

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES - DRAFT
MONDAY, MAY 8, 2017 – 7:00PM
NEW HARTFORD TOWN HALL**

PRESENT: Mary Ann Gunning, David Krimmel, Donna LaPlante, Lori LaMere; Mark Russo; Alternates Bill Baxter and Commission Secretary Debbie Ventre.

ABSENT: Robert Boyan, Jim Brett, Jack Casey, Shelley Lloyd, Alternate John Burdick

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: First Selectman Dan Jerram (7:13 pm), Selectman Laura Garay and Karen Gauthier (8:24 pm)

Chairman Russo called the meeting to order at 7:08 pm.

1. CALL TO ORDER AND SEATING OF ALTERNATES.

Mr. Baxter was seated for Jim Brett.

2. BANNER DESIGN

Mr. Schaller was unable to attend the meeting, but provided design samples to Chairman Russo. Mr. Russo displayed the suggested banner designs at \$100 to \$115 each for an order of 26 units. Mr. Baxter inquired about the size of the banners. Mr. Russo indicated that the prior ones were 28" x 60". Mr. Krimmel confirmed that the existing banners are 28" x 60". Mr. Baxter clarified that these banners would be displayed all year long.

Mr. Krimmel commented that he had thought we would have all four seasons reflected on each banner, but the individual designs are very nice too. Ms. Gunning commented that having all four seasons on one banner would be too busy.

Ms. Gunning suggested adding swimming, kayaking and playground/skatepark. Ms. LaMere suggested canoeing and Stand Up Paddleboarding.

MOTION Mr. Krimmel, second Mr. Baxter, to order 4 designs of the new banners for installation.

AMENDED MOTION Mrs. LaPlante, second Mr. Baxter, to order 2 each of 13 designs of the new banners for installation.

Mr. Krimmel opened discussion to note that there are banners in 26 locations around town and perhaps some of the locations are not appropriate. He would suggest that the locations be evaluated carefully rather than just automatically replacing the existing ones. Ms. Gunning suggested that banners should be placed along 202 to attract the notice of travelers passing through on that route.

Mrs. LaPlante suggested that the locations be decided at the next meeting. First Selectman Jerram commented that it sounds like all are in agreement to replace the existing banners.

Mr. Krimmel called the motion. Ms. LaMere noted she had another comment. Mr. Krimmel withdrew the call. Ms. LaMere suggested that 2 of the banners have an Ovation Guitar since that is a big draw to New Hartford. Chairman Russo questioned if that should wait until later and ask them to sponsor a banner.

Mr. Baxter called the vote. *Unanimously Approved.*

Chairman Russo presented a potential font and will purchase the font to mock up the motto and send it to Secretary Ventre for distribution and vote by email.

3. SIGNATURE EVENT FOR NEW HARTFORD

Chairman Russo indicated that since Jeremy is not present this topic will be addressed at a later meeting.

Mr. Krimmel mentioned an event years ago with kayak racing on the Farmington River that he had discussed with Jack Casey where they had 50 or 60 participants. He had asked Mr. Casey if he would be willing to pull information together on how the event was handled in the past. Mr. Krimmel expressed concern about the permissions needed for the mountain biking event.

Mr. Krimmel noted that he would also like to see an expansion of the fishing attraction beyond just catching fish to have a fly casting competition on the Hurley property. Ms. Gunning suggested that an historical program on the various historic points on the river would be very nice and highlighted potential stops for a day visit. Since both of these events would need to be joint efforts with Barkhamsted she would like to see this Commission work more closely with the Barkhamsted EDC. She noted that someone from Winsted brought her brochures to the Eastern States Exposition and questioned if several area towns could group together to get a table at the Eastern States Exposition and promote local attractions.

4. MEDIA KIT / MARKETING / BRANDING PROPOSAL

Chairman Russo asked Mr. Krimmel if he had an update in Ms. Lloyd's absence. No additional information to provide.

5. DESIGN PROPOSAL AND SOURCE FOR ZIP CODE DECALS

Chairman Russo shared designs for new decals and suggests that we order 250 of the black & white at \$139, 100 of the camouflage design at \$74 and 100 of the green at \$74.

Mr. Jerram suggested that we order only the green design. Mr. Baxter agreed and said, order a couple hundred green ones and see how they go.

MOTION Ms. LaPlante, second Mr. Baxter, to order 250 of the green decals and 100 of the black decals. *Unanimously Approved.*

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

January 9, 2017 regular meeting

Approval of the minutes of the January 9, 2017 regular meeting was postponed due to insufficient members present who attended the meeting.

April 24, 2017 special meeting

MOTION Ms. Gunning, second Mr Krimmel, to approve the minutes of the April 24, 2017 special meeting. *Unanimously approved.* Ms. LaMere abstained.

7. UPDATE – DISCOVERNWCT – John Burdick

Mr. Burdick was not present to provide an update.

8. CURRENT BUDGET BALANCE/BUDGET PROPOSAL

Secretary Ventre passed around copies of the current year's budget report. Mr. Baxter questioned if the budget balance would be sufficient to cover the items that were just approved. Chairman Russo noted that it would have been sufficient prior to the charges for Miles of Smiles for the maps that was charged to the EDC without discussion. First Selectman Jerram described the additions to the sample map that will appear on the final version. The charges are to pay for an advertising box to offset the cost of adding Jones Mountain hiking trails, Brodie Park and Farmington River areas. Mr. Jerram indicated that he believes the maps will fit well into the EDC's planned media kit.

Ms. LaPlante suggested that we pursue completing the banner projects and wait to order the zip code decals until July.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS TO PROPERLY COME BEFORE THE COMMISSION

Ms. Gunning noted that she has asked for the Litchfield Hills Triathlon to be added to the next several month's agendas.

She has spoken with Recreation Director, Christy Tellier who will arrange for a contest among school children and camp attendees to design and create posters to be

displayed in storefronts to advertise the Triathlon. Additionally she wants to have a board displayed at Brodie detailing the amazing prizes that she solicited for donations since at last year's event they did not announce the prizes that individuals won. For example the first prize person was announced as winning a can of beer, but in fact they also won tickets to Ski Sundown. She also plans to have a poster board with all the area businesses offering discounts to participants. Due to her commitments to her guests on the day of the event she was not able to get to the event until 10 and will have the same issue this year so she plans to solicit volunteers to ensure the Business Council table is manned. She is hoping to arrange for a food truck to attend at the event. Mr. Jerram commented that food truck permits are \$25 and are strictly regulated by the Selectmen. Mrs. LaPlante commented that she believes that for a special event such as this where the activities are happening at a time and place where local restaurants are not readily available the vendor permit should be approved.

Ms. Gunning noted that the purpose of having the food truck at the event is really for the spectators and family members who come along to support the athletes. She has received feedback that there was nothing available at the transition area last year. She also received feedback that we did not have enough spectators along the route to support the participants. She and Christy are going to work with the schools to try to get more students interested in coming out to cheer on the participants.

Mr. Krimmel commented that this Commission's purpose is to increase business atmosphere in the Town of New Hartford which in turn creates tax revenue for the town. Most of that revenue comes from Real Estate taxes. He would like to look outside that boundary and consider whether any town owned properties could be considered for sale in order to generate funds for the Open Space proposal for the Butler property.

MOTION Mr. Krimmel, second Ms. LaPlante to send a letter to the Board of Selectmen suggesting that they form a committee to look into the inventory of town owned properties to identify those which could successfully be sold.

Mr. Baxter noted that this suggestion ties in well with an article in today's paper about declining population and how this Commission can proactively and strategically position this town for success. Mr. Jerram respectfully disagreed as he believes New Hartford has seen new business growth over the past several years which outpaced our neighbors. Mrs. LaPlante clarified that residents need to understand that life is going to change and she agrees that looking at the town owned land is a good start. She noted that we started last week with the Regional Referendum in one polling place which was successful and saved several thousand dollars.

Mr. Krimmel added that if the Selectmen form this committee they could also look at potential future uses for the school buildings to be prepared for the time when student enrollment drops low enough that all students can attend Ann Antolini School.

Ms. Gunning recalled the multi-Commission forum held several years ago and noted that one of the discussion points that came out of that meeting was the need for better communication with residents. Chairman Russo noted that corporations and towns all

suffer from the silo effect. He has requested joint meetings in the past with other Commissions, but other Commissions seem reluctant to do so.

Mr. Krimmel called for a vote on the motion.

Unanimously approved.

10. ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION Mr. Baxter, second Ms. LaMere, to adjourn at 8:49 pm; *Unanimously approved.*

Respectfully submitted,

**Debbie Ventre
Commission Secretary**