



## LITCHFIELD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Special Meeting Minutes · DRAFT

February 27, 2023

Bantam Annex

80 Doyle Road

Bantam, CT 06750

1. Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Will Neary, Chair.

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

**ABSENT**     *Regular members:* N/A  
*Alternate members:* Cailyn Paradise

2. Appointment of alternate voting member for meeting: N/A
3. Motion by C. Fuessenich to approve draft minutes of the February 1, 2023 special meeting; W. Neary seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.
4. EDC task force updates:
  - Marketing and branding Litchfield update (D. Clement)
    - Top-performing recent posts: "ski and golf in the same day" (unique story that got a lot of attention) + "restaurant awards"
  - Visitors' Guide reprint
    - Sponsorship plan:
      - Qty. 500 = \$1,000
      - Qty. 1,000 = \$1,750
    - Stuffing LABA bags in March 2023
    - T. Roman mentions the exchange of collateral at the state level

5. Restaurant Week:

- March 24-31, 2023
- Nearly 15 restaurants (and counting) are participating
- Visuals perform best so encourage restaurants to send us photographs of the menu items — D. Clement will tackle this
- By March 1, individually DM each restaurant on social media with tailored creative assets for them to use for promoting their participation
- Project timeline:
  - December: Circulate directory and gather contact information
  - January: Get entire plan and materials wrapped up
  - February: Get buy-in from all restaurants and finalize list of participants
  - March: RESTAURANT WEEK!

6. New business:

- A few updates related to restaurants and public art spaces from M. Murelli:
  - 20' mural to be installed At The Corner South Street (M. Murelli)
  - Market Place Tavern has a new art gallery (new artists every 6 weeks)
- R. Betar is working through list of 760 businesses in Litchfield from assessor's office (December 2022 to February 2023)
- Pick up the "how to open a business" flowchart project
  - M. Lafferty brought up how if the system is complex why not simplify with just "adding a name to the list" and a representative will be in touch to help navigate the process based on their business
  - T. Lynch asked if there were any ARPA funds to allocate to someone who can be employed part-time to liaise in this way and help potential new businesses navigate the town process (learned this was an idea but not feasible)
  - C. Fuessenich recommended potentially handling this process through the SCORE method (Service Corps of Retired Executives)

7. Stonybrook restaurant "reopening" (March)

8. Litchfield Welcome Center collaboration with Historical Society (J. Graham)

- Kent and Simsbury have visitor centers — and there is a big gap in between; having a visitor center for Litchfield would be fantastic
- Visitor center can be anything from an unmanned brochure rack to full-blown center with the museum, "Made in Litchfield" section of the gift shop featuring local goods and Litchfield-branded merch, visitors' guide, art gallery, etc.
- Hours are changing / expanding now Wednesday through Sunday

- First step in getting “Welcome to Litchfield” signs at various locations is to try to secure an encroachment permit with the State of Connecticut (Raz Alexe would be the first person to approach as far as devising scope of work and details)
- R. Betar mentioned that, if a welcome center looks to be a late 2023 / 2024 project, then we should consider going before the borough again to reopen Information Booth in the center of Litchfield

9. Adjourn: Motion to adjourn meeting made by M. Murelli; R. Betar seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:09 p.m.

Next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 29, 2023.

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.*