

Town of Barkhamsted
Economic Development Commission
Meeting Minutes
Town Hall
January 8, 2024

Meeting called to order at 7:30 PM.

Attendees: Tim Deschenes-Desmond, Bob Pulford, Todd Winkler, Mark Mahoney, Linda Ganem, and Don Stein. Also in attendance was 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 Special Meeting of December 4, 2023, were approved unanimously.

Motion: On a motion by Tim Deschenes, seconded by Mark Mahoney, Don Stein was elected chair, on a unanimous vote.

Discussion: Ted Shafer reviewed the attached set of goals and objectives for his position for this fiscal year.

Highlights of the discussion, which covered other topics as well, include:

- The SustainableCT team appears to have completed enough goals that they will be able to achieve Bronze certification after they submit their achievements in April. This is a significant achievement and was the result of extremely hard work by the team.
 - An additional task which would help support this achievement includes putting together a calendar of events to promote the town and its volunteer groups (Mark Mahoney and the Board of Selectmen). Another would be improving the use of social media, like Facebook, by using high school students, with the objective of improving communications about community activities.
- Hold a business networking event at TiTrikes. If possible, holding this event prior to the April submission date would help with getting Bronze for SustainableCT. TiTrikes works hard to support veterans and those with disabilities, and deserves this kind of recognition.

- There is a Job Fair scheduled for Torrington this spring and another one is being planned for Winsted next September.
- The Business Bingo held last fall was not terribly successful, but the Commission felt that it was worth relooking at this event to improve it or modify it in support of local businesses. One of the problems was that the chain stores did not do a good job of getting their staff up-to-speed on the event.

Ted and Don are both working on the committee to create and submit the CEDS (Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy), that would then allow the Federal Economic Development Authority to designate the region as an Economic Development District (EDD). This would then make funds available for initiatives to support the local area. The EDD is being managed by the Northwest Hills Council of Governments. The entity responsible for the activities has been renamed to be the Northwest CT Economic Development Collaborative. There is also a survey that was sent to the various businesses in the region to develop strategies that would help them grow and succeed.

- Leslie Dimartino is operating the Riverton General Store again after Jen Dailey had run it the past couple of years. Leslie never gave up ownership of the building, but had sold the business

Other items such as the welcome bags, Discover Litchfield Hills, the Town website, and the use of the Fairground as a municipal asset were deferred to the next meeting (February 5, 2024 at 7:00)

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Don Stein, Chair

BARKHAMSTED EDC STATUS REPORT - GOALS AND METRICS				
Goal & Metric	EDC Meeting 11/13/2023	EDC Meeting 12/4/2023	EDC Meeting 1/8/2024	EDC Meeting
Local Business Visitation - Retention				
Goal: 75 annual visits	Coordinated with 23 local merchants for "Business Bingo" promotion game ending 11/15	Xmas in Riverton... Riverton merchants visited.	Goulet Printing Winsted Feed Lombard Ford Subway Riverton Gen Store Log House Rest Winsted Hosp Anim	
	Multiple contacts with 55 local businesses regarding "After Hours" Networking event on 11/2/2023 at Sterling			
Business Recruitment				
Communicate with 75 entities annually	Chatted with 20 employers at Winsted 10/11/2023 Job Fair about Barkhamsted economic development	Spoke w/ businesses in region at NW CT Chamber events... Economic Summit, Small biz council, corporate appreciate	Networked with 30+ Whiting Mills tenants and guests at there holiday open house	
Coordinate Business Networking Event			Ti Trikes	
Goal: 2 Events per year	11/2 Business Networking event Oct/Nov Business Bingo Electric Vehicle Show tbd with... (Sustainable CT Committee)		Electric Bike Event before 3/1/2024	
Attend Local Events	Riverton Fair 10/15/2023	Xmas in Riverton		
75% of EDC Meetings		Squires Tavern	Chamber Holiday	
4 Community/Regional Events			Celebration	
Ribbon Cutting Ceremonies	9/30/2023 ribbon cutting event... Village Gift Shoppe			
Workforce Development			Torrington upcoming	
Attend 3 job fairs and /or workshops	Winsted Job Fair 10/11/2023		Job Fair	
Maintain positve working relationships	First Selectman update meetings	CCM conference	Sustainable CT	
Attend 30 meetings / workshops/ events annually	NW CT Chamber events/meeting NW CT Community College 10/20 Torrington Mfg Summit 10/20	NW CT Chamber NCCC Workshop... Lance Leiffert - "Digital Marketing:	board meeting CEDS plan creation meetings	
Business Promotion Event	Oct/Nov Business Bingo		Plan for 2024	
1 event annually				
Sustainable CT Committee	Nov 6th Sustainable CT	Electric Vehicle	Next Meeting in Feb	
Goal : bronze level certification	Committee Meeting	Event TBD		
Seek economic development grants & funding	Potential Sustainable CT matching fund			
Assist First Selectmen throughout year on applications				
Economic Development content posting on Town Web Site, social media	Business Bingo and Ribbon cutting on social media and Town web site			
Info Outreach For Businesses			CEDS Survey	
Goal: 3 distributions annually	Nov 2nd Sterling event speaker: John Fiorello from community college			
Other				