

**East Haddam Economic Development Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
October 3, 2019**

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

Guests: S. Wheeler

1. Call to Order - Mr. Casner called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.
2. Attendance – Attendance was noted.
3. Approval of Minutes

Regular Meeting – August 1, 2019

The Commissioners reviewed the minutes of the Regular Meeting of August 1, 2019.

MOTION MADE BY MR. FENNEMA, SECONDED BY MR. ROBIDOUX, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF AUGUST 1, 2019 AS AMENDED. MR. ALBUQUERQUE AND MS. STONE ABSTAINED FROM THE VOTE AND THE MOTION PASSED BY A MAJORITY OF AYES.

4. Old Business

A. Status Reports

1. EDC Chairman Update

- a. Goodspeed Landing – Mr. Casner reported that the East Haddam Village Revitalization Committee did not meet this month and he expects they will wait until they have the response to the RFP before scheduling their next meeting.
- b. Building Department – Fee Schedule – Mr. Casner reported that the Board of Selectmen had approved a reduction in the Building Department's fee schedule of approximately 25%.

Mr. Casner further reported that he had participated in a tour of the Swingbridge with the Middlesex Chamber of Commerce. He stated that the group had gone up in the tower as well as down in the hole to observe the mechanical systems and noted that the operation of the bridge is completely computerized. Mr. Casner stated that the DOT bridge manager is very aware of how important bridge access is for the local businesses and he is fully supportive of maintaining open communication with them.

2. First Selectman Update

This agenda item was postponed.

3. Economic Development Administrator Report

- a. Tax Incentive Program – Discussion of this agenda item was postponed.

Mr. Casner reported that Ms. Haines had attended a conference regarding the re-use of old manufacturing buildings and he expected her to provide a report on it at the next EDC meeting. There was a brief discussion regarding the status of the old Cumberland Farms and Brownell properties in Moodus.

4. Tourism Committee – Mr. Robidoux reported that the Fall Weekend is scheduled for next weekend and he circulated a brochure for the event. Mr. Casner noted that he was pleased to see so many Town businesses participating with Fall Weekend specials. He also advised that due to the threat of the EEE virus, the Town had cancelled the bonfire that had been scheduled.
5. EDC/PZC Sub-Committee – New Business District on Lower Town Street (Rt. 82) – Mr. Casner reported that the PZC had provide additional guidance regarding potential boundaries to create a Village District zone on lower Town Street. Mr. Fennema presented a map with the originally proposed boundaries and Mr. Casner noted where the PZC had recommended expanding those boundaries.

BASED ON THE FINDINGS OF THE JOINT EDC/PZC SUB-COMMITTEE A MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. ALBUQUERQUE, SECONDED BY MR. ROBIDOUX, TO REQUEST THE BOARD OF FINANCE DESIGNATE FUNDS TO HIRE A CONSULTANT TO PRODUCE A FEASIBILITY STUDY OF THE CREATION OF A VILLAGE ZONE SOUTH OF THE FOUR-CORNERS AREA AND PRESENT SAID FEASIBILITY STUDY TO THE PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION AND AT A PUBLIC MEETING. UNANIMOUS AYE.

The Commissioners discussed the need for infrastructure upgrades, water and sewer, in all of the Town's business zones. There was a general discussion regarding next steps and Mr. Casner recommended putting together a sub-committee to focus on investigating the infrastructure in and around the Town's three business districts and developing recommendations and/or an action plan. He noted that it would be advantageous to hire a consultant to assist in the research and to make a presentation to the Planning & Zoning Commission and Town residents.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. ALBUQUERQUE, SECONDED BY MR. ROBIDOUX, TO REQUEST THE BOARD OF FINANCE DESIGNATE FUNDS TO HIRE A CONSULTANT TO PRODUCE A FEASIBILITY STUDY OF THE EXPANSION OF THE SEWER DISTRICT TO (a) THE FOUR-CORNERS AREA (THE SOUTH AND LOWER PARTS OF TOWN STREET) AND (b) FROM THE FOUR-CORNERS AREA NORTH ALONG ROUTE 151 TO MOODUS VILLAGE AND TO RUN WATER LINES TO ALL OF THE THREE BUSINESS DISTRICTS, AND PRESENT SAID FEASIBILITY STUDY TO THE PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION AND AT A PUBLIC MEETING. UNANIMOUS AYE.

- B. Proposed expansion of the industrial area in the IG zone – Mr. Casner reported that, to date, Shagbark has not taken any further action on their interest in expanding the industrial area in the IG zone.

5. New Business

- A. Business of the Month – Nominations and Vote – It was noted that the September Business of the Month designation had not been presented. The Commissioners therefore agreed to move the approved September and October nominations for Ballek's Garden Center and Eddie's Auto Body to October and November respectively.

Mr. Robidoux advised that the East Haddam Business Association 2nd Annual Business Expo is planned for October 29th. He requested a donation from EDC to assist with the cost of printing for the event.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. FENNEMA, SECONDED BY MR. ALBUQUERQUE, TO DONATE \$125.00 TO THE EAST HADDAM BUSINESS ASSOCIATION FOR THEIR 2019 BUSINESS EXPO, PROVIDED SUFFICIENT FUNDS ARE IN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION'S

BUDGET FOR THE DONATION. MR. ROUBIDOUX AND MS. STONE ABSTAINED FROM THE VOTE AND THE MOTION PASSED BY A MAJORITY OF AYES.

Mr. Albuquerque reported that a resident who is authorized to raise hay on designated open space had inquired about a change of his use of the land. There was a brief discussion about the issue and the Commissioners provided Mr. Albuquerque with information about potential tax benefits as well as information on farming open space land. Mr. Casner recommended the individual contact Ms. Haines for additional direction regarding his request.

6. Public Comment

There was no public comment discussed at the meeting

7. Adjournment

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:02 pm.

Recorded

Respectfully Submitted,
Sharon Wheeler