

LITCHFIELD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

EDC Regular Meeting Minutes
Litchfield Town Annex 80 Doyle Rd. Bantam, CT 06750
and
REMOTE MEETING BY LIVE INTERNET VIDEO STREAM AND TELEPHONE
June 24, 2020 7:00 p.m.

Minutes (draft)

- 1) Meeting called to order at 7:07 p.m. by Cleve Fuessenich, Chair.
Present: Regular Members: Renée Betar, Cleve Fuessenich, Anne Haas, Michele Murelli, Tom Roman and Bea Thomson (Zoom)
Alternate Members: Patty Dauten, Meg Finn, Lindsey Muir (Zoom) and Harmony Tanguay
Ex-officio: Denise Raap, First Selectwoman, Litchfield
Absent: None
Vacancy: One regular member
- 2) Appointment of Alternate: H. Tanguay for vacancy of one regular member
- 3) Public Comment:
 - Carol Powers: Interested resident and grant writer shared her detailed ideas for promoting Litchfield and more specifically, for attracting residents.
 - Will Neary: Attending as potential EDC member. Approval as EDC member was tabled by BOS until July 7, 2020 meeting for decision whether W. Neary will fill the vacancy of an alternate or regular member.
- 4) **Motion by Michele Murelli to approve draft minutes of May 27, 2020 regular meeting; T. Roman seconded the motion. All vote aye and the motion was adopted.**
- 5) **Motion by Tom Roman to approve draft minutes of June 10, 2020 special meeting; M. Murelli seconded the motion. All vote aye, as amended by A. Haas, and the motion was adopted.**
- 6) Old Business
 - a. Re-visit the framework for EDC's sub-committees
 - i. FOI update: C. Fuessenich confirmed that sub-committees established within EDC are able to work within the guidelines set forth in the FOI Act.
 - ii. Review sub-committee structure, guidelines and appointments:
Common name for sub-committees was agreed to be **task force**. Each task force will: be chaired by a different EDC member; identify and confirm task force members; draft and share operating plan at EDC regular meeting; execute from approved plan; and update Commission at meetings.
 1. Establish current task force categories. W. Neary suggested EDC consider economic impact of each task force's activity:
 - a. Events Task Force: Chair, M. Murelli
Events ideas and material, compiled by M. Murelli and distributed to members, were discussed at length. Collaboration with other town agencies and committees is key when planning events.
Motion was made by H. Tanguay to authorize Events Task Force to form committees and draft plans for two events in 2020, *Let's Dine Out Together* and *Holiday Event*; motion seconded by M. Murelli. All vote aye and the motion was adopted.

LITCHFIELD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

- b. Visitors Information Booth Task Force: Chair, R. Betar
R. Betar and A. Haas shared that improvements on the booth are in the process of being made – door replacement and installment of plexi-organizers for wings. Plans for a COVID-safe soft opening by July 3 are in motion.
 - c. Marketing/Branding Litchfield Task Force: Chair TBD based on outcome of D. Raap's meeting on June 25 regarding a potential marketing consultant to be hired through a grant.
2. Status of other EDC Task Forces:
- a. Incubator Task Force: on hold
 - b. Broadband/Fiber Optics Task Force: not needed; is handled at BOS level
 - c. Sustainable Litchfield Task Force: not needed; is handled as existing town committee
 - d. Disaster Recovery/Business Continuity Task Force: not needed; is handled by town Emergency Management team
 - e. Possible new task force: Business Recognition Task Force. Decision that new task force is not needed but task can be rolled into Marketing/Branding Litchfield Task Force. After conversation with FOI Public Education Officer, a businessperson-of-the-month initiative can be implemented with certain caveats. However, after lengthy discussion, EDC decided that instead it will alphabetically acknowledge each business (as listed on comprehensive list to be completed) periodically on town's Facebook page by highlighting noteworthy activity.
- b. Compilation of comprehensive list of businesses: C. Fuessenich continues to work on list and plans to meet with town assessor to delve into information on less traditional types of businesses.
 - c. Litchfield's Long-term Recovery Committee: D. Raap shared that Litchfield will not establish a local Long-Term Recovery Committee (LTRC) due to high resource demands and continually changing mandates and guidelines.
 - d. EDC funds for 2019-2020:
 - i. D. Raap confirmed that EDC funds allocated for 2019-2020 cannot be rolled over to the 2020-2021 budget.
 - ii. After several suggestions for using the funds in budget year ending June 30, 2020, a **motion was made by M. Murelli to have C. Fuessenich requisition \$500, which will be used to authorize the marketing/branding task force to draft a plan for using the funds to promote Litchfield and then execute by spending the funds through Facebook ads; motion was seconded by H. Tanguay. All voted aye and the motion was adopted.**
 - e. Fill Vacancy: CT Western Regional Tourism District (WRTD): R. Betar shared her conversations with Ann Combs, who helped find the right WRTD contact and details about this long-standing vacancy. T. Roman has agreed to be the town representative and EDC liaison on this board that meets quarterly. Once Tom applies to fill this vacancy and receives approval from the BOS, Litchfield will have a regular chain of two-way communication with this active state board that helps manage the tourism budget.
 - f. EDC's help for businesses and community during re-opening phases
 - i. EDC thanked M. Murelli and Lauren Mahieu for organizing and presenting a virtual

LITCHFIELD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

marketing roundtable on June 8. The link to this informative presentation is available at <https://www.townoflitchfield.org/economic-development-commission/news/june-8-2020-edc-marketing-round-table-zoom-now-available>.

ii. EDC offered to help with re-opening, as needed.

7) New Business

a. Election of officers for July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021:

i. D. Raap explained that at the June 16 BOS meeting a resignation tendered from alternate member Meg Finn, was rescinded. Patty Dauten, the next alternate EDC member in line for consideration as a regular EDC member, was not present to accept or reject the offer to become a regular member. W. Neary's appointment to EDC at this BOS meeting was tabled because there was an open issue of whether Will would be appointed as a regular member or an alternate member. C. Fuessenich asked P. Dauten at today's EDC meeting if she would consider moving to a regular member. P. Dauten declined. At the next BOS meeting on July 7, 2020, W. Neary will be scheduled to be appointed a regular member of EDC.

ii. C. Fuessenich opened nominations from the floor for EDC officers.

1. Chair: T. Roman made a motion to elect C. Fuessenich as Chair; A. Haas seconded the motion. After discussion that included objections to limited time and to elections held when some members of the commission didn't realize elections would be held today, although the posted agenda stated such, M. Murelli amended the motion to postpone election of all officers until the next regular meeting on July 29, 2020 to allow members more time to get familiar with the election process and candidates. H. Tanguay seconded the motion.

Voting members in favor: M. Murelli, H. Tanguay and B. Thompson

Voting members opposed: R. Betar and T. Roman

Voting members abstaining: C. Fuessenich and A. Haas

The amended motion to postpone EDC elections to July 29, 2020 was adopted.

8) Adjournment

Motion to adjourn meeting made by A. Haas; H. Tanguay seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion was adopted.

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Next regular meeting scheduled for Wednesday, July 29, 2020.

Respectfully submitted,

Renée Betar
Secretary, Litchfield Economic Development Commission