



TOWN OF OLD SAYBROOK Economic Development Commission

302 Main Street • Old Saybrook, Connecticut 06475
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David Prendergast, Chair
Kacie Costello Hand, Vice Chair
Sandra Roberts, Secretary/Treasurer

Judy Ganswindt
Nick Prevost
Elizabeth Swenson
Susan Quish
Erica Cosenza, Alternate
Michael Bender, Alternate

MEETING MINUTES

HYBRID MEETING

Thursday, April 13, 2023 – 6:30 P.M.
Town Hall, 2nd Floor Conference Room
302 Main Street, Old Saybrook

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair, David Prendergast, called the meeting to order at 6:38 P.M.

II. ROLL CALL

Members present: David Prendergast, Kacie Costello Hand – Virtual, Susan Quish, Erica Cosenza, Judy Ganswindt

Members absent: Sandra Roberts, Michael Bender, Nick Prevost, Elizabeth Swenson

Staff: Jennifer Donahue, Director of Economic Development & Communications

III. PUBLIC QUESTION & COMMENT – None

IV. GUESTS – None

V. STAFF REPORT

Ms. Donahue presented her staff report (attached). She added that Mr. Bender had reported by email that the Goodwin Gallop was successful and raised nearly \$10,000 for the Goodwin PTA. Several award winners who received \$aybucks asked where they could eat around town.

VI. REGULAR BUSINESS

A. March 9, 2023 Meeting Minutes

MOTION to approve the meeting minutes of March 9, 2023 as presented **MADE** by E. Consenza; **SECONDED** by K. Hand **VOTING IN FAVOR:** K. Hand, E. Cosenza; **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINING:** D. Prendergast, J. Ganswindt, S. Quish; **APPROVED:** 2-0-3

B. Correspondence & Announcements

Ms. Donahue reported that the Zoning Commission has sent out notices to local businesses about removing unpermitted signage. This is something that was not enforced during the pandemic.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. Saybrook Business Social & Screening

Ms. Donahue had previously reported that approximately 70 people attended the screening which went well. Mr. Fortuna would like to continue to have at least one business event annually. Commissioners discussed what kind of special presentations might be done in the future in the absence of a television segment like the event was lucky to have this time. Mr. Prendergast noted how well done the Road Trip Masters segment was and what a good job its host did of presenting at the event. Mr. Fortuna also spoke very strongly about the new marketing efforts that will take place on behalf of the business community.

VIII. ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Marketing RFP - Recommendation

Mr. Prendergast detailed the efforts of the subcommittee in evaluating the marketing proposals that were submitted. He thanked Ms. Quish, Ms. Cosenza and Ms. Donahue for their work on the review process which he joined in the interview phase for the final five candidates. Ms. Cosenza talked about the final process of bringing the process to two finalists and Ms. Donahue revealed the recommendation for the marketing contract to be Miranda Creative, detailing the reasons the firm was ultimately selected including price, relevant project experience, local connections, positive feedback from other clients, breadth of staff expertise and ability to jump in in anticipation of the summer season. Brief additional discussion followed.

MOTION to accept the recommendation of the Marketing RFP Subcommittee to offer a marketing contract to Miranda Creative. **MADE** by S. Quish; **SECONDED** by E. Cosenza **VOTING IN FAVOR:** K. Hand, E. Cosenza, D. Prendergast, S. Quish, J. Ganswindt **ABSTAINING:** None; **OPPOSED:** None. **APPROVED:** 5-0-0

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. Discuss Plan for Inventories of Main Street, Route 1 & Mariner's Way

Ms. Donahue reported that the EDC's clerk, Ms. Makowicki is available to work over the summer on the parking and business inventories. She has experience with GIS and doing an inventory of historic buildings in town. She is available mid-May through the second week in August. Ms. Donahue asked Ms. Hand to provide some guidance on the process. It was agreed that the process would begin with Main Street and proceed to Route 1 with Mariner's Way on hold because of the consultant review that will go on in that area.

X. COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR - None

XI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION to adjourn the meeting of Thursday April 13, 2023 until the next regularly scheduled hybrid meeting of the Economic Development Commission on May 11, 2023 at 6:30 pm, Town Hall, 302 Main Street, second-floor conference room; **MADE** by J. Ganswindt; **SECONDED** by E. Cosenza **VOTING IN FAVOR:** K. Hand, E. Cosenza, D. Prendergast, S. Quish, J. Ganswindt **ABSTAINING:** None; **OPPOSED:** None. **APPROVED:** 5-0-0

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Donahue
Director of Economic Development & Communications

Economic Development Report – April 13, 2023 EDC Meeting

Business Development

Five proposals were received in response to the 2023 Mariner's Way RFP.

First Saybrook Business Social & Screening was a success with about 70ish attendees. The first selectman would like to have at least one annual event for businesses going forward.

Marketing

\$500 in \$aybucks was distributed to the Goodwin Gallop for prizes.

\$200 in \$aybucks was offered as prizes for attendees to the Saybrook Business Social & Screening at the Kate.

The business e-newsletter was revived this month.

Social media postings on Facebook were made to promote the Saybrook Business Social & Screening as well as other personal outreach and outreach through the Chamber for this event.

Events

The Art Hallway will switch over from Cindy Stevens to Andria Alex at the end of April/beginning of May. Andria would like to have a small opening reception. We are still working out potential details. She suggested Friday, May 5. I suggested before our regular EDC meeting on May 11.

First annual Saybrook Street Party is scheduled for Sunday, June 25th. A collaboration between the town, including the OSPD, the Chamber of Commerce and the Kate, Main Street will be closed between Sheffield and Elm Street. Three live bands will be spread out along the street as well as food and other vendors. A major sponsor has already been identified. This is part of a summer kick-off which will begin on Saturday with a Sale into Summer event sponsored by the Chamber.

Save the date for Saybrook Starlight Festival! Saturday, December 2nd. First full committee meeting will be held on April 20th.

Grants

- **DEEP Trails Grant** – Still waiting to hear on this project to finish developing the riverfront walk at Saybrook Point and continuing through to a scenic overlook connecting to a new trail through Gardiner's Landing which will join with Fort Saybrook Park. This includes an educational component detailing the history and environmental significance of the site along with new pollinator gardens and picnic tables. The grant is for approximately \$500,000 with a 20% town match for a total project of more than \$600,000. We should find out anytime now if we have been selected.
- **2020 Community Connectivity Grant Program (CCGP)** – A contractor has been chosen for this project which includes nearly \$600,000 worth of sidewalks extending from Agway to the Mobil station and possibly onto Elm Street.

- **2022 STEAP Grant** – The application for \$500,000 has been approved to construct/connect sidewalks from the Westbrook town line to the intersection with Old Post Road. Westbrook also received a grant for sidewalks on their side to complete the construction. Design is underway on this project by Nathan Jacobsen; awaiting signed contract with the state.
- **Main Street Crosswalks** – Three projects are ahead of this one in the queue for the services for the town engineer. \$500,000 in ARPA funding has been allocated to assist with the crosswalks along Main Street, while the crosswalk at the intersection of Main and Route 1 is to be covered by a previously awarded grant.