

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES - DRAFT
MONDAY, AUGUST 14, 2017 – 7:00PM
NEW HARTFORD TOWN HALL**

PRESENT: Mary Ann Gunning, Donna LaPlante, Lori LaMere, Shelley Lloyd, Mark Russo; Alternates John Burdick and Midge Langston and Commission Secretary Debbie Ventre.

ABSENT: Jim Brett, Jack Casey, Alternate Bill Baxter

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: None

Chairman Russo called the meeting to order at 7:06 pm.

1. CALL TO ORDER AND SEATING OF ALTERNATES.

Ms. Langston was seated for Mr. Brett. Mr. Burdick was seated for Mr. Casey.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

July 10, 2017 regular meeting

MOTION Mr. Burdick, second Ms. Lloyd, to approve the minutes of the July 10, 2017 regular meeting. *Unanimously approved.*

4. MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

Chairman Russo announced that Mr. Krimmel has submitted his resignation. There are now 2 full seats available on the Commission.

3. CTVISIT Presentation – October 16 – Mary Ann Gunning

Ms. Gunning offered a conclusion on the Litchfield Hills Triathlon noting that there were 196 participants. She also noted that the bananas cost less than projected. Kim Hanson from Torrington Savings Bank spoke with about 30 people at the pre-registration on Saturday. There was not Business Council table on Sunday as no one was available to man it. She shared a letter from the Hartford Marathon Group thanking her for her efforts and acknowledging the donation from the EDC.

Ms. Lloyd inquired if the discount information was provided in the registration packet so that participants had the information before the race since her husband participates in these events and does not typically stay around afterward. She wondered if discounts could be valid for a longer period to encourage participants to return at another time.

Mr. Burdick stated that he commends Ms. Gunning for all the effort she put into this event and coordinating all the discounts. Ms. LaMere agreed.

Chairman Russo noted that offering another event in the downtown area after the Triathlon might encourage local people to return after showering. Ms. Lloyd commented that having food available at Brodie might be an opportunity for our local vendors to have more exposure.

Mr. Burdick commented that there is a CycleCross event on the Recreation calendar which might offer another opportunity to address the possibility of getting food vendors at Brodie.

CTVISIT – Ms. Gunning stated that on October 16th, the CT Visit presentation would have been between 10 and 2 and she vigorously appealed to them that EDC members would like to be present and would be unable to attend at that time. They have agreed to present at 5 pm. A discussion continued about who should be invited to the presentation. Secretary Ventre had compiled an invitation list from the Assessor's business list and the Business Council membership of those businesses that meet the State criteria to be featured on their site. She had also included the suggestions made by Ms. Lloyd and Mr. Burdick following the last meeting. Ms. LaPlante suggested that specific invitations be sent to those who meet the criteria but that the event be open to the public. All agreed that the invitation should describe the event as an opportunity to promote New Hartford as a tourism destination but that inclusion on the website is subject to Connecticut Office of Tourism guidelines.

Mr. Burdick commented that as the municipal budgets are tighter, the Commission needs to investigate options to fulfill their mission without expense and participation on the State tourism website is just such an opportunity.

Chairman Russo indicated that he would like all members to review the list and add to the invitees. They should send suggestions to Secretary Ventre. There are only a few towns on the CTVisit site so this represents a great opportunity to have our town businesses seen on this site. Secretary Ventre will send a notice to all Commissioners to ensure those who are not present can assist in preparing for this important event.

5. BANNERS

Chairman Russo expressed that he has received photos from Ski Sundown, Lori's daughter and then reached out to Jeremy for a mountain biking photo. He has found a free site where he located some canoeing photos. He asks that all members try to locate a free fall hiking or stand up paddleboarding photo and submit them to Secretary Ventre within the next 24 hours. He believes that we will then have sufficient photos to choose from to be able to move this project forward.

6. CURRENT BUDGET BALANCE

Secretary Ventre noted that no funds had been expended from the EDC budget aside from her invoice for July and the bananas. Additionally, she noted that the invoice for the New England Real Estate Journal advertisement would not be charged to EDC.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS TO PROPERLY COME BEFORE THE COMMISSION

Ms. Gunning inquired about the signs that EDC had ordered. She would like to order a lodging sign to be placed on Church Street. Disappointment was expressed that the hiking sign at the intersection of 202 and East Cotton Hill Road has again been stolen.

Ms. Lloyd commented that she had a conversation with Mr. Krimmel about the media kit folders. She hesitates to put time in for something that will not be funded. Chairman Russo noted that we should get the banner project completed and then consider moving forward with the media kit.

8. ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION Mr. Burdick, second Ms. Lloyd, to adjourn at 8:25 pm; *Unanimously approved.*

Respectfully submitted,

**Debbie Ventre
Commission Secretary**