

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

July 30, 2025 at 7pm

Bantam Annex: 80 Doyle Road, Bantam, CT 06750

1. Call meeting to order, 7:03 pm.

Present: (Regular Members) Tara-Marie Bares, Missy Lafferty, Tom Roman, Cleve Fuessenich,, Michelle Murelli, Lindsey Turner, (Alternate), Renee Betar.

Absent: Al Macchioni

2. Appoint alternate member(s) for the meeting, as needed (no need).

3. EDC membership – discussed vacancies and what skills we'd like to add to the commission.

4. Approve minutes of May 28, 2025 meeting – Michelle motions to approve meeting minutes. Lindsey seconds.

5. Public comment - none.

6. Finance updates:

- Seherr-Thoss (received 5K in the fall, and another 5K in the spring). The initial 5K must be used by November. Second allotment needs to be used by April 2026.
- Town of Litchfield - 15K (fiscal year ends on June 30)
Possible grants –
 - 1) CT Community Foundation due Sept. 8
 - 2) CT office of the arts due Aug 24Michelle will look into both and share thoughts.

Brainstorming an art walk (Michelle mentioned Jessica Jenkins from the Litchfield Historical Society is already thinking about this in collaboration with Plein Air Litchfield).

7. Marketing and branding Litchfield:

- Print guides and sponsorships
 - T. Bares made slew of updates to design file
 - Digital bonus due for The Spa at Litchfield Hills
 - Re-approach businesses with sponsorship pitch
- VLCT QR code window decal stickers (T. Bares emailed Mary Beth Lawlor on 6/12)
Tara Marie got 4 quotes. Cleve motions to approve \$188 purchase of 3x5" window cling decals. Tara Marie seconds. All in favor. NOTE: funds to be pulled from the town of Litchfield's allocated budget. Tara Marie will share creative layouts at the August meeting.
- Seasonal itineraries (T. Bares). Discussion about an insert, a separate piece, the same size, slightly bigger? Suggestion of running the same size, but separate piece that could be used as an insert or stand alone.

Tara motions to approve 3000 seasonal inserts to be printed. Missy seconds.

- Plein Air Litchfield (Oct 4th Gala) (M. Murelli). 109 applications from 24 states. Accepted 33 artists. Update on year round painting events and collaborations with Ripley Waterfowl, The Abner, Belden House (hosting the Gala). Plein Air is still seeking sponsorships and private donations. August 16, 1-3 pm, hosting a pop-up art show on the top floor of the Bantam Arts Factory. Sell tickets to the Oct. gala. Meet and greet with the artists etc.
- Marketing performance, historical data (D. Clement)
- Info booth (R. Betar)

- “In the News” publicity (T. Bares)
- Other:
 - Litchfield businesses database (Q3 2025)
Missy is on track for being done by the end of the year. Hoping by the end of Q3.
 - Litchfield Exchange (Q4 2025)
Tara Marie is going to randomly select the first few businesses and is exploring outsourcing the editing of the videos / reels.
 - Merch (2026) (didn't discuss)
 - America 250 (no update)
- 8. New business:
 - Art walk (D. Clement) (see above re: Jessica Jenkins)
 - Love Litchfield Day (T. Bares)
 - Add voting for officers to the August agenda.
- 9. Old business: (didn't discuss the below)
 - Litchfield signage
 - Starting a business in Litchfield (testimonials?)
 - Chamber music concerts
 - Public policy liaison
- 10. Adjourn Tara motions to adjourn. Michelle seconds.

Next regular meeting is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, August 27 at 7pm at the Bantam Annex.