

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2019 – 7:00PM
NEW HARTFORD TOWN HALL**

PRESENT: John Burdick, Donna LaPlante, Shelley Lloyd, Polly Pobuda, Meg Toro,
Commission Secretary: Debbie Ventre

ABSENT: Jack Casey; Brian Watson; Alternate Bill Baxter;

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:

Chairman Meg Toro called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

1. CALL TO ORDER AND SEATING OF ALTERNATES.

No alternates were seated as a quorum was present.

2. GUEST SPEAKER – Mike Lucas

Ms. Toro noted that although the Zoning Enforcement Officer had committed to attend the November meeting, he did not realize that the EDC meeting fell on the same week as another event he needs to attend. He sends his apologies and is willing to attend a future meeting, perhaps in January.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

October 07, 2019 Regular Meeting

MOTION Ms. Lloyd, second Ms. Pobuda, to approve the minutes of the October 07, 2019 regular meeting as amended.

Unanimously approved.

Ms. Pobuda commented that Mr. Perry's name was misspelled in the minutes. After a discussion about the correct spelling it was suggested that he be listed as L. Perry.

4. APPROVAL OF 2020 MEETING SCHEDULE

Ms. Toro shared the meeting schedule that Secretary Ventre had prepared.

MOTION Mr. Burdick, second Ms. Lloyd, to approve the 2020 meeting schedule.

Unanimously approved.

(Note: A subsequent motion later in the meeting amended the meeting schedule to remove the December meeting date.)

5. BUSINESS SURVEY UPDATE

Ms. Toro noted that we were supposed to hear from the business council about sending an email to encourage membership to participate in our survey. She noted that she has been asking around to businesses and they have indicated they will not complete the survey but would be interested in a business roundtable. A general brainstorming session could be scheduled, perhaps in the Senior Center upstairs.

Ms. Lloyd commented that the Agribusiness forum was well received and perhaps a general business event could be scheduled for February or March.

Ms. Toro noted that the Chair of the Commission on Aging, Laura Garay inquired about survey monkey and whether the account is a town account and could be utilized for a short survey. In the spirit of camaraderie, it was agreed that the EDC would be willing to assist with their survey. Ms. Pobuda suggested that the Seniors should be encouraged to sign up for the town emails.

6. UPDATE FROM TRAILS COMMITTEE

Mr. Baxter was not in attendance to provide an update.

7. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

Ms. Toro noted that the Dunkin Donuts is scheduled to open this weekend. The drive-thru is closed this week for the transition. Petricone's is opening a pharmacy downtown by the end of the winter. Ms. Lloyd commented that the tenants told her that the Marandinos want to sell the grocery business. Mr. Burdick noted that both the property and the business are listed for sale.

Upcoming Holiday events include Light New Hartford on Sunday, December 1, the Bakerville Library Holiday Festival on Friday, December 6 and the Women's Club Breakfast with Santa on Sunday, December 8th. Mr. Burdick was asked if flashlights are needed for Light New Hartford. It was agreed that all the remaining flashlights will be given to Light New Hartford.

Ms. Toro noted that she had received a letter of resignation from member Pat Casey as he is moving out of state. With Mary Ann moving out of town, that leaves 2 full seats vacant on the Commission as well as Robin Buzzi's alternate seat.

Ms. Toro questioned whether next month's meeting should be cancelled as Ms. LaPlante and Ms. Ventre cannot be there and others may have holiday commitments.

MOTION Ms. Lloyd, second Mr. Burdick, to cancel the December meeting for this year and amend next year's schedule to omit the December date.

Unanimously approved.

8. CURRENT BUDGET / DISCUSSION

Since Bookkeeper Witte was out last week, Secretary Ventre was not able to send out the updated budget information. Ms. Witte returned today and Ms. Ventre obtained the updated report this afternoon. She passed around copies of the updated spreadsheet to the membership.

Ms. Lloyd commented that she would like to see us add a Spring event. Fall we have Celebrate New Hartford with Open Farm Day and New Hartford Day, Winter is Light New Hartford and summer should be the Litchfield Hills Triathlon. The Fishing Derby could be a Spring event but it did not happen last year. Mr. Burdick noted that the river is a huge asset and we should promote it more. Ms. LaPlante inquired about the kayak race event that was held previously.

Ms. LaPlante and Mr. Burdick shared that the Business Council has provided the funds to have the gardens cleared up in Calder Way and the work is slated to begin December 2nd.

Ms. Lloyd noted that the banners for Celebrate New Hartford were wonderful and if we have funds left this year we should consider ordering additional banners or banners for other events.

Ms. LaPlante noted that she was thinking of inviting the Grange to participate in Open Farm Day since they may have less involvement with New Hartford Day. She thought that perhaps picking up passports at 2 central locations like Town Hall and the Grange might be an option.

Mr. Burdick noted that he would like to see us support the Triathlon more perhaps by facilitating volunteers. Ms. Lloyd suggested rather than buying bananas we should ask what they would need. She will liaison with Mark to coordinate.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS TO PROPERLY COME BEFORE THE COMMISSION

Ms. Ventre commented that Small Business Saturday is coming. Anita Barden had spoken with Pat Casey about a window decorating contest and consistent lights among the local businesses, but had not heard anything further.

Ms. Lloyd noted that she had spoken with Glenn at Farm River Café about potential art shows in the downtown businesses. Mr. Burdick noted that Glenn has shelves where he allows the craft businesses from the Hurley to advertise.

Ms. Pobuda noted that Ski Sundown used to participate in Light New Hartford she would like to see more holiday promotion for downtown. Ms. Lloyd noted that it is too late now, but she would like to see some sort of decorating competition next year.

10. ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION Mr. Burdick, second Ms. Pobuda, to adjourn at 7:58 pm; *Unanimously approved.*

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Ventre, Commission Secretary