

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

April 29, 2026 at 7pm

Bantam Annex: 80 Doyle Road, Bantam, CT 06750

1. Call meeting to order at 7:01PM

2. **Members present:** *Tom Roman, Renee Betar, Missy Lafferty, Cleve Fussenich, Tara-Marie Lynch Bares, Lindsey Turner, Amanda Glover, Jess MacDonald, Victoria Butkus.*

3. Approve minutes of April 29, 2026 regular meeting -not posted to town website. April 29, 2026 minutes to be approved at the next meeting

4. Refresher on strategic mission and roadmap - post ARPA funding

5. 2026 Restaurant Week postmortem highlights : Litchfield Ledger dinner was very successful. Patrick Allers from LL in attendance, 3300 local subscribers, Litchfield curious, curated events, third dinner club to be held at the Lost Fox. EDC is also trying to build out the community.

- Restaurant Week Post Mortem:
 - Increase in business, increase in clientele, 40% response rate to the post-mortem survey. Extended week, mostly five star reviews, Arethusa and Materia diners raved, people made a day out of the 60 Litch 32% LC% 4% Ny 4% other, Dining receipts to other businesses. Tara proposes the 5 year plan. Victoria suggests a reach out to farms. CSA funding, 5% discounts? Topic to be discussed at August meeting re:brainstorming with other business groups. Future marketing collab with Litchfield Ledger for 5 year Restaurant Week, perhaps an ad to post on their newsletter on the first week in March.

6. Finance

- Seherr-Thoss update: \$26k for Litchfield Signs, Tapping Reeve Meadow is on brand, colonial, wrought iron, subsequent signs tie all the boroughs together. Nature, Shops, Dining, Arts, Culture, etc. permitting, DOT approval, reach out to Jessica at the Historical Society to see who designed it. Get 3 bids, preferably local, see what the project cost looks like, see how many can be made, then decide on location. The Villages of Litchfield: provides context to the fact that.

- Boardwalk Media retainer - Doug Clement, local resident who provides PR, marketing and social media services asks for an increase in his monthly stipend, first increase in 6 years. Missy suggests that we get comparables and will spearhead and report back. CT Office of the Arts Grant to create an Arts District in the center of Litchfield - contact *Lourdes Rivera* at LNRRivera@ct.gov. The scope of the work has increased. Renee suggests perhaps an assistant to build in redundancy. Grant funding to pay salaries. Tom suggests using a larger

agency to do the social media and pay Doug to do the local content and photography. The committee agrees to get competitive bids, and also agrees on Doug's value.

7. Litchfield Build & Design Fair (trade expo — residential and commercial) : Tara contacted people in the trades, they identified that late fall would be a good time for it. Lindsay envisions that it builds awareness of the trades and service industries in town. It would be helpful to locals and new residents who don't have contacts. Format could be a professional networking session to start the day, keynote speaker, then an expo to follow. Amanda suggests a partner with WAMOGO to provide access to apprenticeships while also taking advantage of the large, indoor, public space available. Cleve suggests LABA involvement. Lindsay stated that it would be open to Litchfield businesses first, then open to other Litchfield County businesses.

8. Ongoing business:

- Business Database - Missy to connect with Evan.
- Litchfield Day 2027 - Tara spoke to park and rec, they'll collaborate, time of year TBD, extend the road race weekend or incorporate the Block Party as a daytime extension? Tara would like it to be more neighborly. Victoria offers her farm, fall fest they parked 400 cars. Tara envisions the inaugural on the Litchfield Green with music.

- Litchfield guide 1000 copies arriving tomorrow. Distribution plan, connect with Lindsay.
- Info booth : Missy received the info, will schedule a meeting with Jessica to organize the volunteers. Google Sheet or Calendly for sign ups?
- Volunteer fair: Coordinate with LABA and Berta at the Community Center.

9. Adjourn at 8:19PM Tara motions, Michelle seconds. All in favor.

Next regular meeting is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, June 24 at 7pm at the Bantam Annex.