



REGULAR MEETING MINUTES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

November 19, 2025 at 7pm
Bantam Annex: 80 Doyle Road, Bantam, CT 06750

Regular Members: Victoria Butkus, Missy Lafferty, Lindsey Turner, Tara Marie Bares, Michelle Murelli, Cleve Fussenich

Alternates: Renee Betar, Amanda Glover

1. Meeting called to order at 7:00pm.
2. Appoint alternate member(s) for the meeting, as needed. None needed.
3. Minutes of October 29, 2025 approved. Cleve approves, Renee seconds. All in favor.
4. New business:
 - “Shop Late” collaboration(s) around holiday season (Litchfield Distillery) - West Street businesses/business owners could spearhead. December 18/22/23 will be the Distillery Shop Late. Coordinate and create a marketing post. Then revisit in September of the following year. Cedric suggests perhaps picking one night per week. Get it established, build momentum.
 - Litchfield Wellness Festival - Silvana DeLuca shares plans for the 2026 Wellness Festival, local resident, owner of Charym, and owner of skincare company. Noticed fragmented wellness businesses in the Litchfield County area and had the idea to unite wellness businesses, and inaugural year with 70 businesses and 800 people attending. Litchfield has the possibility of becoming a blue zone, promoting wellness businesses and practitioners. Educate and communicate with the community about all aspects of wellness. Database of wellness providers created post festival, making the connection easier. January 28 hosting a networking conference in the field of wellness, and new innovative companies promoting your services at Litchfield Inn. The next LWF on June 27, 2026. She is happy to cooperate with the EDC and share databases. Tara will connect with D. Clement to promote the conference and the festival.
 - Fieldwork, a quarterly newspaper publication presented by publisher Cedric Gairard of FotoDiary, a gallery in Kent connecting a creative co-op of creatives to scale and work collectively and support each other to serve clients. The publication gives a behind the scenes view of the process of makers in Litchfield County.
 - “Gamifying” the info booth - tabled.
 - POCAD - tabled.
 - EDC 2026 meeting schedule - tabled to December meeting.
5. Public comment: none.
6. Finance updates:
 - Seherr-Thoss Foundations \$5k to be spent down by June 2026
 - Fall 2024: \$5K used for marketing support and ‘guide’ printing (awaiting Town to furnish a receipted

bill showing funds were spent for the purpose granted)

- Spring 2025: \$5K by June 1, 2026
- Fall 2025: Application under review

◦ Connecticut Humanities (Dec. 1) Michelle to set up a call for early next week with Tara and the point of contact, Grant can be used for exhibitions, interpretive media projects for c-3 or municipal projects, or state or federally recognized tribe.

- Planning Grant (\$5-\$25K): Exhibitions, public programs, interpretive digital media projects
 - Connecticut Community Foundation (Mar. 17)
 - Seeking treasurer role (grantwriting a plus) - tabled.

7. Marketing and branding Litchfield:

- VLCT QR code window decal stickers — samples will arrive for next month's meeting
- Seasonal itineraries — must begin devising winter verbiage, in new layout (bi-fold)
- Print guides and sponsorships
- Marketing performance, historical data (D. Clement) - Doug not present.
- Other:
- Litchfield Restaurant Week 2026 (Lost Fox Inn kickoff party) Lindsay would like to proactively reach out for sponsorships. Feasibility conversation with Denise for a participation fee. Amanda to research food purveyors for sponsorships. Next meeting we vote on a pay to play
- Litchfield businesses database (Q4 2025) — dedicate an EDC meeting to working on this, December 10 meeting will be a working session. Questions for Evan: How to use websites as the "holy grail" to flush out the rest using AI, use case, front facing, how to update, register and approve a listing. EDC would own, and not public, to refine. Update and data capture - middle ware? Zapier? Maintain using town Grand List to capture new businesses. Cleve feels like this is a project that can be handed off to another organization in the future for maintaining.
- Litchfield Exchange (2026) - tabled
- Merch (2026) - tabled
- Love Litchfield Day (T. Bares, C. Fuessenich (2026) - tabled
- America 250 (2026)- tabled

8. Adjourn 8:07 Tara motions, Missy seconds.

Next regular meeting is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, December 10 at 7pm at the Bantam Annex.

January 28, 2026

February 25, 2026

March 25, 2026

April 29, 2026

May 27, 2026

June 24, 2026

July 29, 2026

August 26, 2026

September 30, 2026

October 28, 2026

November 18, 2026

December 9, 2026

Minutes prepared by Amanda Glover