

**East Haddam Economic Development Commission**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**June 6, 2019**

Attending: R. Casner; D. Bergeron; I. Haines; R. Parady; M. Robidoux  
Absent: J. Albuquerque; J. Fennema

Guests: M. Callahan; G. Hamilton; R. Melmed; S. Wheeler

1. Call to Order - Mr. Casner called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.
2. Attendance – Mr. Casner sat Mr. Robidoux for Mr. Fennema.

Mr. Casner noted that there were two guests in attendance that would provide presentations to the Commissioners and stated he would like to allow them the opportunity to speak at the beginning of the meeting. The Commissioners agreed with his recommendation.

Mr. Robidoux introduced Gena Hamilton of eXact Digitalmedia who provided a screen presentation and overview of her company which offers digital destination marketing solutions. Ms. Hamilton responded to several questions from the Commissioners. She also agreed to do a similar presentation for the 5-town EDC tourism sub-committee that Mr. Casner sits on.

Mr. Casner thanked Ms. Hamilton for her presentation and there was a general discussion regarding the benefits of marketing the tourism aspects of the Town.

Mr. Casner introduced Mr. Russell Melmed who was recently confirmed as Director of the Chatham Health District. Mr. Melmed provided an overview of his work history and noted that he has been in his current position for 6 weeks. Mr. Casner reviewed the recent history of the Town's concerns regarding the services provided by Chatham Health District and Mr. Parady expressed his frustration with the customer service he had received in the past. Mr. Melmed reiterated his philosophy regarding customer service and stated that he has an open-door policy for any client to discuss their concerns.

In response to a question raised by Mr. Bergeron, Mr. Melmed advised that he has direct hiring/firing authority and that he proposes a budget for Chatham Health District; however, the board has approval authority on the budget. There was a general discussion regarding opportunities for grant funding for the District.

Mr. Melmed and the Commissioners discussed Mr. Mitchell's planned retirement in the fall. Mr. Melmed confirmed he has already posted the position for an experienced sanitarian but noted that, if a suitable replacement is not found by the time of Mr. Mitchell's retirement, while the Town will receive the same quality of customer service, the quantity of time allotted to East Haddam will be limited since he will have one less sanitarian to cover the six towns in the District.

3. Approval of Minutes

**Regular Meeting – May 2, 2019**

The Commissioners reviewed the minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 2, 2019.

MOTION MADE BY MS. HAINES, SECONDED BY MR. PARADY, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF MAY 2, 2019 AS WRITTEN. UNANIMOUS AYE.

#### 4. Old Business

##### A. Status Reports

###### 1. EDC Chairman Update

- a. Goodspeed Landing – Discussion of this agenda item was postponed.
- b. Building Department – Fee Schedule – Mr. Casner reported that the First Selectmen and Building Inspector are reevaluating the recent increases to the Town's building fees.
- c. New EDC Administrator – Mr. Casner reported that the Town had received several qualified applications for the EDC Administrator position and noted that they had offered the position to Irene Haines who has accepted.

Mr. Casner also reported the following:

- In response to a request by Ryan Scully, he had attended a recent Planning and Zoning Commission meeting in support of Mr. Scully's project for 4800sf of commercial space.
- A stone bench at Heritage Park was recently dedicated to the Town's long-time pharmacist, Jack Herman. He stated that the memorial bench was a joint venture between EDC and the East Haddam Business Association. He noted that the additional monies from the fund-raising campaign will be used to establish a scholarship in Mr. Herman's name which will be administered by the Business Association. Mr. Casner advised that Mr. Herman's children and grandchildren were in attendance at the dedication ceremony and were very appreciative of the Town's efforts in honoring Mr. Herman.

###### 2. First Selectman Update

- a. Transfer Station – Mr. Casner reported that there have been problems with the replacement ram and it is his opinion that the replacement may not be an adequate size for the hopper.

###### 3. Economic Development Administrator Report

- a. Tax Incentive Program – Discussion of this agenda item was postponed.
4. Tourism Committee – Summer Music (Steam Train & River Boat) – Mr. Casner advised that he had received a request for feedback from Essex Steam Train and River Boat's management regarding their plans to dock the Lady Catherine on the Haddam side of the river during the Music on the River events. There was a general discussion regarding this request and the consensus was to "give it a try".
5. EDC/PZC Sub-Committee – New Business District on Lower Town Street (Rt. 82) – Discussion of this agenda item was postponed.

B. Proposed expansion of the industrial area in the IG zone – Discussion of this agenda item was postponed.

C. Chatham Health Oversight Review Committee – Discussion of this agenda item occurred earlier in the meeting and is reported on in the above minutes.

D. Plan of Conservation & Development – Discussion of this agenda item was postponed.

E. Business of the Month – July 2019 Nominations and Vote – Discussion of this agenda item was postponed.

F. Vision/Mission Statement – Discussion of this agenda item was postponed.

5. New Business

A. Commissioner Changes

- a. Irene Haines – Resignation – Mr. Casner advised that, due to Ms. Haines acceptance of a paid position with the Town, she had submitted her resignation to the EDC board.

MOTION MADE BY MR. PARADY, SECONDED BY MR. BERGERON, TO RECOMMEND, WITH REGRET, THAT THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN ACCEPT MS. HAINES RESIGNATION FROM THE BOARD OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION. UNANIMOUS AYE.

- b. Mike Robidoux – Recommend as Regular Member - Mr. Casner advised that, with Ms. Haines resignation, a regular membership has opened up on the board. Mr. Robidoux agreed to Mr. Casner's recommendation that he fill that position.

MOTION MADE BY MR. PARADY, SECONDED BY MR. BERGERON, TO RECOMMEND, THAT THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN CHANGE MR. ROBIDOUX STATUS FROM ALTERNATE TO REGULAR MEMBER OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION. UNANIMOUS AYE.

- c. Jess Stone – Recommend as Alternate Member – Mr. Casner advised that he had spoken with Ms. Stone regarding joining the EDC. The Commissioners agreed that Ms. Stone would be a good addition to the Board.

MOTION MADE BY MR. BERGERON, SECONDED BY MR. PARADY, TO RECOMMEND, THAT THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN APPOINT MS. STONE AS AN ALTERNATE MEMBER OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION. UNANIMOUS AYE.

Mr. Robidoux advised that the East Haddam Business Association is in the preliminary stages of planning its 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Business Expo and requested EDC's support of the event.

MOTION MADE BY MR. CASNER, SECONDED BY MR. PARADY, FOR THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION TO PARTNER WITH THE EAST HADDAM BUSINESS ASSOCIATION FOR THE 2019 BUSINESS EXPO. UNANIMOUS AYE.

6. Public Comment – Mr. Callahan stated that he found Ms. Hamilton's presentation and business model interesting; however, expressed his concern that there is not enough lodging space to accommodate overnight tourism in the CT River towns.

7. Adjournment

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm.

Recorded

Respectfully Submitted,  
Sharon Wheeler