



TOWN OF OLD SAYBROOK Economic Development Commission

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

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

MEETING MINUTES

September 10, 2020

Teleconference

7:00 pm

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair, Matt Pugliese, called the meeting to order at 7:06pm.

II. ROLL CALL

Meeting held via videoconference.

Members present: Matthew Pugliese, John DeCristoforo, David Cole, Judy Ganswindt, David Prendergast, Carol Conklin, Sandra Roberts

Members absent: Elizabeth Swenson, Joseph Arcari

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

Guests: Judy Sullivan, Executive Director, Old Saybrook Chamber of Commerce; Rich Scierka and Jeff Strakosch of Scierka Lang Marketing

Public: Bruce Carlson

III. PUBLIC QUESTION & COMMENT

IV. GUESTS

Judy Sullivan, Executive Director of the Old Saybrook Chamber of Commerce discussed some of the outreach of the Chamber over the past few months, in particular a promotion to aid restaurants and encourage people to dine out, called 'the great takeout giveaway' during which time 50 restaurant gift cards valued at \$100 each were randomly given away.

J. Sullivan explained that a great concern of restaurant owners is viability through the colder weather, combined with restrictions on indoor dining. She stated that the Chamber is considering a future 'shop local' raffle, which perhaps the EDC could team up on with the Chamber. Regarding non-profits, many fundraisers have been canceled and so revenue is a concern. She noted that traffic into town and to the Chamber office has been steady over the summer, and that many are out of state visitors.

Rich Scierka of Scierka Lang Marketing reviewed a draft of a marketing plan that offers two distinct campaign messages: 1) peace of mind campaign, targeted to people looking to leave cities and

2) a campaign promoting local businesses within a 30 mile radius that highlights recreation, restaurants, and retail. He explained that they are strategizing how to make the promotion available and affordable to our small businesses, to take advantage of group advertising. He explained it would be turnkey and the businesses would share in the cost. Details such as cost would need to be ironed out.

V. STAFF REPORT

Economic Development Director Susie Beckman referred members to the Economic Development Reported dated September 10, 2020. Most important she noted is the PPE Program made possible by the Recovery Taskforce Small Business & Employment Working Group, working with the police department to make available the PPE purchasing program. The program provides PPE to Old Saybrook businesses at lower costs and can be found at oldsaybrookppe.com

VI. REGULAR BUSINESS

A. Approval of Minutes: August 13, 2020

MOTION to approve the Meeting Minutes of August 13, 2020; **MADE** by D. Cole; **SECONDED** by D. Prendergast; **VOTED IN FAVOR**: M. Pugliese, C. Conklin, J. DeCristoforo, D. Cole, J. Ganswindt, S. Roberts, and D. Prendergast; **OPPOSED**: none; **ABSTAINED**: none; **APPROVED**: 7-0-0.

B. Correspondence & Announcements

MOTION to approve expenditure of \$120 to renew membership in the Old Saybrook Chamber of Commerce; **MADE** by M. Pugliese; **SECONDED** by D. Cole; **VOTED IN FAVOR**: M. Pugliese, C. Conklin, J. DeCristoforo, D. Cole, J. Ganswindt, S. Roberts, and D. Prendergast; **OPPOSED**: none; **ABSTAINED**: none; **APPROVED**: 7-0-0.

S. Beckman reported that she spoke to a potential developer regarding housing in the Ferry Point area, and the question arose whether the TIF district extends to Ferry Point. It was agreed that it does not. Members discussed whether there is interest in extending the TIF district, or creating a new district. Members agreed it is worth exploring. S. Beckman is to gather more information.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. Small Business & Employment Task Force Recovery Update

M. Pugliese reported that the Task Force is doing one-on-one confidential interviews with business owners to hear their concerns and get a snapshot of how they've been impacted by the pandemic.

VIII. ADVISORY GROUP REPORTS

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. 2020-21 Marketing Plan

Members discussed the marketing plan. There was general agreement with the direction and flexibility offered by the two campaigns, one directed at getting people to move here, the other directed at getting people to visit. It was also pointed out that spending on media buys can be stopped, suspended, or

shifted, depending on results and changing conditions. Members were in agreement to offer the online advertising to Old Saybrook businesses, with the understanding that businesses would share in the cost, and that it would need to be at an affordable price.

C. Conklin left the meeting at 8:20pm.

MOTION to approve the 2020-21 Marketing Plan as presented, with a budget of \$16,000; **MADE** by J. DeCristoro; **SECONDED** by J. Ganswindt; **VOTED IN FAVOR**: M. Pugliese, J. DeCristoforo, D. Cole, J. Ganswindt, S. Roberts, and D. Prendergast; **OPPOSED**: none; **ABSTAINED**: none; **APPROVED**: 6-0-0.

MOTION to offer the online advertising campaign to Old Saybrook businesses; **MADE** by M. Pugliese; **SECONDED** by J. Ganswindt; **VOTED IN FAVOR**: M. Pugliese, J. DeCristoforo, D. Cole, J. Ganswindt, S. Roberts, and D. Prendergast; **OPPOSED**: none; **ABSTAINED**: none; **APPROVED**: 6-0-0.

X. COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR

M. Pugliese stated he is looking forward to working on the strategic plan for Old Saybrook's Thriving Local Community. At a recent B.O.S. meeting he shared the points that EDC had brought up at the previous Commission meeting, and asked the B.O.S. to publicly support the plan and promote it to the other Boards and Commissions so that the EDC can start to work with them. A press release from the B.O.S. will go out, as well as a memo to Town staff. M. Pugliese and S. Beckman will present the plan highlights to town staff.

M. Pugliese expressed thanks to Christine Nelson, Town Planner, for her many years of service to the town and to the EDC, and for her dedication in getting the strategic plan updated and incorporated into the Town Plan.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION to adjourn the meeting at 8:27pm 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, J. Ganswindt, S. Roberts, and D. Prendergast; **OPPOSED**: none; **ABSTAINED**: none; **APPROVED**: 6-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Meryl Moskowitz
Recording Clerk