1. Meeting called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Will Neary, Chair.

**PRESENT**

- *Regular members*: Will Neary, L. Cleveland Fuessenich, Thomas Roman, Michele Murelli, Tara-Marie Bares
- *Alternate members*: Renee Betar, Cailyn Paradise, Missy Lafferty
- *Members of the public*: Doug Clement
- *Ex-officio*: Denise Raap, First Selectman, Litchfield

**ABSENT**

- *Regular members*: Lindsey Turner, Lelah Campo
- *Alternate members*: N/A

2. Appointment of alternate voting member(s) for meeting, as needed: Cailyn Paradise.

3. Public comment:
   - Megan Harpin — The Spa at Litchfield Hills ([megan@litchfield-spa.com](mailto:megan@litchfield-spa.com))
     - National event to boost “shop small” (by AMEX) on the day after Black Friday
     - Referenced L. Mahieu’s passport program initiative in the past
     - Focus on shops and boutiques (there were restaurants involved prior but there are too many to include and this is about holiday shopping and boosting foot traffic — so they came up with an idea for “local eats” where people with the passport can simply attach any receipt from any Litchfield restaurant)
     - Recap from most recent campaign: 70 “postcards” came back more than 50% filled with “stamps” (¼ with restaurant receipts attached)
     - D. Raap to send M. Harpin the latest email list of businesses
     - T. Lynch to send the updated Visitors’ Guide PDF
     - M. Harpin will send social media creative to:
       - D. Raap who will share and spread the word via Town of Litchfield website and social accounts
4. Motion by M. Murelli to approve draft minutes of the September 28, 2022 regular meeting; C. Fuessenich seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

5. New EDC members / candidates:
   - Welcome voting member Lelah Campo (absent)
   - Welcome alternate members Missy Lafferty and Cailyn Paradise

6. EDC task force updates:
   - Marketing and branding Litchfield
     - Pamphlet
       - Sponsors vs. ad space
       - W. Neary described path that was taken for sponsorships
       - T. Roman mentioned that Northwest CT Tourism is allowing an exchange of collateral so we should look into doing this as well
       - Research Litchfield Airbnb hosts and suggest they include visitlitchfieldct.com website in their listing descriptions and also have them grab a copy of the Visitors’ Guide for having in their Airbnb
       - New design by T. Lynch / updates from D. Clement
       - Favorite to be removed for future print run
       - Additional bids for higher quality printing?
     - Digital properties (D. Clement)
       - D. Clement gave a report on great organic search and organic social media driven traffic to the website
       - T. Lynch suggested exploring paid campaigns now that we have a more substantial budget
       - M. Lafferty recommended posting about working in YARDwork (showcasing other elements of Litchfield like working remotely from coworking space)
       - D. Raap inquired about schools since they've supported this in some part (we should flesh out their descriptions a bit more on the website)
   - “Made in Litchfield” initiative (T. Lynch)
     - Merch order fulfillment in progress!
       - Water bottle / computer stickers
       - Baseball caps
       - Long-sleeve shirts
       - Picnic-on-the-green blankets
     - Local makers secured:
       - “Litchfield” coffee table book copies
       - Winter Winds Farm syrup
       - C.P. Farmhouse zippered Litchfield, CT pouches
- Blueprint CT's "Litchfield" etched wooden cutting board
- Bantam Frameworks frames for custom graphic design
- Ace Hardware for branded Litchfield merchandise (e.g., keychains)
- Litchfield Distillery nips and swag
- M. Murelli children's coloring books
- Haight-Brown Vineyard $5-off wine flights
- Berry Ledges honey jars
- Bunnell Farm dry rub
- Bantam Tileworks ceramic pieces
- Troy Brook wooden spoons

Next steps:
- Collect all final items
- Photograph / stitch together video of assembled basket (must be high-quality and engaging and buzzworthy)
- Lay groundwork with local social media influencers for amplification
- Ensure captions describe all who contributed (as well as standalone slide of logos accompanying the post)
- IMPORTANT: T. Lynch stated it will be important to keep the local merchants and businesses in the loop during the campaign (e.g., tagging them but also give a postmortem on its success to fuel future iterations); the more involved and more communicative we are about ROI, the better

- Signage for local merchants, stores, restaurants with VLCT QR code to print and distribute:
  - T. Lynch to take this on and design it
  - D. Raap would even print QR code on The Village placemat (could be a great idea for other restaurants who have printed paper placemats)
  - T. Lynch motions to fund $100 for plastic placards for QR code printouts for restaurants; all voted aye and the motion carried.

7. Holiday Stroll
   - Colleen Kinkade will no longer be at Park & Recreation by November 2022
   - Commission will now has to take and run with the Holiday Stroll

8. Restaurant Week
   - EDC is tentatively looking to March 2023
   - Someone has to play point for this — M. Murelli will start by outlining a strategy
   - T. Lynch recommended looking at other towns' Restaurant Weeks / last year's minutes

9. Information Booth (R. Betar)
   - Information booth is closing for the season on November 1
   - R. Betar suggested putting a P sign on the Town Hall for parking (lots of people ask about this) — though parking is only available on weekends
   - Information booth has to go to the borough every year
   - Information booth has been very busy the past few weeks; sidewalks crowded
10. Old and unfinished business:
   ● Secretary volunteer?
   ● Borough of Bantam notetaking post (maybe once they are secured, we can ask if they want an additional role); $20/hr per D. Raap

11. New business:
   ● Charging stations — by end of December, we'll know whether we have secured $226K per D. Raap (W. Neary said this would be great to post about via VLCT channels)
   ● M. Murelli — CT Ballet under the stars (full-day event with classes for kids during the day and ballet performance in the evening); Summer 2023
   ● M. Murelli — Re: Litchfield Makers Market, Borough of Litchfield is issuing a survey to merchants on the green and has put a moratorium on any events held on the green until those survey results are compiled
   ● T. Roman reports the state is bringing tour buses:
     ○ They're looking for suggestions from towns for bus tour
     ○ E.g., 55 people on a bus
     ○ D. Raap said many local restaurants could probably house that many people
     ○ EDC members should offer itinerary ideas and send to susanh@ctvisit.com
   ● D. Raap recommends having a summit in the spring (e.g., Litchfield Community Center) with all the local economic development groups — each EDC sends one or two representatives that can speak and report on what they've been doing and what's been successful

12. Adjourn: Motion to adjourn meeting made by W. Neary; C. Fuessenich seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

Next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 16, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,
Tara-Marie Lynch
Litchfield Economic Development Commission

Litchfield Economic Development Commission Mission Statement (adopted 06/10/2020):
The mission is to promote sustainable economic diversity for Litchfield.