



TOWN OF OLD SAYBROOK Economic Development Commission

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David Prendergast, Chair
Carol Conklin, Vice Chair
John DeCristoforo, Secretary/Treasurer

David Cole
Judy Ganswindt
Sandra Roberts
Elizabeth Swenson
Barbara Labriola, Alternate
Nick Prevost, Alternate

MEETING MINUTES

May 13, 2021
7:00 pm
Videoconference

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair, David Prendergast, called the meeting to order at 7:03pm.

II. ROLL CALL

Meeting held via videoconference.

Members present: David Prendergast, David Cole, Elizabeth Swenson, Barbara Labriola, Nick Prevost

Members absent: Carol Conklin, Sandra Roberts, Judy Ganswindt

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

Public: Tedd Levy, Bruce Carlson

III. PUBLIC QUESTION & COMMENT

Bruce Carlson, resident, and member of an ad-hoc arts group updated the Commission on a proposed idea for an Art Pop Up event. The group is looking at four weekends in October, the idea being to bring visitors to town during the shoulder season and to present Old Saybrook as a creative community. The focus would be on shoreline artists, identifying emerging and young artisans, as well as working with OS Youth & Family Services and showcasing student artwork. The event would take place along Main Street. Mr. Carlson asked for financial support to perhaps cover the cost of insurance. There was discussion whether or not the Pop Up event could be covered under the Town's CIRMA policy.

Tedd Levy, representing the Old Saybrook Historical Society spoke about a bike tour event on June 6. It is a tour of historical sites around town, with stops at sites of significance to the Pequot War and Fort Saybrook. The Historical Society has hired a filmmaker to film the bike tour and they are seeking financial support from the EDC. The final film will be used to encourage people to come to town to make the same bike tour. The estimated cost for the filmmaker is \$800 and the estimated project budget is \$12,000 - \$15,000.

IV. GUESTS

V. STAFF REPORT

S. Beckman summarized the following:

- Marketing: she is working with a company to produce a video, highlighting the town to encourage tourism and business. A marketing campaign will be created to promote the completed video.
- Sidewalk Sale: the Old Saybrook Chamber of Commerce will be promoting a sidewalk sale in July; she would like to use some of the American Rescue Fund money to market this event.
- First Selectman Carl Fortuna has agreed some funding from the American Rescue Funds may be used to support Road Trip Masters, a small production group that highlights places off the beaten path and who plan to produce an episode on Old Saybrook. Their work appears on the Discovery Channel. EDC would fund their lodging and expenses at an estimated cost of \$3,000.

VI. REGULAR BUSINESS

A. Approval of Minutes: April 15, 2021

MOTION to approve the Meeting Minutes of April 15, 2021 amended to state on page 3, par. X, S. Beckman to send note from EDC to Carol Conklin...” **MADE** by D. Cole; **SECONDED** by N. Prevost; **VOTED IN FAVOR:** D. Prendergast, D. Cole, E. Swenson, B. Labriola, and N. Prevost; **OPPOSED:** none; **ABSTAINED:** none; **APPROVED:** 5-0-0.

B. Correspondence & Announcements

S. Beckman reported that the application “Smoke On the Water” was denied due to an incomplete application. She read a letter in opposition from Camille and Anthony Brodeur.

S. Beckman referred to a memo from First Selectman Carl Fortuna, dated April 23, 2021, regarding the resumption of in-person meetings. The option to attend via zoom will still be available. In-person public meetings will resume in June. S. Beckman referred to a budget memo from the First Selectman. All department heads are to report back with budget forecasts.

S. Beckman screen-shared the EDC's budget, noting a balance of \$2,055. A suggestion was made by B. Labriola to support the Historical Society's bike tour project with some of those remaining funds. N. Prevost suggested a donation of \$800 to cover the cost of the filmmaker.

MOTION to donate \$800.00 to the Old Saybrook Historical Society to be used for the filming of their cycling tour, **MADE** by N. Prevost; **SECONDED** by B. Labriola; **VOTED IN FAVOR:** D. Prendergast, D. Cole, E. Swenson, B. Labriola, and N. Prevost; **OPPOSED:** none; **ABSTAINED:** none; **APPROVED:** 5-0-0.

MOTION to amend the previous motion *to donate up to \$800.00* to the Old Saybrook Historical Society to be used for the filming of their cycling tour, **MADE** by D. Prendergast; The motion passed unanimously.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. Sponsorship Policy Review

S. Beckman sent a draft sponsorship policy to members, the concept being that if EDC has an opportunity to have sponsors, a policy will be in place. A business in Hartford has contacted S. Beckman to inquire about sponsorship of the “How to Get Here” web page.

She asked members to review, and bring comments to the next meeting, and to make a motion to

approve if in agreement. She will then send the document on to the First Selectman.

B. Holiday Season Attractions 2021 Discussion

S. Beckman presented the idea of having four seasonal events throughout the year. She has spoken to the First Selectman about using funds from the American Rescue Plan to promote the events: July – sidewalk sale, October – art, December—holiday festival of lights to bring people to town, possibly bring back the winter stroll.

VIII. ADVISORY GROUP REPORTS

A. Affordable Housing Taskforce

E. Swenson that the goal is to reach 10% affordable housing, which would mean 2,000 more units. One issue with increasing units is that there are not many fixer upper homes. There was a discussion about how in some places the in-law apartment is not necessarily attached to the house, which is one way to increase units.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. Arts & Crafts Pop-Ups

See discussion above under section III. “Public Question & Comment” and VI. B, “Holiday Season Attractions 2021”.

B. Labriola mentioned Wallingford's use of an empty office building and turning it into shared workspace. She will gather more information on the Wallingford model and report back.

Discussion about Bruce Carlson's request for EDC to be a sponsor of the Art Pop-Up and having the Town insure the event under its policy.

MOTION to sponsor the October Art Pop Up with Cares Act funds; **MADE** by B. Labriola; **SECONDED** by N. Prevost; **VOTED IN FAVOR:** D. Prendergast, D. Cole, E. Swenson, B. Labriola, and N. Prevost; **OPPOSED:** none; **ABSTAINED:** none; **APPROVED:** 5-0-0.

B. Request for Financial Support from OS Historical Society

See above, section IV. C, Correspondence & Announcements

X. COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR

D. Prendergast officially welcomed new members Nick Prevost and Barbara Labriola and stated he appreciates their input.

A thank you note was sent to long time EDC member John DeCristoforo, who has retired from the Commission.

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, June 10, 2021 at 7:00 P.M., via videoconference; **MADE** by D. Cole, **SECONDED** by E. Swenson; **VOTED IN FAVOR:** D. Prendergast, D. Cole, E. Swenson, B. Labriola, and N. Prevost; **OPPOSED:** none; **ABSTAINED:** none; **APPROVED:** 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Meryl Moskowitz, Recording Clerk