



TOWN OF OLD SAYBROOK Economic Development Commission

302 Main Street • Old Saybrook, Connecticut 06475
Telephone (860) 395-3139 • FAX (860) 395-3125

Matthew Pugliese, Chair
Carol Conklin, Vice Chair
John DeCristoforo, Secretary/Treasurer

David Cole
Judy Ganswindt
Sandra Roberts
Elizabeth Swenson
Joseph Arcari, Alternate
David Prendergast, Alternate

MEETING MINUTES

August 13, 2020
7:00 pm

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair, Matt Pugliese, called the meeting to order at 7:03pm.

II. ROLL CALL

Meeting held via videoconference.

Members present: Matthew Pugliese, John DeCristoforo, David Cole, Elizabeth Swenson, and David Prendergast

Members absent: Carol Conklin, Judy Ganswindt, Sandra Roberts, and Joseph Arcari

Staff: Susie Beckman, Economic Development Director, and Meryl Moskowitz, Recording Clerk

III. PUBLIC QUESTION & COMMENT

IV. STAFF REPORT

Economic Development Director, Susie Beckman asked members for comments on the “Draft Annual Report.” The following comments were made:

- update the list of Commission members
- under 'Marketing,' last sentence, include dealing with post-pandemic operations
- under 'Marketing,' add a 4th statement about measuring results of marketing efforts, include metrics
- under 'Year in Review' add a subheading for Covid 19 Response & Recovery

V. REGULAR BUSINESS

A. Approval of Minutes: July 9, 2020

MOTION to approve the Meeting Minutes of July 9, 2020 amended to state David Prendergast was absent; **MADE** by D. Cole; **SECONDED** by J. DeCristoforo;; **VOTED IN FAVOR**: M. Pugliese, J. DeCristoforo, D. Cole, E. Swenson; **OPPOSED**: none; **ABSTAINED**: D. Prendergast; **APPROVED**: 4-0-1.

B. Correspondence & Announcements

VI. OLD BUSINESS

A. Small Business & Employment Recovery Update

M. Pugliese reported that the Board of Finance approved a PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) purchasing program, which will be handled through Emergency Management, whereby there will be a revolving fund used to purchase PPE, to allow Old Saybrook businesses to purchase PPE at prices that the town purchased them at, which may be as much as 75% savings. A flyer will be sent to every business in Old Saybrook, and a web site will be set up for purchasing.

VII. ADVISORY GROUP REPORTS

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Review of Economic Development Strategy Plan

M. Pugliese asked members to state their top five priorities within the Economic Development Strategy Plan that they believe will catalyze additional development. Members provided their input, which M. Pugliese summarized as follows:

- development of a pedestrian bridge over the train tracks into Research Parkway and into Mariner's Way
- engineering work for Route 1 boulevard through Mariner's Way
- examination of Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) and how businesses are impacted by zoning restrictions
- facade improvements, and exploration of revolving loans to finance them
- affordable housing and versatile housing, and the role of a housing authority
- waste water and how it restricts development and affects our tax base
- bike lanes throughout the community, helps to promote a healthier community, drives tourism, is an element of place making, look at connectivity from Schoolhouse Road to Ferry Point.

D. Cole brought up that the federal government plans to build a new railroad bridge across the CT River, and the possibilities this would open up for the Town to gain access to the river off of Ferry Road. All agreed the Town should stay on top of this to see if any land not used can be obtained, perhaps by getting access to the old right of way.

S. Beckman agreed it's important that the town stay involved with this topic and be on top of opportunities such as potentially gaining public access to the river.

MOTION to present the Economic Development Strategy Plan and priorities to the Board of Selectmen at an upcoming meeting of the Board of Selectmen, **MADE** by J. DeCristoforo, **SECONDED** by D. Prendergast; **VOTED IN FAVOR**: M. Pugliese, J. DeCristoforo, D. Cole, E. Swenson, D. Prendergast; **OPPOSED**: none; **ABSTAINED**: none; **APPROVED**: 5-0-0.

IX. COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR

M. Pugliese thanked members for the discussion of priorities within the Economic Development Strategy Plan. He would like to invite Rich Szierka of Sierka Lang Marketing to an upcoming meeting to discuss and recommend marketing options.

X. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION to adjourn the meeting at 8:19pm until the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Economic Development Commission which will be held on Thursday, September 10, 2020 at 7:00 P.M., via videoconference; **MADE** by D. Cole, **SECONDED** by J. DeCristoforo; **VOTED IN FAVOR**: M. Pugliese, J. DeCristoforo, D. Cole, E. Swenson, D. Prendergast; **OPPOSED**: none; **ABSTAINED**: none; **APPROVED**: 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Meryl Moskowitz
Recording Clerk