

Town of Barkhamsted
Economic Development Commission
Special Meeting Minutes
Town Hall
June 13, 2023

Meeting called to order at 7:00 PM.

Attendees: Tim Deschenes-Desmond (attended via Zoom), Bob Pulford, Todd Winkler, Kathy Williams and Mark Mahoney. Also in attendance was Don Stein, First Selectman, and Ted Shafer, Economic Development Consultant. No members of the public were in attendance.

Motion: On a motion by Bob Pulford, seconded by Mark Mahoney, the minutes of the April 26, 2023, Special Meeting were approved on a unanimous vote.

Motion: On a motion by Bob Pulford, seconded by Kathy Williams, the attached, revised schedule of meetings for the rest of the year was approved. This is being done to try to fit members' schedule and to get better attendance at meetings.

Discussion: Ted Shafer presented the attached set of goals and objectives for his position for the coming fiscal year. They will be used to measure his progress and to determine if the position should continue. It was suggested that this document be re-formatted into a spreadsheet for easier reporting and measurement. A few of the highlights include:

- the suggestion that there be ribbon cutting events at the T-Mobile store and the Village Gift Shop, Leslie DiMartino's new store next to the Riverton General Store
- Kathy Williams will work with Ted to re-start the welcome bag program which was very successful pre-Covid in terms of welcoming new folks to town and to acquaint them with businesses in town.
- Ted will work with the EDC to get the "Business Bingo" in place for the fall, which will also be used to encourage folks to use our local businesses.
- The Northwest CT Economic Development Corporation is holding a Meet and Greet on Tuesday at the American Mural Project to attempt to get input from business owners regarding the upcoming Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, which has to be updated every 5 years. Once that is approved by the Federal Economic Development Agency, the region is considered to be an Economic Development District and qualifies for Federal funds to implement the strategies.

Discussion: The Commission members discussed the business promotion and business retention strategies, Discover Litchfield Hills, tourist maps, all of which will be covered through Ted Shafer and his goals and objectives.

Discussion: They discussed the status of the Frontier installation of fiber optic internet, which has changed significantly from the original promises made by Frontier last December to do the entire town in the 1st quarter of 2023 or a bit into the 2nd quarter. At this stage, they have done most of the streets with aboveground utilities and starting to hook residents up to their service on those streets. The underground neighborhoods and homes will probably be delayed until late this year or the 1st quarter of 2024. This is very disappointing based on the earlier promises.

Discussion: Tim Deschenes-Desmond reported that the Blacksmith Guild was still potentially interested in the use of the Riverton Fairgrounds for their annual meeting, but that still was not for sure. Tim also reported that the community garden was full, with only a few beds being owned by folks who were using more than one bed.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 on a motion by Bob Pulford, seconded by Kathy Williams.

Respectfully submitted,

Don Stein

**TOWN OF BARKHAMSTED
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
MEETING DATES FOR 2023**

| | |
|-------------|-------------------------|
| January 19 | July 20 10 |
| February 16 | August 17 14 |
| March 16 | Sept. 21 11 |
| April 20 | October 19 9 |
| May 18 | Nov. 16 13 |
| June 16 | Dec. 21 11 |

Revised June 12, 2023. The Economic Development Commission will meet on the ~~third Thursday~~ second Monday of every month at 7:00 p.m. in the Barkhamsted Town Hall, beginning July 10, which will be a Special Meeting.

Ted Shafer Objectives – 2023/2024

1. Goal: Business Visitations. Status meetings with local businesses. Metric: 75 visits annually.
Recent business visits: Old Riverton Inn, Riverton General Store, Orchard Hill Bakery, Riverton Self Storage, Village Gift Shop, Pleasant Valley General Store, Mallory Brook Plaza tenants, Lombard Ford, Log House Restaurant, Goulet Printing.
2. Goal: Information outreach to businesses. Example: Prepare and distribute grant opportunities & financing resources flyer or multi-page handout. Metric: 3 distributions annually.
Current information gathering and discussions with SBA, Banks, DECD, etc...
3. Goal: Business Recruitment. Commercial Networking. Referrals. Efforts to fill empty commercial space. Metric: Communicate/meet with 75 businesses or related commercial professional annually for recruitment purposes.
Continuing to network & recruit with surrounding town merchants, developers, brokers, entrepreneurs and artisans. Trading messages with Mallory Brook Plaza property manager Michael Sarasin 860-683-9000 x 2.
4. Goal: Organize and hold business events (local or regional). For example, business breakfast or evening networking with food, beverage and speaker(s). Metric: Hold 2 events (local or regional) per year.
Barkhamsted Business Networking Event. Date TBD.
5. Goal: Attend Barkhamsted EDC meetings and other Town meetings/events as appropriate. Provide economic development presence at local community/regional events such as Riverton Fair, Christmas in Riverton, 4th of July parade & celebration, Regional Small Business Workshop. Metric: Attend at least 75% of EDC meetings annually. First Selectman to be notified if I am unable to attend. Attend a minimum of 4 community/regional events annually.
Attended recent "Touch a Truck" community event
Future Ribbon Cutting ceremonies
Welcome Bags
6. Goal: Promote workforce development initiatives. Attend/coordinate workshops or provide public outreach to promote workforce development in Barkhamsted. Example: Last year's Regional Job Fair. Metric: Attend or coordinate combination of 3 job fairs and/or workforce development forums annually.
Regional Job Fair at Gilbert School slated for October 2023; exact date TBD.
7. Goal: Maintain positive working relationships with First Selectman, NHCOC CEDS, CCM, COST, NW CT Chamber of Commerce, NW CT Economic Development Corp, Northwest Community College Entrepreneurial Center. Metric: 30 meetings attended or discussions with leaders of these organizations annually,
Have met regularly, attended workshops/events and established relationships with all of the above
8. Goal: Coordinate promotion event(s) for the residents to visit and meet the local businesses. For example, "Barkhamsted Business Bingo". Metric: 1 business promotional event annually.

Barkhamsted Business Bingo planning for the Fall/Winter of 2023.

9. Goal: Help to build Sustainable CT team. Assist on developing process to obtain “bronze level certification” and possible “community matching funds”. Explore joint efforts with surrounding town. Metric: Strive for Sustainable CT Bronze level certification in 2023.
Have met with initial organizing Sustainable CT (SCT) committee. Meeting with SCT summer intern/fellow scheduled for tomorrow afternoon.
10. Goal: Locate appropriate grants or funding for Town economic development and assist on completing submission application. Metric: Assist First Selectman and/or Town Staff with grant and/or funding application annually.
Sustainable CT Community Match Fund opportunities being explored along with other grants.
11. Goal: Develop and/or update economic development content to be posted on Town/s social media, website and discover Litchfield Hills. Metric: Arrange for 12 posts and/or content updating annually.
Meeting & coordination with Evan Dobos to be scheduled.

Other:

Regional Economic Development Meet & Greet sponsored by the Northwest CT Economic Development Corp and the Northwest CT Chamber of Commerce. June 20th, 4:30pm to 6:30pm at the American Mural Project - 90 Whiting Street, Winsted CT 06098. RSVP to Emily Hultquist – ehultquist@northwesthillscog.org by June 15th.

Regional Mfg speaker event at the Little Red Barn in Winsted CT - Day /Time TBD.