



LITCHFIELD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Special Meeting Minutes · DRAFT

February 1, 2023

Bantam Annex

80 Doyle Road

Bantam, CT 06750

- Meeting called to order at 7:04 p.m. by Will Neary, Chair.

PRESENT *Regular members:* Will Neary, Lindsey Turner,
Tara-Marie Lynch Bares, L. Cleveland Fuessenich
Alternate members: Renee Betar
Ex-officio: Denise Raap, First Selectman, Litchfield

ABSENT *Regular members:* Michele Murelli, Thomas Roman
Alternate members: Missy Lafferty, Cailyn Paradise

- Appointment of alternate voting member for meeting: R. Betar.
- Motion by R. Betar to amend and approve draft minutes of the December 21, 2022 regular meeting; W. Neary seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.
- America250: United States Semiquincentennial (R. Betar)
 - Patriots are coordinating lots of activities around anniversary of July 4, 1776 (2026)
 - Informational meeting scheduled for March 15 at Litchfield Community Center (W. Neary plans to attend)
 - For instance, certain groups can sponsor a parade, fireworks, etc.
 - EDC can devise VLCT blog post, email, social
- Marketing and branding Litchfield:
 - D. Raap relayed a recent conversation with Litchfield Historical Society:

- They are interested in working more closely with EDC to help serve as a guide for residents and visitors by potentially using a portion of their building as a “welcome center”
- Perhaps within, there can be a mini “Made in Litchfield” storefront?
- Litchfield Historical Society wouldn’t have the funds for it but perhaps a town employee could staff it
- Currently Kent is the only town in NWCT that has a welcome center
- Moreover, there is no sign to welcome people to Litchfield:
 - There could be up to five different posts for it: 118, 202, 63, etc.
 - Will need encroachment permits (state roads) and permission from borough
 - If we proceed, we’d be interested in doing
- “Made in Litchfield” initiative (T. Lynch):
 - “Made in Litchfield” giveaway campaign was a resounding success
 - Over the two-week campaign period:
 - 586 user-generated engagement actions
 - 609 post likes
 - 431 shares on social media
 - Really great feedback like:
 - “Any chance this will be a commercial collaboration to purchase outright? This was such a cool idea.”
 - “This is such a great way to showcase special and unique items!”
 - “Can you tell me where the framed wooden CT cutout is from?”
 - “Wow! So many great Litchfield items!”
 - “Time to travel to CT to explore”
 - T. Lynch compiled a report-out to participating businesses
 - The next theme for baskets can be added gift cards to restaurants (but wait until after Restaurant Week so as to not muddy the water)
 - Partner with an already existing entity in town for fulfillment (e.g., Ace)?
- “Visit Litchfield” pamphlet reprint:
 - We can have “sponsorships” but not “advertisers”
 - Realtors, restaurants, inns expressed interest in sponsoring future print runs
 - “Visitors’ Guide” — update language to “Visitors’ & Residents’ Guide”
 - QR code to map on the website? Or fold-out map inside the book?
 - Next steps:
 - Get print quotes from: Minuteman, Goulet, Oddo, Murphy Boyz
 - Get a collection of interested sponsors
 - W. Neary will frame the language for sponsorships at various quantities: 250, 500, 1,000 (and then 1K+)
 - Be intentional about not just covering costs
 - Non-branded versions can be printed for the Information Booth

- Restaurant Week 2023 (L. Turner):
 - There is lots of excitement and interest so far from the restaurants
 - March 24-31, 2023 @ \$25, \$35, \$45
 - T. Lynch to design "Proud Participant of Litchfield's 2023 Restaurant Week" poster art
 - T. Lynch to use the same graphic for social media post
 - L. Turner to send M. Murelli's design around
 - February: Get buy-in from all restaurants, finalize list of participants, begin posting materials and design
 - March: RESTAURANT WEEK!
- Women Development Business Council Grant / List of Litchfield Businesses:
 - Grant opportunity from WDBC (can apply for up to \$10K with criteria)
 - D. Raap to post about this via town's digital channels
- New Businesses in Litchfield (R. Betar):
 - Chris Kelsey provided R. Betar a list of businesses in Litchfield (700+)
 - L. Turner to circulate Excel list of all businesses sent by B. Paynter
- Adjourn: Motion to adjourn meeting made by T. Lynch; W. Neary seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

Next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 22, 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.*