideas had been discussed at the meeting and suggested a written plan for each event be created to capture all of the ideas. The group also discussed creating sub-committees for the Business Expo, 12 Doors, and Shop Local programs.

The attendees scheduled their next joint meeting for August 8th at 7:00 p.m. Ms. Smith suggested the agenda for the meeting should include a brief recap of what had been accomplished since their last meeting and then the committees could break out into working sessions. Ms. Stone recommended that written outlines for each of the events/programs be created for the sub-committees prior to the meeting.

- IV. Business of the Month – August – Nomination/Vote – Mr. Casner nominated Julia Balfour, LLC for the August Business of the Month. He noted that Ms. Balfour has rehabilitated two buildings in the Village and improved the landscaping not only on her properties but also, with the Town’s approval, on one of the small greens in the Village.

Ms. Smith nominated Grandview for the recognition and noted the improvements the owners have done to the property and that they attract tourists to the area. Several other businesses were also discussed for the award and there was a general discussion regarding the nominees.

MOTION MADE BY MS. SMITH, SECONDED BY MR. FENNEMA, TO NAME JULIA BALFOUR, LLC AS THE BUSINESS OF THE MONTH FOR AUGUST 2018. UNANIMOUS AYE.

- V. Adjournment

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:23 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sharon Wheeler