

**Economic Development Commission**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**April 12, 2012**

Attending: D. Mathiasen; E. Odell; R. Parady; P. Rubenbauer; G. Rucker; P. Simmons (Economic Development Coordinator); F. Weissbach  
Absent: J. Albuquerque; R. Casner  
Guests: C. Scherrer

Mr. Odell called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

**Minutes** – The Commissioners reviewed the minutes of the March 1, 2012 meeting. MR. PARADY MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MR. WEISSBACH TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS WRITTEN. UNANIMOUS AYE.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Status Reports:**

Economic Development Coordinator – Mr. Simmons reviewed several points in his April 1<sup>st</sup> report, a copy of which is attached to and made part of these minutes. He noted that the CT DEEP staff is evaluating two proposals it received for the Sunrise Resort property and provided an update on the status of the Brewery, Coffee House and Brownell projects. Mr. Simmons and the Commissioners also discussed CT's STEAP and Main Street Investment programs.

Ms. Mathiasen asked Mr. Simmons to inform the owners of Jack's Place, the new restaurant at Banner Estates, to contact her about a listing on EDC's website and being included in EDC's business mailings, etc.

Ms. Scherrer introduced herself as the owner of Fish Sister's in East Haddam Village. Hearing and seeing progress in Moodus with streetscape improvements and sidewalks, she asked the Commissioners to consider improvements to East Haddam Village. She acknowledged that the Village is often discussed and studied, but wanted to comment that very little is happening there to keep and attract new businesses. This was her first time attending an EDC meeting and wanted to introduce herself and meet the Commissioners.

East Haddam Village Revitalization Commission – Mr. Odell stated that the Village Revitalization Commission has not met recently. There was a general discussion about next steps for this project.

First Selectman Update – The First Selectman was not in attendance at the meeting and there was no update on this agenda item.

East Haddam Business Association – Ms. Mathiasen reported that next Business Association meeting is scheduled for April 18<sup>th</sup> and Ms. Zibron will host a hands-on social media class. She also advised that the Lions had invited local businesses to set-up tables with sales items at the April 7<sup>th</sup> road race.

Moodus Commercial Infrastructure – There was no update on this agenda item.

Sunrise – This agenda item was discussed under the Economic Development Coordinator's report and is reported on in the minutes above.

Agriculture/Farmers' Market – Recommendations & Sub-Committee

Ms. Rubenbauer advised that the Sub-Committee would like to have a banner made up for the Farmers' Market. Mr. Weissbach noted that the Farmers' Market will be held on the grounds at the Grange on Wednesdays starting June 20<sup>th</sup> thru the end of October. He advised that Mr. Casner agreed to identify the best location for a banner to advertise the event. Mr. Odell thanked Ms. Rubenbauer & Mr. Weissbach for their efforts to get the East Haddam Farmers' Market started this year. Ms. Mathiasen advised that EDC can help promote the event and it also has funds in the budget to assist with some marketing materials, but noted that it would need to involve mainly East Haddam businesses or residents to justify the expense as an economic development pursuit.

There was a general discussion regarding whether the majority of vendors would be East Haddam businesses or come from outside of Town. Ms. Rubenbauer advised that the committee would use the Ag Commission list of identified Ag businesses to invite vendors to participate. Ms. Mathiasen also offered the EDC business list. She will attend an upcoming Farmers Market meeting to discuss publicity.

## Destination Marketing Sub-Committee

Ms. Mathiasen said the plan is to start with a historic walking tour of the Village and then expand it to greater East Haddam. She advised that the goal is to launch the walking tours concurrent with the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the Swingbridge in June 2013. There was a general discussion concerning plans to commemorate the bridge's anniversary. Ms. Mathiasen will contact the First Selectman, East Haddam Historic District Commission and the Historical Society to see if any plans have been discussed.

### **Other Businesses Updates/New Businesses/Events/Tourism:**

Chowder Cookoff – Ms. Mathiasen recapped Mr. Simmons' report on the Chowder Festival and the group considered nominations of organizations to receive donations from the profits of the event. In response to a question from Mr. Odell, Ms. Mathiasen advised that there is \$1286.00 to disburse.

MR. WEISSBACH MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MS. MATHIASEN, TO DONATE THE PROCEEDS OF THE 2012 CHOWDER FESTIVAL AS FOLLOWS: \$100 EACH TO THE SPORTSMEN'S CLUB, THE EAST HADDAM FUEL BANK, AND RAY OF LIGHT FARM, \$186 TO FRIENDS OF GILLETTE CASTLE FOR THE EAST HADDAM STAGE COMPANY OUTDOOR SUMMER THEATER PERFORMANCES, AND \$200 EACH TO THE HARVEST HOUSE, MUSIC ON THE RIVER, THE EAST HADDAM FOOD BANK, AND THE SENSATIONS CHARITABLE FOUNDATION. UNANIMOUS AYE.

Ms. Mathiasen reviewed the income and expenses generated by the event.

State Tourism Marketing – First Selectmen Letter & Request to Fund Conference Attendance – Ms. Mathiasen stated that Mr. Simmons had drafted a letter for the First Selectman to send to the State Tourism Commission requesting that they consider offering some smaller marketing grants so that small municipalities could also take advantage of them.

Ms. Mathiasen advised that the State will be presenting a May 17<sup>th</sup> Tourism Conference, which she has registered to attend and requested reimbursement of the \$89 registration fee.

MR. PARADY MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MR. RUCKER, TO REIMBURSE MS. MATHIASEN \$89 FOR THE REGISTRATION FEE FOR THE CT STATE TOURISM ANNUAL CONFERENCE. UNANIMOUS AYE.

Little League Signage – Ms. Mathiasen advised that the fee to renew the EDC banner at the Little League field is \$100 and the cost to re-do the banner with EDC's new website address would be no more than \$200.

MS. RUBENBAUER MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MR. WEISSBACH, TO ALLOCATE A MAXIMUM OF \$300 FROM THE EDC BUDGET FOR THE FEE TO POST AND UPDATE THE EDC BANNER AT THE LITTLE LEAGUE FIELD. UNANIMOUS AYE.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Tourism Brochure Revisions – Ms. Mathiasen reviewed the changes to the East Haddam Tourism Brochure.

Use of Tax Incentive Program – There was no update on this agenda item.

EDC Ordinance – Goals Rewrite Suggestions – There was no update on this agenda item.

Mail Received – Ms. Mathiasen advised that EDC had received an invitation to a brochure swap at the Tourism District's May 7<sup>th</sup> meeting. She stated that she will attend and bring any brochure East Haddam's businesses would like to contribute.

Public Comment/Other – There was no public comment at the meeting.

MR. ODELL MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MS. RUBENBAUER, TO CHANGE MR. WEISSBACH'S STATUS FROM AN ALTERNATE TO A REGULAR COMMISSIONER. UNANIMOUS AYE.

Ms. Rubenbauer suggested EDC undertake a project to install ornamental lighting on the Swingbridge. She described a similar project that was carried out in Davenport, IA and distributed copies of a picture of that bridge. The Commissioners discussed her suggestion and Mr. Simmons stated he would float the idea by the CT DOT. Mr. Odell suggested involving the Haddam EDC in the project.

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:41 p.m.

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